

## Save Yourself and Your Hearers: The Relationship between the Minister's Sanctification and Ministry Effectiveness in 1 Timothy

By Timothy Hughes<sup>1</sup>

The Pastoral Epistles transport the reader to another world: a world whose government was Roman and whose culture was Greek; a world of competing worldviews, competing theologies, and competing armies; and a world which was being confronted with a new faith. This faith, which was grounded in expectation nourished by the Hebrew Scriptures and catalyzed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, had moved beyond the narrow bounds of Palestine to establish itself in the heart of the Roman Empire. Its growth and spread were due in large part to the Lord's remarkable use of its most able emissary, the Apostle Paul. At the end of his ministry, Paul was headed toward his final confrontation with the power of that Empire—one that would take his life. Other apostles had already paid the ultimate price for their witness to the living Christ. Paul himself had already experienced years of imprisonment, numerous trials, and eventual acquittal in the imperial court. Released, he continued his critical mission. But his time was limited. Continuing a correspondence ministry that had already produced numerous treasured epistles to Christian assemblies, he addressed letters to his close ministerial associates Timothy and Titus.<sup>2</sup> Later, imprisoned for the last time and facing imminent death, Paul once again wrote to Timothy. These three letters are the last of Paul's preserved writings; and their contents are revealing.

A study of the Pastorals' contents confirms that the same concern motivates these letters as motivates the more typical Pauline letters: a consuming passion to see God glorified through the spiritual health and steadfastness of the churches.<sup>3</sup> In the Pastorals, Paul communicates spiritual goals for those who will be influenced by the ministry of his delegates and the other leaders of the

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<sup>2</sup> Most conservative interpreters believe that Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment (recorded in Acts) and enjoyed a period of ministry before he was once again imprisoned by Rome and executed. The difficulty of matching the historical references of the Pastoral Epistles with anything in the Acts account of Paul's ministry, as well the weight of early tradition, both favor this theory. Many have questioned Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles. Many able defenses for the Pauline authorship of these epistles exist; and in this article Pauline authorship will be assumed rather than argued.

<sup>3</sup> "Perceiving that Paul was a missionary helps us understand his letters. They serve as pastoral words to churches he established to ensure that they would stand in the faith. Paul did not conceive of his mission as successful if his converts initially believed his gospel and then lapsed. His work was in vain unless his converts persisted in the faith (1 Thess. 3:1–10). Thus, his letters were part of his missionary work, written to encourage believers to continue in their newfound faith." Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006), 39.

congregation. At the same time, these letters speak directly to those called to spiritual leadership and contain a significant amount of spiritual instruction aimed specifically at Timothy and Titus. The close proximity of these two emphases in the Pastoral Epistles raises an important question: *How do the Pastoral Epistles present the relationship between a minister's personal sanctification and the effectiveness of his ministry?*

In 1 Timothy, Paul frequently addresses the personal spiritual life of the minister.<sup>4</sup> He includes extensive teaching regarding the minister's spiritual life and character, instructions for the Christian minister's public ministry, and ideal spiritual outcomes for those under his leadership. The material dealt with under the heading of *sanctification* in this article involves teaching regarding the minister's spiritual life, character, and conduct.<sup>5</sup>

First Timothy also expresses important ministry goals, indicating the ideal outcomes of ministry.<sup>6</sup> These apostolic goals form benchmarks for measuring ministry effectiveness in scriptural terms. Three basic categories of ministry goals emerge in 1 Timothy: apostolic expectations for ministry, ethical/spiritual goals for believers, and missional goals for the church. Each category of ministry goals addresses a different dimension of ministry. (1) Apostolic expectations for ministry—in other words, *God's* expectations for ministry as communicated through his apostolic spokesman Paul—*address the Godward dimension of ministry*. (2) Ethical/spiritual goals for believers *address the effect of a man's ministry on God's people*. And (3) missional goals *address an outward-focused dimension of ministry to reach the lost*. Formulating these together into a contextual benchmark, effective ministry may be defined as ministry that meets apostolic expectations for right ministry, ministry that results in meeting ethical or spiritual goals in the life of the congregation, and ministry that advances the gospel mission to lost people.

*The letter's side-by-side presentation of personal spiritual exhortations for the minister and apostolic goals for public ministry suggests a strong correlation between the minister's sanctification and the effectiveness of his ministry.* In 1 Timothy, each of these three categories is clearly connected material on the sanctification of the minister. In addition to these *explicit* connections, the letter contains *implicit* connections. By presenting these numerous connections between a minister's sanctification and apostolic ministry goals, 1 Timothy indicates a close relationship between a minister's personal sanctification and his ministry effectiveness.

