

Be an Example

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[0 : 00] So we're in 1 Timothy chapter 4. 1 Timothy chapter 4. Paul tells young Timothy, he says, Note this in 1 Timothy 4 verse 12.

Paul urges Timothy this. He says, Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things. Give thyself wholly to them, that thy prophecy may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine. Continue in them. For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. So Paul's writing to this young believer, the apostle Paul writing to Timothy, and he's saying, Meditate upon these things.

[1 : 34] Give yourself wholly to them. He says this is important. Take stock, take heed of this. And he's setting forth a standard. And this standard is still the same standard for us today.

These are the word of God. This is the word of God to Timothy. It's the word of God to you and me. And it's saying, Be an example. God, through Paul, is setting forward a standard here.

And the standard, friends, the standard for the believer is the book. This is the standard. God's standard is given us in the book. It's a pattern, a way of living. It's a model.

We see that Paul tells Timothy to be such, to be an example. And the Bible standard, the Bible measure, is the Bible. The standard for the believer is the book.

So we go to the book. We live by the book. We go to the word of God. And in the word of God, it tells us that we should declare it loud and clear.

[2 : 36] In Isaiah, it says, Cry aloud. Cry aloud. Spare not. Lift up thy voice like a trumpet. Show my people their transgression. And the house of Jacob, their sins.

This standard, this message, is something that should be loud and clear. Should be declared. With authority. There's a real challenge here for us in what Paul tells Timothy.

Because what Paul tells Timothy, God tells to us. To be an example. It tells us here about the qualities that God calls us to in our lives. And the Bible shows us how.

That we are to live. Friends, we're all affected by what we hear, what we see, what we read. And let's face it, we're all influenced by examples.

Now when we say here, be an example, actually, every one of us is an example. Isn't that right? Every one of us is an example. And when Paul tells Timothy, be an example, well, we already are.

[3 : 38] Because we see some are an example that is a good example. Some people are the opposite. They're not a good example. They're a bad example. What is the influence that we have?

Can we be a good example? Paul tells us how. Paul shows us how. And it's applicable to us to be there an example of the believers. Your life sends a powerful message, doesn't it?

Now some people think, well, I'm not a leader. Well, if you're a parent, you're a leader. If you're an older brother, older sister, you're a leader. You're an example. If you're a husband, you're a leader. If you're a mother, a wife, you're a leader. You're an example. People look up to you. If there's someone younger than you, chances are, you're an example to them. You're a grandmother, a grandfather.

We're all examples. We're all living examples. People are watching you. That's the point. And your life sends a powerful message. Even without your trying, you're a model. You've got to go to modelling school.

[4 : 40] You've got to join the model, you know, walk the catwalk. You're a model, in the sense that people are watching you. And you're a pattern. You're an example that people look to. Life is a workshop, and every one of us is kind of a work in progress.

God's developing us in right character. And the word of God tells us that Christ died for our sins at Calvary. And we talked about it earlier today, that we should be dead to sin and alive to God. He calls it to be those living examples that our life is lived out as an example of those spiritual truths that we claim, that we profess. We should live it before others.

A man said, nothing is so infectious as an example. You are an example. There are living examples all around us, and they speak volumes, even if they hardly say anything.

You know, God commends the ant. Such a small, insignificant creature is the ant. He says, consider the ant. Thou sluggard, you know, you lazy person. Consider the ant.

[5 : 44] Look at how they work so hard. They're a great example. Because of their industry. And Benjamin Franklin said, none preachers better than the ants. And she says nothing.

You know, people are watching you. Even though you might not be a loud mouth, people are watching you, how you live. And what you, how you act. Someone said, I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day.

I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way. You know, you're a louder example than a sermon, really, because you're a living letter. You're an example. Here's another saying, don't feel useless.

You can always be used as a bad example. So, we don't want that, do we? But, but honestly, we all can be, at times, we can be a bad example.

Some folks are really good at being a bad example. Now, you are an example, whether you realise it in one way or the other. And we're all an example somehow. You know, just as we have good habits and bad habits that we can, we can learn from people that we watch.

[6 : 48] So, be careful who you learn from. Imagine, you know, if you had a bad driving instructor. Russell's going to get his L-plate sent. He's going to be on the road. And, Russell, make sure you get a good driving instructor, right?

