

Building Great People

Spiritual Progress Over Perfection – Part 3

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Rev. Dr. Tony Soldano

Introduction

You do not have to be perfect, but you must progress. If you are growing you will not have to publish it, it will be evident. God expects that you will progress spiritually and grow into Christ. Our goal should be fruitfulness instead of success. Paul provides Timothy with wisdom and instruction that will ensure progress that is evident to all.

Main Passage for reading

1 Timothy 4:11-16

¹¹ These things **command and teach**. ¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an **example** to the believers in word, in **conduct**, in **love**, in **spirit**, in **faith**, in **purity**. ¹³ Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. ¹⁵ Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. ¹⁶ Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Main Points

- 1) Be a *practitioner not a perfectionist – command and teach these things*.
- 2) God expects that you will progress.
- 3) Pay attention to yourself.

Spiritual Progression

1 Timothy 4: 1, 7, 10

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,

⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train (exercise) yourself for godliness.

¹⁰ For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

- The pursuit of godliness takes hard work - Paul uses strong verbs here to communicate this point.

1 Timothy 4:11-12

¹¹ These things **command and teach**. ¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an **example** to the believers in word, in **conduct**, in **love**, in **spirit**, in **faith**, in **purity**.

Timothy - Background

1. He was under fierce persecution and pressure.
2. He was young and perhaps inexperienced - his youth had come under challenge and perhaps even attack.
3. His mother was Jewish, and his father was Greek – that did not help him on either side of the equation with people who wanted to oppose him:
 - This required a plan - focus, time energy, scheduled – balance.

4. Paul said “command” and “teach” these things.

- a. Paul told Timothy to be an example - he challenged his spiritual son to have a command over these things first and foremost.
- b. EXAMPLE = pattern, manner of living, model, imitation
 - i. Lifestyle
 - ii. “Practice these things.”
 - iii. How serious are you about this?
 - iv. You need a stronger internal motivation!!!
 - v. Verse 13, 14 and 15 are connected – “preach the Word.”
 - vi. Example – tupos - From G5180; a die (as struck), that is, (by implication) a stamp or scar; by analogy a shape, that is, a statue, (figuratively) style or resemblance; specifically, a sampler (“type”), that is, a model (for imitation) or instance (for warning): - en- (ex-) ample, fashion, figure, form, manner, pattern, print. Total KJV occurrences: 16

1Timothy 4:13-14

¹³ Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.

Give attention to:

- Reading – growth in knowledge
- Exhortation – encouragement and building of others
- Doctrine – the right beliefs
- Gifting – to be stirred up.

1Timothy 4:15

¹⁵ Meditate (practice) on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your **progress** may be evident to all.

- **Practice (meditate, be diligent)** these things, **immerse** yourself in them, so that all may see your **progress. (Advancement, forward movement, maturity)**
- **Progress** - prok-op-ay' - From G4298; progress, that is, **advancement** (subjectively or objectively): furtherance, profit. Total KJV occurrences: 3
 - a. That all may see your **progress**:
 - i. Be addicted to progress.
 - ii. Get angry at no progress in your life.
 - iii. Self-talk – get mad at yourself, no progress is unacceptable.
 - iv. Practice excellence and virtue.
 - v. You have options - you always have options.
 - vi. Your target should be maximum impact.
 - vii. God expects that you will progress in your spiritual maturity.
 - viii. Create spiritual rhythm in your life.

1Timothy 4:16

¹⁶ **Take heed to yourself** and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

¹⁶ *Keep a close watch on yourself (take heed/warning) and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers. (ESV)*

- Constant alertness – always be on guard.
- **"The right beliefs without a godly life has no value, while a godly life without the right beliefs is impossible"**

- **WARNING – Paul issues a warning...**



1. Take heed to yourself – i.e., pay attention to yourself

a. That is why Paul admonished Timothy, “Take heed unto thyself....” This phrase “take heed” comes from the Greek word “epecho”, which is a compound of the words “ep” and “echo”.

- “ep” means “on”
- “echo” means “to have or to hold”
- When these two words are compounded into one word, it means **to grab hold of something very tightly**. In other words, the word “epecho” describes **an extremely firm grip**.



- Paul’s words to Timothy could be translated:

“Get ahold of yourself....” “Make your own spiritual life a priority....” “Don’t get so busy that you forget you have spiritual needs too....”

Final Thought

Wisdom Keys

Our natural side/life is tied into our spiritual – it has an impact on us

- Our sleep, or hydration, what we eat, our exercise - this is all connected to maximum impact in our conduct.
- We fool ourselves when we think that these habits and lifestyles do not impact our spirituality.
- Your vertical relationship with God must first be right and then your horizontal life will come into alignment.
- Live life from the inside out and not from the outside in.
- Are you living life without margins? When margins go down stress goes up.

Group Questions and Discussion

- 1) Is it possible to be constantly alert? How can we do this practically? List 3 ways.
- 2) List a few ways that you have been despised in your life. How did you overcome it?
- 3) Identify 5 things that you are doing in your natural life that impacts your spiritual walk.
- 4) How are you an example to others? Have you identified those that you impact? Who is in your sphere of influence? Who has been assigned to you?
- 5) What are seducing spirits? What are they teaching? What are doctrines of devils?
- 6) What do you need to take command of in your own life?
- 7) What do you need to get a firm grip on in this season?