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<sup>4</sup> The word *minister* evokes various images. In this study, *minister* is not restricted to vocational pastors. The Pastoral Epistles address Timothy and Titus in their role as apostolic delegates but also contain a great deal of teaching regarding the life and character of other congregational leaders. *Minister* serves as an umbrella term encompassing biblical church leadership.

<sup>5</sup> In this study, *sanctification* stands for *progressive sanctification*. Positional or definitive sanctification is a key biblical teaching to which some in recent years have called needed attention, but for the most part the material treated under the heading of sanctification in this study will be descriptive of the minister's *progressive* sanctification.

<sup>6</sup> These goals provide a contextual standard for determining ministry effectiveness. *Effectiveness* is achieved when ministry accomplishes its scriptural goals. In the Pastorals, Paul's apostolic direction to Timothy and Titus makes clear the ideal outcomes of ministry. In this article, ministry that meets contextually articulated apostolic *goals* for ministry is considered *effective* ministry.

*Sanctified for an Approved Ministry—  
Effectiveness Measured by Apostolic Expectation and Evaluation*

In 1 Timothy, Paul repeatedly makes the connection between a minister's spiritual life and proper public ministry as defined by apostolic expectation and direction. These ministry expectations may be divided into two broad categories. First, Paul directly expresses a number of ministry expectations for the man of God. Second, he uses positive descriptive terminology to identify ministry that is worthy of approbation. Both of these subcategories are connected with the minister's sanctification in 1 Timothy.

Connections between the Minister's Sanctification  
and General Apostolic Expectations for Ministry

In 1 Timothy, Paul sets high expectations for the public ministry of the man of God. The Christian minister must refute false doctrine and teach true doctrine and right behavior (1:3–4; 3:2; 4:6, 7, 11, 16; 5:7; 6:2, 14, 17–19, 20). As part of this effort, he is to give careful attention to the primary means of public instruction for the gathered congregation (4:13; 5:17). He is to exemplify Christian conduct and spiritual progress (4:12, 15). He must be able to care properly for God's church (3:5). He is to demonstrate both caution and courage in the church discipline of leadership (5:19–20), all without partiality (5:21). Not only should he seek to build accountable leadership for God's church, but he must also exercise caution in the selection and ordination of candidates for church ministry (5:22). Several of these passages clearly connect apostolic ministry expectations and the minister's sanctification.

*A Good Household Manager—3:4–5*

By his sanctified and capable leadership in the home, a candidate for overseer gains experience and credibility to care for God's household. "He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)" (3:4–5). According to verse 4, a qualified overseer is a successful household manager whose children testify by their behavior to the capable and godly parenting of their father. The verse describes a man who has demonstrated consistent leadership in the home, managing his household well and bringing his children into obedience *with all dignity*. To meet this qualification, the overseer must be a sanctified man. Among other things, for instance, he must exercise personal discipline, demonstrate sacrificial love for his family, patiently shepherd his children, and strive for God-taught wisdom. The passage makes abundantly clear that the primary test of a man's qualification to manage properly God's household as an overseer is how he has managed his own household as a father. This standard calls for a sanctified minister who is both credible and experienced.

The rhetorical question of verse 5 communicates an apostolic expectation that the overseer properly care for the church. "If a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?" When a potential overseer leads his own household in a serious,

dignified, holy way to follow his spiritual leadership, he gains both the experience and the credibility he needs for a ministry of tending to the needs of God’s church—the household of God. His godly leadership in the home provides a foundation for ministry, functioning both as schoolroom and proving ground for his public labors.

*Sanctified for Public Ministry—4:12–16*

In 1 Timothy 4:12–16, Paul sandwiches apostolic expectations for Timothy’s public ministry directly between instructions related to his sanctification. Addressing him in this way about his public ministry and his personal sanctification, Paul implies the closest possible relationship between the two. The passage moves from instructions about Timothy’s sanctified role-modeling to instructions about the exercise of his public ministry, to directions that seem to bring both together.

Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. *Take pains with these things*; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. (4:12–16, emphasis added)

Rather than allow his relative youthfulness to become a reason for people to reject his leadership, Timothy is to offer a compelling Christian example in speech, lifestyle, love, faith, and purity. This example setting is to be coupled with *faithful observance of the primary elements of corporate worship* and a careful cultivation of the gifting he received at ordination.

This passage weaves together highly personal instructions for Timothy’s spiritual life and growth with a broader concern for the ministry impact of his own character and conduct. In 4:15, Paul removes any remaining distance between the personal and ministerial exhortations of 4:12–13 when he urges Timothy to “take pains with these things [ταῦτα].” The ταῦτα apparently encompasses both the personal and ministerial exhortations in the immediate context.<sup>7</sup> When the minister gives proper attention both to his own spiritual life and to his public ministry, his progress becomes “evident to all.” Timothy is to immerse himself in these things, giving diligent, continued attention to the essentials for effective ministry—apostolic doctrine, and his own character and conduct (4:16a).<sup>8</sup> For Paul, personal life and public ministry are inseparable.