Because, you can pick up some bad driving habits. You know, maybe you might pick up some bad driving habits from Dad or Mum. There you drive it. But, you know, honestly, we can pick up bad habits of driving, but what about living too?

We can pick up bad habits from others. Hopefully, we can pick up some good habits. It's the same spiritually. So, consider, how can we be an example in areas like obeying the law and the honesty? You know, Julie says we should be legalistic when we're driving because we should obey the law. You know, break the law and you pay the penalty. You know, we need to be a good example in obeying the law.

As it were, the laws of the land. And, we need to be a good example in our honesty. Be a good employee. Be one that they say, yeah, I can count on them to show up for their shift and to put the work in.

[7 : 53] Be an example about that, that kind of spirit of Christ, that love, that, of bearing one another's burdens, of, of showing forgiveness, of having patience with other people.

Some people test that, don't they? But we can be a good example. What about in terms of our speaking? Are we a good example? Are we gossip? That's a bad example.

Don't be that. A murmurer, a gossip, rather be one who lifts other's people by what you say. Lift them up, edify, build them up. And we're an example in how we relate to the world.

Do we love the world? Are we filled with just worldly thinking and worldly talking? Or do we actually think, actually I want to be an example of a godly person, of a believer in Jesus?

It says, be an example. And it says, be an example here in six ways. There's six ways we can be an example about Paul tells Timothy. We do well to think about these six things.

[8 : 56] So it's a multiple point sermon here tonight. But firstly, it says, be an example, be thou an example in word. Be an example in word. Now it's the strongest muscle of the body.

You might have some big biceps and triceps and go to the gym. I know some of you have that and you go to those workouts and you're very much more muscular than me. But the biggest muscle is your tongue. And it's the one that gets us into the most trouble, isn't it?

That tongue. That tongue. Watch your language. Watch what you say, your speech. Gain control of your tongue. And that's something tricky too because James says it's a hard thing to tame.

It's like taming a wild animal, isn't it? The tongue. Encourage people with your speech. Speak the truth. Here's what Paul writes in Ephesians 4.

It talks about, verse 25, he talks about putting away lying. You know, that's some speaking to stop doing. Don't tell lies. Tell the truth. He says, speak the truth.

[9 : 55] Rather speak the truth. And let no corrupt communication, it says, proceed out of your mouth but that which is good. He says, let your speech be something that's good.

Something that is to the use of edifying, which means building up. It means building up people, encouraging people, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Paul says, don't use corrupt communication.

And there's someone that I know that I regularly have contact with and it says every time I meet him, he's just got to let a swear word out. It's like, he can't help himself.

He's got corrupt communication. And he's a good Catholic as well. He tells me he's a good Catholic and he claims to be a Christian. But it's something like every time he talks, there's some foul word that comes out of his mouth.

mouth. There's gutter language. There's crude talking. Crass, crude talking. And he just can't help himself because the Bible says out of the heart the man speaks. Out of the heart the man speaks.

[10 : 54] So let's speak what's edifying. Let's speak what's building up people. Let's speak what ministers grace to people. We're a nation of talkers. You can turn on the TV, the radio and hear talk shows and we spend approximately one-fifth of our life talking.

So they say. And if the average person could see a transcript of everything that they say of the previous year, just one year, it would have filled 66 books of 800 pages each.

Wow, imagine that. That's hard to fail then, isn't it? 66 books, 800 pages each, one year. It's been said the average man uses 20,000 words a day.

20,000. Well, the average woman uses 30,000. This is why some men don't mind that their wives have the last word.

They're just glad when she gets to it. Now, honestly, we talk a lot, don't we? And you can often, here's another good saying, you can often save face by keeping the lower part of it shut.

[12 : 04] You know, sometimes better don't speak. Zip the lid, you know? And look, here's a funny story. There's told, you might probably have heard this one, and it's tongue in cheek, of course.

There's a story about a man who joined the monastery, you know? He took a vow of silence for three years, went into the monastery, couldn't talk for three years. But after the first year, the head monk said, you're allowed to say something.

And he asked him, what do you want to say? And the monk said, bed hard. And after the second year, he went before the head monk and was asked again the same question, food cold.

And the third year came, and he went before the head monk, and he said, I quit. And the head monk said, that's not surprising, you haven't done anything except complain since you got here.

