

humanity sees the faith of a child of God in action, they will really see a development of character which is a rare sight!

- 3) Purity. The whole concept of Biblical morality is mentioned here. The Bible provides the objective standard by which motives, actions, and lives are measured. One can note, however, some specific areas of purity. Take these: a) Motives (Phil. 4:3) b) Acts (Isa. 52:11 cf. 1 Sam. 2:12-17) c) Morality (1 Tim. 2:22).

CONCLUSION. The burden of this passage is Christian leadership. But not the kind of leadership most people are interested in. Too many are concerned with guiding other people in directions of one sort or another. This current passage is designed to get people interested in leadership of being and becoming. This is character leadership. What one's mouth cannot do, one's life can! It is the life that will so often win a heart whereas the mouth alone is an utter sham. The word "example" in the text is the word "type." It suggests a model. This is what God is looking for--a model of believers. It is not "to" believers, but "of." When the world around us begins to see the product in us, they will line up to get it! What kind of a character reference are YOU to the Lord Jesus Christ and the community of the saints? To put it bluntly: what sort of impression do people get of a Christian by looking at you? If all Christians were like you, how many more could the world use? A final word of warning: some may reject Christ because He is not seen in you. Their blood will be on your hands (Ezek. 3). They will be lost, but it will be YOUR fault. Any unbeliever reading this should not take refuge in another's failure. The call of the Gospel still goes to you--believe now!

THE BOOK OF FIRST TIMOTHY

"Christian Leadership"

1 Timothy 4:11, 12

Introduction

1. Leadership is a word which suggests guidance and conducting someone in a particular sphere. It is normally considered as an honour and place of choice.

2. Contrary to modern principles, the first place among the children of God is serving! If this principle of the Word of God is not agreed upon, let the sceptic read the Book (cf. Mark 10:44 where the word bondsman is used in Greek; John 13:1-20). Let's not look, then, for leadership in the same places that the world does! Industry and secular life have no standard for the child of God. Only the Word of God can stipulate the proper protocol. Say "amen" to that now and always.

3. This is the sort of thing which Paul enjoins young Timothy to "command and teach." The "these things" (v. 11) is a reference to what follows. All these injunctions he is to "command and teach." In point of time, "teaching" will precede "commanding," but both are necessary. It is a sad commentary on current preaching that there is a fearfulness in the pulpit lest someone in the pew raise a voice of objection. God give us fearless preaching which includes commands based upon teaching. This is sound Biblical counsel for those who stand behind the sacred desk today. If there were more of this sort of activity in the pulpit, it might be that there would be more adherence in the pew to the eternal verities which cannot be trifled with!

4. What does Paul expect Timothy to "command and teach?" Read the text carefully and you will see the important items. One is negative and the other is positive. Here they are:-

1. ADMONITION

No one is to despise the youth of Timothy. This is a tall order, but one which can be met by the indwelling Spirit of God. The verb "despise" is derived from a term which means to "think little of." The mind is in action. Timothy is exhorted not to allow others to consider ill of him because of his youth. It does matter, therefore, what others think! No one lives to himself.

It is not clear what is meant by "youth" in the context. However, if Timothy had been a lad of 15 or 16 when he first met Paul, then according to Paul's martyrdom, this would have been about 25 years later. Timothy, then, is around 40. This age is old for a contestant in games, but young for a bishop! But Timothy was not to give any reason for contempt on the part of others. Let all who name the Name of Christ take heed about these matters (cf. Rom. 14).

2. INJUNCTION

Whereas Timothy is urged to defy adverse comments because he is young, the verb "be" in the positive side of the matter is an imperative. This is no choice, but a definite responsibility! More than that, the verb is the common one which means to "become" Hence, God is noting that what is expected of Timothy will not be instantaneous, but a process of his life. The whole modern idea of "becoming" and "potential" is not so modern and new after all. God the Spirit included it in this study of leadership and personality dynamics 2000 years ago! Incidentally, this verb is present tense, so it urges consistent and constant activity in the realm of character development. How God places the emphasis upon one's character and not his talents! A man is not used because of what he can do so much as what he is.

Note the character features in becoming:-

a. Public features.

- 1) Word. Two items should be remembered in this connection. God is interested in what we say (cf. James 3; Heb. 13:15).

In all our social intercourse one is to "become." But then there is something important in how we say things (cf. Col. 4:6). A study of Song of Songs 4:3 and 6:4 will set the pace for proper mouths!

- 2) Conversation. This is the term in the Greek which means "conduct" or "demeanor." Perhaps the word "bearing" best communicates the thought (Gal. 1:13; Eph. 4:22). Paul certainly points out the importance of this in his epistles (cf. 1 Cor. 10:23-33).

b. Private features.

- 1) Love. This is not a term to be tossed about lightly, although it normally is. Some say they love, but their actions deny the very essence of love, namely, the thoughtful consideration of the best interests of the other person. This is not an emotional tide, but a solid decision of the heart (agape love). In what directions will this love be manifested? Three are discernable from the Word: a) Toward God (Luke 10:27). b) Toward believers (1 John 4:7). Toward unbelievers (2 Cor. 5:14). When this kind of character is exhibited, people will get the message that we are really HIS!
- 2) Faith The essence of the Christian life is faith. A child of God believes the revelation of the Lord Himself! The point to the present injunction is that which moves in two ways: a) The life of faith (Heb. 11) and b) the life of faithfulness (cf. 1 Cor. 4:2). The whole Christian community needs a baptism in the truth of faith (2 Cor. 4:18). When the general run of