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<sup>7</sup> See I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, ICC (New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 570; Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 326; Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NAC (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 140; and J. H. Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 73. Luke Timothy Johnson says that “the things (*tauta*) that Timothy is to give his attention to are the practices of the church and, especially, the moral qualities appropriate to his *anastrophe* (manner of behaving) as a person of faith.” *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 35A of Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 254.

<sup>8</sup> Verse 16 will be dealt with in greater detail at a later point in this article. Its inclusion here is appropriate, since, like the preceding verses, it emphasizes the need for both personal and ministerial excellence. Luke Timothy Johnson identifies

Some might wonder whether a heavy emphasis on this connection might make a man artificial and “ministerial” rather than transparent, authentic, and focused on his private walk with God. Actually, the reverse is true. A minister who realizes that he cannot separate his spiritual life and his public ministry becomes a better man, not a worse minister. A solemn awareness that his effectiveness for life-changing, eternity-influencing spiritual ministry to others is linked inextricably to his own personal spiritual health becomes a powerful impetus for personal spiritual growth. Then, spiritual ministry becomes a natural outworking of his own relationship with God—and his progress becomes evident to all who benefit from his genuine, God-honoring ministry.

*Keeping the Commandment without Stain or Reproach—6:13–14*

By instructing Timothy to “keep the commandment without stain or reproach,” Paul connects Timothy’s ministry charge with blameless behavior. “I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (6:13–14). Interpreters have differed on the identification of “the commandment,”<sup>9</sup> but given the historical situation and the nature of the letter, it seems best to understand the commandment as reflective of Timothy’s apostolic charge to minister faithfully. Just as the charge in 1:18 likely refers to Paul’s ministry charge to Timothy (see 1:3–5), so the commandment of 6:13 seems to refer again to Timothy’s ministry mandate, perhaps particularly as communicated and reinforced in this epistle. Towner observes that “in spite of a rather surprising amount of discussion about the meaning and scope of ‘the command[ment]’ (better ‘the mandate, order, commission’), the reference is surely to what Paul has charged Timothy to do in Ephesus. This charge is introduced in 1:3–5 and filled out in the course of the letter.”<sup>10</sup> Timothy is to “keep” this ministry charge without stain (*ἄσπιλος*) and without reproach (*ἀνεπίλημπος*) until the Lord’s appearance. The thrust of the charge requires Timothy’s spotless and blameless conduct as he carries out the ministry mandate he has been given. Once again, Paul tightly connects the minister’s personal spiritual life and growth with the effectiveness of his public ministry. To fulfill his ministry charge faithfully, a minister must carry out his ministry with personal purity and integrity.

Connections between the Minister’s Sanctification  
and Positive Apostolic Evaluation of Ministry

Several times in 1 Timothy, Paul uses certain positive descriptions for his conception of right ministry. Table 1 identifies these apostolic commendations of effective ministry and the connections

a “focus throughout this section both on Timothy’s personal character and on the quality of his instruction” and observes that “this final command [4:16a] . . . summarizes the point of the entire paraenesis” (254).

<sup>9</sup> See especially Knight’s listing and discussion. George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 266–268.

<sup>10</sup> *Timothy and Titus*, 414. In a similar vein, Luke Timothy Johnson comments, “By this point, we recognize the *entolē* as the entire commission that Timothy has received from Paul, and whose *telos*, as we saw in 1:5, is *agapē* sprung from internal dispositions of faith and a good conscience” (308).

that the letter makes between ministry described in these terms and the minister's sanctification. In eighty percent of the passages in this epistle in which Paul uses a positive description to identify commendable ministry, he connects ministry so described with an element of the minister's sanctification.

**Table 1. Connections between the Minister's Sanctification and a Positive Evaluation of His Ministry in 1 Timothy**

Positive Evaluation	References	Connected with Minister's Sanctification?
"good fight"	1:18	The good fight performed <i>by means of</i> "keeping faith and a good conscience" (1:19)
"good servant of Christ Jesus"	4:6	Followed by further description "nourished on the words of the faith and of the sounds doctrine which you have been following" (4:6)
"rule well . . . worthy of double honor"	5:17	No connection explicitly drawn
"fight the good fight of [the] faith"	6:12	Seamless integration of the man of God in his personal spiritual life and in his role as a man of God
"you made the good confession"	6:12	Seamless integration of the man of God in his personal spiritual life and in his role as a man of God

#### *Faith and Good Conscience—1:18–19*

First Timothy 1:18–19 reveals an *instrumental* relationship between the minister's personal sanctification and effective ministry. "This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith." Timothy will be *enabled* to fight the good fight by giving attention to his own spiritual health.