Sometimes we might say just a little thing, but it's just negative. And we've got to watch that, don't we? And it can be negative in our talking. And it's not how much we say, but what we say.

[13 : 06] And friends, the Bible does seriously tell us to set a watch before our mouth. The psalmist cried, set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth.

Keep the door of my lips. It's got the sense of guard. We should have a guard there. A sentry, a watch. Somebody who kind of does guard duty in watches, a watchman.

So keep, watch, and a guarding, a keeping of the door of your lips. So we can guard against some things. What should we guard against? Idle words. Against gossip.

Let your yes be yes, and your no be no, is what it says. Don't swear, it says, by heaven or earth.

You know, some people just, often they say things like, oh, I swear it's true.

Well, actually the Bible says don't swear at all. Don't swear at all. In the sense, just let your yes be yes. As a Christian, your word is your bond, isn't it? You should speak, what you speak should be true.

[14 : 04] You don't have to say, cross my heart and hope to die. You don't have to say any of that. Your word should be true. Everything that you say should be true. You don't have to say, make some swearing or an oath or whatever.

And the Bible says, let no corrupt communication come forth out of your mouth. Now, here's some words to avoid saying. So, bear with me for saying them. But just to give us some examples, you might say, oh, that's nothing.

But it's kind of, it's not letting your yes be yes and your no be no. It's kind of using words that are not necessary and which have connotations and can refer to like using God's name in vain or the name

of Jesus in vain, which we know the Bible says we're not to do.

So, bear with me while I'm just going to say them. And these are words to avoid saying. And I can explain if you can question later, if you want to question me, why is that such a big deal?

Words like gosh, golly, darn, gee, gee whiz, ding, dang, dog gone, gosh, darn, geez, heaven, heavens, goodness sakes, good graces, Christ, my oath, for crying out loud.

[15:16] These are all words that they're not necessary words. They're words that are not necessary and they're words that have connotations because they, really, they're kind of like a minced oak is what they call it where it's kind of like, you're kind of swearing but it's kind of a mellow swear word.

Best not to say, there's no point. It doesn't glorify God. You know, our Lord says this in Matthew 12, 36 through 37, He says, you're going to give account of every idle word.

Every idle word you're going to give account of, it says, in the day of judgment. James talks about the tongue as being like a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

James 3, verse 8. Paul says this in Colossians 3, he says, put off all these, get rid of this. He says, anger, wrath, malice, you know those angry words, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Friends, be an example. it says. Paul says to Timothy, God says to you and me, be an example. Be an example. In your words. Here's a good prayer you can pray every day. The prayer that David prayed.

[16:23] In Psalm 19, verse 14, he says this, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

So, number one, go off through to the first point. Be an example in word. Be an example be thou an example of the believers in word.

Second one, it says, be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation. In conversation. Now, this word conversation, it means conduct. It means the way you live.

It means your behavior, your integrity. It's your conduct. It's what we do. How we live. It's been said, if you want the world to hear, to heed, put your creed into your deed.

If you want the world to heed, to listen, put your creed into your deed. Now, if you actually, what you live is how you should believe. You should put your faith into action, in other words.

[17:24] You should put the faith that you talk about into your shoes and walk it out. Live it out.

James says this, he says, who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you, let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

James says, show it out. Show out that good conversation. Show out that good way of living. Your way of life, it says something. It shows something. Hopefully, meekness of wisdom.

Meekness of wisdom. Christianity revolutionizes your lifestyle. Our conversation, how we live, it should match up with our testimony. Paul says this in Philippians 1, 27.

He says, only let your conversation, your way of life, he says, let it be as it becomes the gospel of Christ. Think of your conduct as a conduct that is becoming of a Christian.

Is it conduct that's becoming? Is it appropriate? Is it fitting of the gospel of Christ? If you profess to be a Christian, it's how you're living matching what you profess you believe.

[18:35] Now, think of today. Even AFL footy players have got a certain conduct. They do something that's, you know, gross, or, you know, the media gets hold of something about their lives, and they put it on the front page, and they get exposed, and they fail the expected conduct of a footy player.

Honestly. And we see that in so many secular settings these days, where there's this super high code of conduct, that even the world tries to, you know, fulfil that.

When politicians, you know, they do something wrong, and their, you know, their name is marked as conduct that is not becoming. How much rather for you and me that we profess to be the children of the living God, how much more should our conduct be becoming of the gospel?

