

“A Good Example”, 1 Timothy 4:11–16
Pastor Shawn Newberry, May 17, 2026

Main Idea:

A faithful spiritual leader is marked by godly character, devotion to God’s Word, and perseverance in truth.

I. Be an Example (vv. 11–12)

“Set the believers an example...”

Paul’s Charge to Timothy

- Command and teach these things
- Spiritual leadership requires both:
 - **Command** — declaring God’s authority
 - **Teaching** — explaining truth clearly

Nine Imperatives in Five Verses

- Command, teach, Let no one despise you, set an example, devote yourself, do not neglect, practice, keep watch, persist.

Present Active Imperative

The commands carry the idea:

- “Keep doing this”
- “Continue in this”
- “Make this your regular practice”

Five Areas of Example

1. Speech
2. Conduct
3. Love (Agape)
4. Faith
5. Purity

Key Truth

“A leader’s greatest platform is a transformed life.”

II. Be Devoted to the Word (vv. 13–15)

“Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture...”

The Calling of the Minister

1. Read the Word

- Public reading implies private devotion
- Ministry begins with personal saturation in Scripture

2. Exhort the People

- Encourage
- Implore
- Shepherd hearts with truth

3. Teach Sound Doctrine

- Clear thinking produces clear teaching
- “Muddy thinking leads to muddy speaking”

Steward Your Gift

“Do not neglect the gift you have...”

- Timothy had a God-given calling
- Gifts must be developed, not neglected
- Danger: resting on your laurels

Pursue Intentional Growth

“Practice these things, immerse yourself in them...”

- Ministry is not a hobby
- Growth should be visible over time
- Faithful ministry requires:
 - Devotion
 - Discipline
 - Continual growth

III. Be Faithful to the End (v. 16)

“Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching...”

Two Things Timothy Must Guard

1. Himself

- Heart
- Motives
- Conduct
- Spiritual life

2. His Teaching

The Call to Persevere

“Persist in this...”

- Continue
- Remain
- Abide

The Result

- Authentic faith becomes visible
- People see the gospel lived out
- Faithfulness impacts both the leader and the hearers

Closing Application

A Good Example Is:

- A life that matches the message
- A leader devoted to Scripture
- A believer who faithfully perseveres

When our words and actions reflect one another, the gospel becomes visible to the world.

In 1 Timothy 4:11–16, the Apostle Paul calls Timothy to be “a good example” by living a life that reflects the gospel he preaches. Paul emphasizes that spiritual leadership is not built merely on talent, personality, or age, but on godly character, devotion to God’s Word, and faithful perseverance. Timothy is commanded to model Christlikeness in his speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity while remaining devoted to the public reading and teaching of Scripture. Paul reminds him not to neglect the spiritual gifts God has entrusted to him, but to continually practice and grow in them so others can clearly see spiritual maturity developing in his life. Finally, Timothy is urged to watch both his life and doctrine carefully and to persist faithfully through difficulties, because authentic, enduring faith has a powerful impact on both the believer and those who hear the gospel from that faithful messenger.