"This command" refers to Paul's charge to Timothy (in 1:3–5) to remain at Ephesus to combat the false teaching that was apparently threatening the Ephesian church.<sup>11</sup> The most logical identification of the "fight" in the context of 1:3–17 is the war Timothy is to wage against the Ephesian heresy and its malignant moral side effects. Now reiterating his charge to Timothy in 1:18, Paul identifies three means by which Timothy will be able to "fight the good fight." The first of these means is for Timothy to act in accordance with "the prophecies previously made" about him. This instruction likely has reference to prophetic utterances made regarding Timothy and his ministry at the time of his ordination (see 4:14).

In 1:19 Paul provides two further, significant means by which Timothy will be enabled to fight the good fight as he confronts the doctrinal and moral defections of others. Timothy is to fight faithfully "the good fight" *by* maintaining or holding (ἔχων) his personal faith (πίστιν) and a good conscience (ἀγαθὴν συνείδησιν). The participle ἔχων is likely best taken adverbially as indicating further *means* of fighting the good fight, rather than simply indicating some sort of accompanying action in

<sup>11</sup> "The verbal link with vv 3, 5 seems very strong. Paul may be thinking of the command as it is expounded in vv 4–17, and thus v 18 acts as a summary of vv 13–17." William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 65.

vague connection with *στρατεύη*.<sup>12</sup> A godly Christian minister must keep a careful watch over his own soul when confronting the doctrinal and moral defections of others. In particular, he must be careful to maintain a clear conscience, and he must steadfastly maintain personal faith in God and his words.

If the Christian minister faithfully contends for the faith over the course of his life without abandoning personal faith and good conscience, at the end he will be able to say with Paul: “I have fought the good fight” (2 Tim 4:7). As an essential part of his preparation for spiritual warfare, the minister’s personal sanctification *enables* effective ministry.

#### *Nourished through Faithful Ministry—4:6*

In 1 Timothy 4:6, Paul teaches that faithful ministry helps the minister grow in his own sanctification. Here, effective ministry is ministry that receives a positive evaluation because it faithfully teaches scriptural truth even in the face of intense opposition. “In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following” (4:6). As Timothy faithfully teaches the Christian community at Ephesus that God’s good gifts are not to be rejected (as those who teach the “doctrines of demons” would have them to believe), he will be a “good servant of Christ Jesus.”

The participial phrase that follows this descriptive evaluation of effective ministry further explains the result of ministry rightly carried out. Not only does such ministry earn the minister the description “good servant,” but it also furthers his own sanctification. Timothy will progress in his own growth in the faith as he ministers the Word to others. The same doctrine that nourishes his hearers will nourish him spiritually. As he ministers it to others, it is ministered to his heart as well. According to this passage, faithful, effective ministry of the Word to others actually furthers the personal spiritual growth of the minister.

#### *Fighting the Fight and Taking Hold of Eternal Life—6:12*

Waging good warfare for the Christian faith is impossible in isolation from personal belief in and faithful adherence to God’s Word and ways. Paul places the two in close connection when he says, “Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses” (6:12, ESV).

It is difficult to be certain whether the ESV translation “the good fight of the faith” better reflects Paul’s intention than the NASB translation “the good fight of faith.” The Greek text contains the article, but a number of interpreters see the fight as a struggle of personal faith rather than as a contending for the faith. If the question were to be decided merely on the basis of the article’s presence, then the ESV translation is likely the strongest. Πίστις occurs thirty-three times in the Pastorals. When articular, it can typically be translated as “the faith.” No anarthrous occurrence in the Pastorals *requires* the sense of “the faith,” but there are some occurrences where such a sense is

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<sup>12</sup> Towner sees the participial phrase as “underlin[ing] the means by which Timothy will be able to wage the good war” (157). Marshall argues that “the participial phrase possibly continues the metaphor by describing the soldier’s equipment” and notes that “in any case, it details two elements essential both to effective ministry and authentic spiritual life” (411).

permissible. Towner states, “The use of *pistis* in the NT consistently divides into two categories. Frequently, it occurs in connection with the believer’s personal relation to Jesus Christ. In the Pastorals this usage is certainly present, especially where *pistis* denotes a Christian quality . . . and where the verb *pistenein* occurs (1 Tim 1.16; 3.16; Titus 3.8; cf. 2 Tim 1.12). However, the second category of use—*he pistis*=‘the faith’—predominates in the Pastorals.”<sup>13</sup> The article in this passage should probably be seen as the individualizing article rather than the article with abstract nouns, and the ESV translation is probably to be preferred.

Keeping in mind that the article tips the scales in favor of the ESV translation, it is necessary next to examine immediate contextual factors. Significantly, Paul addresses Timothy as a “man of God.” “Fight the good fight of [the] faith” is conceptually similar with Paul’s earlier charge to “war the good warfare” in 1:18. And 1:13 makes reference to public confession. These factors may together suggest that Timothy’s public ministry is at least partly in view in 6:12, no matter how *τῆς πίστεως* should be translated.