We that profess faith in Christ, the Saviour of the world, there's a holiness there that's called for, and a partness, a separateness, there's a conviction of sin. Friends, holiness is something that is becoming, it's something that's appropriate, something that is praiseworthy, and holiness is something that's vital, it's godly, it's something that we should aspire to.

The word holy is used 600 plus times in the Bible. Think of that. That's important, isn't it? Holiness is important. It's used over 600 times in the Bible.

[20 : 00] So be an example, it says, be an example of the believers in word, in conversation. And the third one is charity. Be an example in your charity.

The fruit of the spirit is love, it says. And everything else flows from that love. And when Paul says to Timothy, be an example in charity, it's that word love, it's agape, it's God's love, it's the love of Christ that took him to the cross, it's the love that the Bible speaks, greater love has no man than this, than a man lay down his life for his friends.

That's the love of Jesus that took him to the very cross to pay for our sin, to take our penalty, to freely give his life, that we can know through his sacrifice our forgiveness.

And that's the kind of love, self-sacrificial love, it's unconditional love, it's love, it's decisive love. He determined that love. He freely gave that love. And it's been said, love is the Christian's ID card. It should identify us, that we that love the Lord, that we should be a loving people, that we should be filled with God's love. Jesus says, love one another as I have loved you.

[21 : 13] How much more loving can we be than he that has loved us to the extent of giving his life for us? And the fruit of the Spirit is love.

Friends, that's what we need to aspire to. Now, here's a little funny saying that says, God wants spiritual fruit, not religious nuts. He wants us to be something godly fruit, something that's fruit, there's something that people want that.

Oh, I want to pick some of that fruit here. Pick some of that fruit out of your life. Fruit is something you want to take and receive from someone. You see the fruit of their life and you say, I want some of that.

I want to taste that. I want that for myself. That's what we as Christians ought to be, that we've got fruit, not religious nuts. You know, that sense of, that love of God should be forthcoming.

God is love. It's his very nature. And we should be an example, it says, in love. He wills that we abound in love. It says, 1 Thessalonians 3, verse 12, the Lord make you to increase and abound in love, one toward another and toward all men, even as we do toward you.

[22 : 24] Our Lord wants you to have that heart of love. You know, friends, when we've got that heart of love, we'll look on others as Jesus looks on us. We'll look on them with compassion and care and consideration.

He wants us to increase and abound in love towards one another, believers, and towards all men. But we are marked by his love. Friends, he wants us to have this heart of love.

Be an example in love. We see another example that we are to be an example in spirit. Paul says, be an example in spirit.

It's talking about the heart of man. It's talking about the very core of your being, that nature that you are, your spirit. And how is it that you seek to please? Do you seek to please the God you love, that you have that spiritual nature?

Are we in the Word? You know, grace, God's grace teaches us how to live. It says here, Paul writes in Titus 2, for the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

[23 : 28] And this grace of God teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. There's a spirit that is different about we that know our Saviour.

It ought to be so, that we would have a spirit that is different, that we have a spirit that is in tune with God's spirit, that the spirit of Christ would be seen in us, that when people see you in your setting, in your workplace, in your life, in your everyday life, that they see Jesus in you.

They see the spirit of Christ in you. That he can be clearly seen, the character of Christ, his forgiveness, his compassion, his grace. And friends, we're all learning those lessons of grace, this grace that saves, the grace of God, it says, the grace, in other words, it's the loving kindness of God, it's his mercy, that he would even extend, the gift of salvation, that we can say, yes, Lord, I believe.

It's grace that gives us the opportunity to claim his gift. It's grace that extends it and offers it. It's grace. And it's grace that teaches us to believe.

It's grace that teaches us to grow, to deny ungodliness, to have a different spirit. It's like we're entering a new school. It's the school of Christ. And grace teaches us.

[24 : 53] That's what we need to get that teaching from God and his spirit. The Bible talks about guarding your spirit, your mind, keeping that right spirit, that attitude.

It talks about having a cleansing. In 2 Corinthians 7, verse 1, Paul talks about these promises. He's talking about the promises of God. He says, having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Friends, the Bible shows us how we can be clean inside and out as a cleansing of the filthiness of the flesh and the spirit, as a knowing of God, to fear him, to love him, to be in awe of him, the wonder of who he is.

The Bible talks about thinking about pure things, about good things, about godly things. Guard what goes into your mind, you know, through the ear gate and the eye gate. Put that sentry there, that watchman.

Put those guards there, that guard what goes in and be wary because the Bible talks about different spirits. Look, there's different spirits. There's what's called the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

[26 : 06] You know, there's all kinds of religious philosophies and different religions. We've got to discern what's the spirit of truth. What is the truth? How do we know what is the truth? It's by the word of truth.

That's what it's called. It's called the word of truth, the Bible. And there's a sense where we need to guard against these other spirits that are contrary to the spirit of God, the spirit of truth.

It's why we need to be like a spiritual goalie. I know we've got a soccer champ here today. We've got to be like a goalie, guarding that goal, as it were, deflecting the junk and the evil that wants to come in into the neck of your mind.

Be a goalie and stop those things from going into your mind. All right? It's a good thing to do. And so, friends, be an example, it says. And it goes on to say to be an example in faith.

What says to Timothy, be an example in faith? Now you could say faithfulness is that faith that God gives us such a blessing to believe, to trust, to know Him.

[27 : 13] And, friends, this is the distinction between all other religions and biblical Christianity. And I know I've said this before, that all other religions say do.

It's about doing good works. But the Bible, Christianity, says done. Actually, everything was done at the cross. Everything was done for you to be saved.

It was done. Other religions would say you've got to do this, do that, do this, do the other, to somehow deserve heaven, to deserve, to achieve, to realise eternal life, to please God.

It's not to say we shouldn't do right, but that's not the saving part. The saving part is that He has done. When He said by the cross, it is finished. You have done everything to save your soul.

He's done everything to save you. And you simply have to trust that which He has done. It says, therefore, being justified by faith, faith, we have peace with God.

[28 : 18] Faith plus nothing equals peace with God. Faith, faith in Christ your Saviour, faith in Him, in what He has done at the cross, it brings peace with God.

It's through our Lord Jesus Christ. And there's a sense where faith is something that grows, that faith that manifests, that faith that is evident, it shows, it shows through.

You know, we see the stories of the men and women of God, for example, Hebrews chapter 11, that by faith they did this, by faith they did that. They were godly examples that stood as an example for us to follow.

And you can be an overcomer by faith. You can have victory in your life by faith. You can be as those men and women that it speaks of, we can be two, we can be counted in their number.

When the saints go marching in, I want to be there in that number. And it's by faith that you'll be in that number. That's what makes us different. So we've seen, as we've seen so far, Paul says this, like no man despised by you.

[29 : 23] Timothy, it appears he was a young man at this time. Some would say a young man might be 40. It's kind of a bit of conjecture how old Timothy actually was. But you know, you might feel you're a young person here tonight.

Russell, we've got to pick on you again. You're probably the youngest here tonight. But the Bible says don't let any men despise you just because you're young. You can be an example. Russell, you can be an example to the rest of us.

That's what Paul's saying. He's saying to Timothy, even though you're a young man, you can be an example. It doesn't matter how old you are, or how much you know, or how much you think you know.

He says be an example of the believers. He says this we've read so far in word, what you say, in your conversation, how you live, in your charity, that love, in spirit, be a spiritual man, a spiritual woman, in faith, know the Saviour and live like it.

And number six, he says be an example in purity. Purity is something precious, it's something special, it's something that should be cherished. The Bible urges us to a purity thing.

[30 : 31] And we can know that, even though there might be some things that we're not so proud of, there's times we might have failed, and there might be some defilement.

Friends, it's like walking through a muddy field sometimes, isn't it, this world, and you get the mud in your boots and on the wellies, and you walk it, it takes it into the house.

But the Bible speaks how we can be cleansed. It talks about a cleansing from defilement. There's a sense where Jesus can clean your heart, he can clean your inside, out.

It talks about if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. There's a wonderful cleansing you can know, even though we see through the Bible that there's people that were defiled, they would have been looked down on by the world, prostitutes and people that were blatantly obviously sinful, that God says that they can have new life.

They can be just like they've never sinned. They can be cleansed and made pure and holy before God by the cleansing work that he affects. And so the Bible commands purity.

[31 : 46] And you might say, I'm dirty, I've done some things that make me dirty and feel dirty inside. God can cleanse your heart today. Psalm 51 talks about David. He committed adultery.