If it is indeed the good fight of the Christian faith that is in view, or if indeed a ministry struggle in particular is at least partly in view, then 6:12 reveals a close connection between the minister’s sanctification and his public ministry. Timothy is to “fight the good fight of the faith”; another component of the same charge now turns his attention to his own spiritual life and calls him to “take hold of the eternal life” to which he has been called. The latter part of the verse solidifies this connection by moving the focus of attention immediately back to the public sphere by referencing Timothy’s public, good testimony of his personal faith (“in the presence of many witnesses”). The fact that Paul can mix in an impassioned plea elements of Timothy’s ministerial responsibility and personal sanctification so seamlessly is instructive. It indicates that for Paul there was no real separation between what a man is in his personal spiritual life and what he is as a man of God.

### Summary

In 1 Timothy, Paul consistently connects the minister’s spiritual life and apostolic expectations for the public ministry of the man of God. An overseer’s godly leadership in the home functions as a schoolroom and a proving ground for his public labors. The minister’s careful attention both to his own spiritual life and to his public ministry results in progress that is evident to all. In order to fulfill faithfully his ministry charge, he must maintain a ministry that is spotless and blameless, carrying out his responsibilities with purity and integrity. He is to maintain personal faith and a good conscience to enable him to “fight the good fight.” His faithful, effective ministry of the Word to others actually furthers his own personal spiritual growth. Paul’s seamless connection between a leader’s ministry responsibility and his personal sanctification indicates deep continuity between who a man is spiritually and who he is as a man of God engaged in public ministry for the people of God. No man can contend effectively for the faith apart from strong personal grounding and growth in grace.

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<sup>13</sup> Philip Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction: The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 230.

*Sanctified for Effective Ministry as a Teacher and Model for God's People—  
Effectiveness Measured against Goals for the People/Church of God*

First Timothy's extensive spiritual and ethical teaching for the people of God presents apostolic ministry goals by setting forth ideal congregational responses to effective ministry. The letter nowhere promises that a minister's sanctification guarantees the ideal response from his people at all times. It does, however, consistently link the minister's sanctification to his credibility and therefore to his potential impact upon responsive people—and through them, upon a lost world.

God's people are to adhere to sound doctrine and maintain genuine faith and adherence to the truth (1:3, 5, 10; 2:15; 4:1, 3, 10, 12; 5:8, 12, 16; 6:2–3, 10, 21). They are to further the stewardship entrusted to them by God (1:4). They are called upon to maintain a vital prayer life (2:1, 8; 4:5; 5:5) and offer thanksgiving (2:1; 4:3–4). They should fix their hope in God (5:5; 6:17). They must avoid wrath, strife, and dissension (2:8; 6:4–5) and demonstrate honor and/or submission as appropriate in various relationships (2:11–12; 5:4, 17; 6:1–2). They must maintain a pure heart and clean conscience (1:5, 4:2) and live godly lives (1:9; 2:2, 10; 3:16; 5:4; 6:3, 5–6), demonstrating holiness (1:9; 2:8, 15), dignity (2:20), modesty (2:9), self-control (2:9, 15), temperance (3:11), and order (2:9). They must engage in good works (2:10; 5:10; 6:2, 18), show hospitality (5:10), and serve others (5:10, 6:2), demonstrating genuine love (1:5; 2:15; 6:2). They are to exhibit a proper attitude toward wealth (6:5–10, 17–19). They must demonstrate faithfulness in their marriages (5:9), maintain an excellent testimony (5:7, 10, 14; 6:1), and generally conduct themselves properly (3:15). Ultimately, God's true people persevere in salvation and “take hold of that which is life indeed” (2:15; 4:16; 6:19).

First Timothy contains both explicit and implicit connections between these spiritual/ethical goals for the congregation and the minister's sanctification. One of the minister's main responsibilities is to nurture God's people toward God's ideals. He will not be able to do so effectively unless he has first embraced God's ideals for his own spiritual life.

### Explicit Connections

Two key verses located in the heart of the letter draw a clear connection between the minister's sanctification and spiritual or ethical goals for God's people.

#### *Exemplary—4:12*

Although Timothy apparently is young, he is called to live in such a way that in spite of this potential limitation he exercises a highly effective ministry. “Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather [ἀλλά] in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe” (4:12). The phrase “let no one” faces outward and is clearly oriented to the effectiveness of Timothy's ministry. The conjunction ἀλλά then signals the contrasting circumstance that will prevent others from looking down on Timothy's youthfulness—and this circumstance has everything to do with Timothy's personal sanctification. The grammatical structure of the verse itself emphasizes the connection between Timothy's sanctification and effective ministry.