This was a vile, abhorrent sin. It was an unfaithfulness to his life. It was a vile stain on his character. And yet God said that you can be whiten and snow.

That you can be cleansed. I'm ad-libbing a bit because I can't think of the exact words there. But it talks about how he calls for God to cleanse him.

He talks about I acknowledge my sin. It's ever before me. He says purge me. In other words, clean me. I shall be washed. Wash me. And I shall be whiter than snow.

If you've ever seen snow, it's white. You've got to put your goggles on, your sunglasses on when you see the dazzling brilliance of white snow. That's how white and clean you can be in terms of the character of your heart.

[32 : 46] You can be made clean. And there's a purity you can know. By faith in Christ, you can clean your heart, make you brand new inside. The Bible says we should hate evil.

Not compromise with it. Don't mess with it. Don't toy with it. Friends, this world is constantly this toxic stream, this toxic river, this barrage of that which would soil our thinking and our mind.

It's constant, isn't it? The world's media. The way the world advertises products now, it's like it's muck and filthy and vile.

But God wants us to know a cleaning, a cleansing. And it's as we hate evil, as the Bible talks about hating that which is evil, abhorring it, which means to hate it.

It says hate that and clean for that which is good. Hate that which is sin. Renounce it. In your personal life, aim for sexual purity until marriage.

[33 : 50] It's a good godly aspiration and God will help you to affect that, to keep pure and right, to avoid immorality. Don't go the world's way, go God's way. Honour God with your life.

You can be a pure person before God. You can make that decision. And how can we realise that? The Bible shows us how. It says how does a young man cleanse his way?

Taking him to the word of God. That's how. That's how you can be clean, young person, older person. How can we clean our way? By taking him to the word of God.

You know, the world rates movies PG-13, PG or whatever, whatever, much worse. But God rates things as right or wrong. You might say, oh, it's just got a little bit of swearing, it's just got a little bit of nudity, it's just got a little bit of this or that.

You know, they just use the Lord's name, three or four times in this movie, so it's kind of not so bad. Well, God says it's either right or it's wrong. That's how God rates movies.

[34 : 52] It's either godly or it's ungodly. It's either righteous or it's unrighteous. God's kind of wisdom is pure.

What are we watching? What are we taking in? What are we feeding on? Is it pure? The Bible says that the wisdom that's from above is firstly, it's pure. It's firstly pure. That's peaceful, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy, good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy.

The wisdom that is from above, God's kind of wisdom, is first, it's pure. It's a wise thing to want to be pure. You'll have no regrets to want to be pure in your walk with God.

Peter talks about having pure minds in 2 Peter 3 verse 1. He talks about loving one another with a pure heart, fervently. You can have a pure mind and a pure heart. Wow, how do you get there? It's by the grace of God. Friends, as you seek to know Him, to love Him, to walk with Jesus, He'll help you in that vein, in that task, that object.

[36 : 01] We talked about this morning, about crucifying the flesh. You know, it's not a cultable thing, but crucifixion is needed. It's what we called to, that sense of, I want to put that away, I want to die to that, that which is of the ungodly way of living.

I want to be Christ's, I want to belong to Jesus, I want to please Him. It talks about, the Word of God talks about how there's none holy as the Lord. God's holiness is so awesome and absolute.

There is none like our Lord, our God, and yet we're called to be like Him. We ought to aspire to that. And it says that we, if we're in the flesh, we cannot please God.

So it's only by the grace of God, isn't it? I know it's a battle that's within every man, every woman, that sense of how can I overcome this inclination to do wrong, to do, to fail God, to dishonor Him, get out of the flesh.

Yet, God helping you, say, look, I don't, I'm going to, if I recognise the flesh, I want to steer away from the flesh. I'd rather please God. That's what I want. That's what matters to me, to please Him.

[37 : 17] And that's a great aspiration for your life. To be an example, it says, at the last part here, it says, let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Have that sense, those senses to say, actually, come to think of it, that's right, and that's wrong.

Have that sense of, yeah, I'm going to discern, yeah, that's right for me, that's a good thing for me, that's a wrong thing for me, I'm going to avoid that, I'm going to depart from that.

I'm not going to hang around that, that crowd, I'm going to steer away from that. So, friends, we see, again, getting back to the verse we started with, Paul says this, and God says this to you, to me, he says, be thou an example, be thou an example, wow, and you are, you are an example, whether you realise it or not, you are an example, one way or the other.