Not just the grammar, but also the vocabulary of the passage indicates that personal sanctification is essential for effective ministry. Paul's command for Timothy to be an example (τύπος) implies that he intends for the congregation to follow that example. This intention is implicit in the very idea of a τύπος. The minister should provide an example so that those under his ministry will imitate his example. As the Christian minister faithfully lives an exemplary life before his congregation, he provides them with a model to follow. As they imitate his godly example in "speech, conduct, love, faith and purity," they meet apostolic spiritual goals for the congregation.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Self-Heedful—4:16*

"Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you" (4:16). This solemn exhortation closely links the minister's personal spiritual watchfulness and the salvation of his hearers, making this verse perhaps the Pastorals' most indisputable instance of connection between the minister's sanctification and the effectiveness of his public ministry. The Christian minister must exercise intentionality in his spiritual life. Just as Timothy must guard apostolic teaching, so he must carefully guard his own spiritual life and walk. The importance of this command is highlighted by its eternal ramifications—ramifications not just for the minister, but also for those to whom he ministers.

The passage culminates with a spiritual goal for Timothy and his hearers.<sup>15</sup> "As you do this you will ensure salvation [σώζω] both for yourself and for those who hear you" (4:16). The question naturally arises: in what sense will Timothy save himself and his hearers? Some have suggested that the "salvation" indicated in the passage is a deliverance from false teaching, but most commentators agree that salvation should be understood "soteriologically and eschatologically."<sup>16</sup> Given that σώζω elsewhere in the Pastorals is "clearly soteriological in orientation,"<sup>17</sup> it seems best to understand this occurrence in the same way as well.

Paul explicitly connects the minister's sanctification and the salvation of Timothy's hearers when he orders Timothy to take heed to himself and to the teaching and then follows up by instructing him further: "Continue in these things [ἐπίμενε αὐτοῖς], for doing this [τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν] you will save yourself and your hearers"<sup>†</sup> (4:16). The γὰρ gives the reason or motivation for the minister to "continue in these things." The Christian minister is motivated in his own sanctification by the truth that giving attention to his own sanctification is one of the God-ordained *means* for bringing others to the Lord.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> For further elaboration, see "Thematic/Lexical Connections" below.

<sup>15</sup> George M. Wieland believes that 4:16 is the climax of the paraenesis that begins in 3:14. *The Significance of Salvation: A Study of Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2006), 98. Luke Timothy Johnson identifies a "focus throughout this section both on Timothy's personal character and on the quality of his instruction" and observes that "this final command [4:16a] . . . summarizes the point of the entire paraenesis" (254).

<sup>16</sup> See Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 211, for a helpful listing.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Mounce agrees that the participle ποιῶν indicates means and translates "by doing" (265). Romans 12:20, containing an identical participle phrase, may provide further corroboration for this understanding: "But if your enemy is hungry,

Timothy's careful attention both to his own sanctification and to his doctrine is essential to his salvation and the salvation of his listeners. This statement is neither forced exegesis nor un-Pauline theology. Scripture teaches that those who fail to persevere in the Christian faith (including right living and right belief) will not in the end be saved, and evidence that they have never been justified to begin with.<sup>19</sup> So careful students of the Scripture are not surprised to find that Timothy's faithfulness in *both* of these areas (sanctification and orthodoxy) is essential. God has so designed the Christian ministry that through faithful living, the minister will be an instrument of God's saving power extended to his hearers. His personal sanctification becomes an instrument of effective ministry—ministry that affects the eternal destiny of his hearers.

### Thematic/Lexical Connections

First Timothy seldom draws explicit connections between the minister's sanctification and ethical/spiritual goals for the congregation, but implicit connections abound. These implicit connections include tight lexical and thematic links between what Paul urges upon the minister and what he envisions for God's people generally. As David Mappes argues, the qualifications lists in 1 Timothy and Titus "call church officers to be examples (τύποι) of the godly life"; and "elders and deacons are to set the standard for ethical behavior to which all believers should aspire."<sup>20</sup> By their exemplary living, "church leaders are to model a life of godliness so that others can imitate them."<sup>21</sup> This is true not only with reference to the virtues *highlighted* in the qualifications for the overseer, but also with reference to *other* virtues urged upon the man of God in 1 Timothy.