We can't help but be an example, we've got younger, I've got younger sisters, you might have younger sisters or brothers, I've got children, grandchildren, and they look up to you, don't they?

We're an example. Wow, that's something that's really, that's significant, isn't it? But how we live, it's not just impacting ourselves, there's people watching us, people who work with us who say, oh, he's a Christian, look what he does, look what she does, she says he's a Christian.

[38 : 43] They're quick to point that out, to pick on you or no. Look, let me just go a little bit further, just a few short further points, we've seen how to be an example, and then Paul says this to Timothy, he says some extra things to take note of, in verse 13 he says this, he says give attendance to reading.

Now, friends, we can read lots of things, we can watch lots of things, but there's one thing we should read, it's the Bible, alright, it's God's love letter to you, it's his message, it's in black and white and red, it's the word of God, it's his words, and Paul says, Timothy, give attendance to this, he says attend to this, devote yourself to this, determine each day, give yourself to reading, how do we, how do we know, how can we let God speak to us, through his word, that, some people blab on and say, oh, the spirit told me to do this, and the spirit told me to do that, but actually, what does the word of God say, that's what counts, it's not what we might, you know, it's not to say we can have inclinations, oh, God's led me to certain things, but we have to measure it by this, this is the absolute measure, the Bible calls it a plumb line, so it's straight up and down, it's just, there's no flip flopping, this is straight up and down, it's the plumb and it's the word of God,

God speaks through his word, the Bible, it's got the sense that when Paul says to Timothy, give attendance to reading, it's got the sense to listen to it, as it's read out loud, the Bible says, faith cometh by hearing, faith comes by hearing, you might say, I'm not a believer yet, listen to this and you'll become a believer, it says, faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God, so good to read the word, and it's good for you as a Christian, good to read it out, read it out, at home, read it out loud, hear it, it's not then just words on a page, you're hearing it too, it's reinforcing it, read it, memorise it, obey it, there's a recommended diet for the Christian, a minimum daily intake, you know, you need a spiritual diet, I need one, a minimum daily intake, get those nutrients, those things that will help you to grow in your faith, and many are stunted in their spiritual growth because they're not paying attention to reading, they're not feeding on it, and we're so blessed these days, aren't we, with all

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MP3s, and ways you can tune in on your computer, or you can play something on your audio system, you can get the Bible on audio, you can listen to it, even when you're just driving, whatever the spare times, you can put it on, and you can grow, you can pay attention, you can give attendance to reading.

D.L. Moody said, the Bible was not given to increase our knowledge, but to change our lives. That's what it does, you pay attention, you give attendance to reading, you pay attention to the Bible, reading it, it's going to change your life.

[41 : 50] And it's been said there's only two ways to study the Bible, studying it with your mind made up, or studying it to let it make up your mind. Go to the Bible with that openness to receive God's Word.

One of the telling things about those that were saved, they received the Word. Receive it. Let your brain, your mind be a sponge and soak it up. Now this is not man's teaching, it's straight from God. That's why when we go witnessing, we like to actually read it, because faith comes by hearing. It's not what men say, it's not what our opinion or point of view is, in a way that's irrelevant, as even what they might believe or think or say.

It's what does God say. That's what counts, that's what matters. So give attendance to reading. Also secondly, give attendance to exaltation. That's what you're doing tonight. You're coming to a place where you can hear the preaching, where you can hear the sound of the Word of God as it's declared.

You can encourage, you can receive encouragement. Give attendance to exaltation. Exaltation means encouragement. It speaks about that coming alongside of God's comfort, of that encouragement.

[42 : 58] The Bible says encourage one another, exhort one another. Now when you come in fellowship like this, it's not meant to be a monologue with me doing it all, but the sense where we encourage one another.

That's what we want. That's what we want to foster here, that we can give and receive encouragement and exaltation. Now a pastor was once asked to define faithful attendance at worship.

You know, sort of exaltation, it means kind of getting together. It means kind of gathering, where the word is. And this pastor said this, all that I ask is that we apply the same standards of faithfulness to our church activities that we would in other areas of our life.