God's minister is to adhere to sound doctrine and maintain genuine faith and adherence to the truth (1:4, 12, 19; 3:9; 4:6, 12, 16; 6:11, 12); so are God's people (1:3, 5, 10; 2:15; 4:1, 3, 10, 12; 5:8, 12, 16; 6:2–3, 10, 21). God's minister is to demonstrate ἀγάπη (4:12; 6:11), as are His people (1:5; 2:15; 6:2 [ἀγαπητός]). A good conscience must be a minister's personal goal (1:19). That God's people maintain a good conscience (συνείδησις) is a ministry goal (1:5; 3:9; 4:2 [negative]). Like the Christian minister is called to εὐσέβεια (4:7, 8; 6:11), so are God's people (2:2; 3:16; 5:4; 6:3; 6:5). Christian ministers must not be fighters (3:3), are called to be peaceable and gentle (3:3), and are to "pursue . . . gentleness" (6:11); Christian men in general are to pray "without wrath and dissension" (χωρὶς ὀργῆς καὶ διαλογισμοῦ, 2:8). Ministers are to show themselves exemplary in purity (ἀγνεία, 4:12), relate to the younger women "in all purity [ἀγνεία]," and keep themselves pure (ἀγνός, 5:22); the men of the church are to "lift up holy [όσίος] hands" (2:8) and the women are to "continue in . . . holiness [ἀγιασμός]." Elders are to demonstrate dignity in their child-rearing (σεμνότης, 3:4). God's people generally are to live lives of dignity (σεμνότης, 2:2)—especially deacons (σεμνός, 3:8) and deaconesses (or deacon's wives, 3:11). A qualified overseer is prudent (σώφρων, 3:2); similarly, the women of the

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feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing [τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν] you will heap burning coals upon his head."

<sup>19</sup> For a helpful overview and compelling argument, see Thomas R. Schreiner, "Perseverance and Assurance: A Survey and a Proposal," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 58.

<sup>20</sup> David A. Mappes, "Moral Virtues Associated with Eldership," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 160, no. 638 (April 2003), 215.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

church are to demonstrate *σωφροσύνη* (2:9, 15). God's ministers are to engage in good works (3:1; 5:25); so are his people (2:10; 5:10; 6:2, 18). A qualified overseer has shown hospitality (3:2); a qualified widow has done so as well (5:10). Just as the minister must have a proper attitude toward wealth (3:3, 8; 6:11), so must those to whom he ministers (3:8; 6:5–10, 17–19). The minister must be faithful in marriage (3:2) just as those in his congregation are to be faithful in their marriages (3:12; 5:9). He is to maintain an excellent testimony (3:2, 7; 6:14) as are the rest of God's people (5:7, 10, 14; 6:1). Ultimately, just as his ministry goal is that his people grasp true life (*ἵνα ἐπιλάβωνται τῆς ὄντως ζωῆς*, 6:19), so he must follow Paul's admonition to grasp eternal life (*ἐπιλαβοῦ τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς*, 6:12), as both he and his hearers persevere in their salvation (see 4:16). These strong lexical and thematic links between the minister's sanctification and ministry goals for the congregation further evidence the close relationship between the minister's sanctification and ministry effectiveness.

### Summary

First Timothy links the minister's sanctification to his effectiveness in leading people to meet God's goals for their spiritual lives and for their conduct. It does so both through explicit statement and through lexical and thematic connections between the minister's sanctification and the sanctification of his people.

#### *Sanctified for Effective Mission— Effectiveness Measured against Missional Goals*

The missional goals of the Pastorals hold a prominent place in the structure and argument of the letter, even though they do not occupy as much space in the epistle as do the ethical goals. God desires the salvation of the lost (1:15–16; 2:4; 4:10); he has designed the church to be the pillar and support of the truth (3:15); and he calls its members to live in such a way as to bring no reproach to his name and ways (5:14; 6:1). This missional emphasis is highlighted in each chapter of 1 Timothy.

Emphasizing God's desire for all to be saved and explaining the importance of proper conduct for God's people, 1 Timothy consistently highlights the mission of God to bring lost sinners to himself—and his intention to use his people's witness to do so. In the teaching of 1 Timothy, the man of God has an essential role in God's plan to bring people to himself, and it is imperative that he be sanctified for the task.

#### Motivated for Godliness and Witness—4:7–10

Diligent effort in personal godliness and agonizing labor in ministry both spring from the same motivation, as careful study of 4:7–10 reveals.

But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. For it is for this we labor and strive, because

we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. (1 Tim 4:7–10)

The lasting profit of εὐσέβεια motivates the Christian minister to exercise (γυμνάζω) himself “in godliness”<sup>†</sup> (4:7–8). Πρὸς εὐσέβειαν could mean either “for the purpose of godliness” or “in godliness,”<sup>22</sup> but likely “indicate[s] that εὐσέβειαν is that *in* which one exercises, and not just that toward which one exercises.”<sup>23</sup>

The lasting profit of εὐσέβεια also motivates the Christian minister to exercise himself in gospel ministry. Referring back to the faithful saying of verse 8, Paul expresses the right motivation for labor in the gospel when he makes this statement: “For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope [ὅτι ἠλπικαμεν] on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers” (4:10). Godliness promises eternal profit, so it is to this end or for this reason that “we labor and strive.”<sup>24</sup> The passage continues, “because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.” The Christian minister can labor confidently with eternity in view, for the eternal profitability of godliness is not a vague principle but the promise of the living God who has made salvation available for all if they will believe.