That doesn't seem too much to ask. The church after all is concerned about faithfulness. So consider these examples. If your car started one out of three times, would you consider it faithful? I know Peter had a car like that, didn't you? You're getting behind and you wonder is it going to start today or not? If the paper boy, that's kind of an old example, if you still get your paper delivered, but if the paper boy skipped Monday and Thursdays, would they be missed?

[44 : 05] If you show up at work two or three times a month, would your boss call you faithful? If your refrigerator quit a day now and then, would you excuse it and say, oh well, it works most of the time?

If your water heater greets you with cold water one or two mornings a week while you're in the shower, would you call it faithful? If you missed a couple of mortgage payments in a year's time, would your bank say, oh well, 10 out of 12 isn't bad?

So if you miss worship out of 10 meetings, only often enough to say you're interested, but not often enough to get involved, are you faithful? And we can all think, how can I give attendance to exhortation?

To fellowship, in other words. Paul says this further, he says, give attendance to doctrine, to doctrine, and he underlines it later in verse 16, where it talks about take hand to thyself and unto the doctrine.

We can get doctrine from all kinds of sources, especially these days, you know, there's the wacko preachers on every channel, in terms of there's lots of internet preachers out there, there's lots of teachings, there's lots of doctrine out there.

[45 : 19] We've got to make sure it's sound doctrine. Is it Bible, or is it false doctrine? The Bible talks, Paul talks in the same book about winds of doctrine, kind of blow people off course and just carry people here and there.

So, give attendance to doctrine, make sure it's sound doctrine, Bible doctrine, and you've got to test that, test me, test this church, is it Bible? Are we actually biblical, or are we getting off track? Challenge me, if we fail, we want to be biblical, we want to have biblical doctrine, we want to have true doctrine, true teaching in other words. And Paul adds this last time, he says, neglect not the gift that is in thee.

How easy it is to get neglectful, you've got a gift, use it, use it. Say, I volunteer, and we need a bus driver at the moment, we need a bus driver to take over from Tony, we need someone we can count on, morning and night, ideally.

How easy it is to be neglectful of what we can do, what we're able to do, what does the word of God call us to do? Don't neglect your gift, whatever you can use for the glory of God, use it.

[46 : 29] I want to inspire you and encourage you to do something as a result of this message. Friends, we've seen, Paul says this, he says, Timothy, let no man despise thy youth.

He says, be an example, be an example, offer believers. Friends, you're an example, you are an example, be a good one. Amen. An example in word, what you say, in conversation, how you learn, in charity, be that loving person that reaches out, not a whingy, moaning, bitter person, be a loving person, show the love of Jesus, be an example, it says, in charity, in love, be an example in spirit, have that right spirit, that godly spirit, that godly spirit, be a spiritual man, a spiritual woman, let people say, yes, she has the spirit of god in them, be an example in your faith, that you don't just say you believe, it shows, they can see you believe, impurity, that you're living right, that you're keeping clear of that which is doubtful, that you're saying it's not, whether it's PG or G or whatever, is it right or is it wrong?

Does it please my god? would it be to his glory, to his honour? Keep in doubt it, don't touch it, purity, that's something special, isn't it?

And then give attendance to some things, friends, and I'm preaching to the converted, you're here, give attendance, attend, attend church, attend, attend to the reading, get the word and read it, read it, read it, and keep on reading it, and it'll change your heart, give attendance to reading, give attendance to exhortation, encourage, get encouraged, be where you can be encouraged, be where you can read and study, where you can get together in fellowship, where you can exhort one another, give attendance to doctrine, let it be sound doctrine, let it be teaching, yeah, that's Bible, there's no question, that's not airy-fairy, that's not some extra biblical so called prophecy and some newfound kind of wild idea, some mad kind of teaching that's got nothing to do with the Bible, that's Bible, I want to give attendance to sound Bible doctrine and neglect not the gift that is in there, friends you've got a gift, God's gifted you, every believer has gifts of one kind or another, ways that you can minister, ways that you can bless, ways that you can be a blessing, don't neglect that, volunteer say

I want to be, I'm available, let's pray, Lord we thank you that your grace saves, that we can trust your wonderful grace that took you to the cross to save a soul and to make heaven our home, we pray each one might know that personally and say yes Lord I believe Jesus died on the cross for my sin, I trust him, I want to be his, to know him and to receive that gift and by faith I do receive it, and Lord for everyone here that we can grow and learn how can we be that good and godly example that you help us to be such a people for your praise, in Jesus name, Amen.