Motivated by the truth that godliness is of eternal profit and by a hope firmly fixed on “the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers,” godly ministers “labor and strive” in ministry.<sup>25</sup> Understanding the eternal profit of godliness and armed with the confidence that comes from knowing the salvific purposes and power of God, the Christian leader seeks the eternal welfare of men as a primary ministry goal.

### Summary

First Timothy 4:7–10 reveals that diligent effort in personal godliness and agonizing labor in ministry both spring from the same motivation. The minister is to exercise or train (γυμνάζω) himself in godliness because it is of eternal profit. And he is to agonize (ἀγωνίζομαι) in ministry because godliness is of eternal profit—and because he knows that God is the Savior who can bring people to eternal life. A man who doubts the promise of life that godliness holds and who reflects his doubt by a failure to pursue it diligently is a man who lacks motivation to do true life-changing gospel work. On the other hand, a minister who genuinely exercises himself in godliness because he knows it is of eternal profit is motivated to labor for others. Energizing both his personal and ministerial labors is a

<sup>22</sup> See Mounce, 251.

<sup>23</sup> Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 197. R. C. H. Lenski also argues this point, citing the way πρὸς is used in the two immediately following occurrences in verse 8. *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon* (Columbus, OH: Wartburg, 1937), 632.

<sup>24</sup> Marshall points out that εἰς τοῦτο could either mean “for this reason” or “with this aim” (555); either way, the eternal promise of godliness motivates the minister’s toil in the gospel.

<sup>25</sup> “Because godliness has the promise of life, ‘we’ ‘labor and struggle’ (v. 10a). Such effort is undertaken ultimately because our hope is fixed on θεῶ ζῶντι, who can give such ζωὴ (v. 10b) as the Savior of all who believe on him (v. 10c)” (Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 202).

confident expectation that the Savior who has made propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2) and desires all men to be saved (1 Tim 2:4) grants this eternal life freely.

The athletic image evoked by *γυμνάζω* and *ἀγωνίζομαι* suggests a further point of connection. In the Greek culture with which Paul was intimately familiar, an athlete would train (*γυμνάζω*) with an eye toward engaging in competition (*ἀγωνίζομαι*).<sup>26</sup> But such language was not limited to physical training for physical competition. A Greek writer from several centuries before Paul had already drawn upon the same athletic imagery to impress upon rulers the importance of attending to their own souls as training for kingship. “Therefore, no athlete is so called upon to train his body [τὸ σῶμα γυμνάζειν] as is a king to train his soul [ὡς τοῖς βασιλεῦσι τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν ἑαυτῶν]; for not all the public festivals in the world offer a prize comparable to those for which you who are kings strive [ἀγωνίζεσθε] every day of your lives.”<sup>27</sup> This passage may present a similar challenge—not to secular kings, but to Christian leaders—in the form of a deliberate, extended metaphor designed to teach that the minister’s personal training in godliness *prepares* him to compete with success in the strenuous struggle of the Christian ministry.

### Indirect Connections

First Timothy also contains an indirect but strong point of connection between the minister’s sanctification and the missional goals of the church. A minister’s godly life is designed to serve as a model for his congregation (4:12), and (as is suggested above) much of 1 Timothy’s material on the minister’s sanctification likely has in view his impact upon the congregation. First Timothy consistently draws strong connections between the ethical behavior of God’s people and God’s saving purposes. The ethical goals of 1 Timothy serve the missional goals. This relationship between the ethical and missional goals makes it apparent that the minister’s sanctification, in furthering ethical goals for God’s people, helps the church move forward in meeting missional goals as well. It does so by equipping the people of God for a brighter witness.

#### *Connections between Ethical and Missional Goals in First Timothy*

Some interpreters apparently have failed to grasp the strength of the connection between ethics and the mission of the church in 1 Timothy (and the other Pastorals). Since the time of Dibelius, a number of liberal interpreters have advanced the thesis that in light of the delay of the Parousia, the author of the Pastorals (not Paul) presents an ethic designed to help Christians peacefully co-exist with and prosper in the world.<sup>28</sup> Dibelius and Conzelmann argue that, unlike Paul, “the author of the Pastorals seeks to build the possibility of a life in this world, although on the basis of Christian principles. He wishes to become part of the world. Thus, for him, the peace of a secure life is a goal

<sup>26</sup> See for instance Dio Chrysostom, *Discourses* 31.126–127, and Philostratus, *Gymnasticus* 43.

<sup>27</sup> Isocrates, 3.11.

<sup>28</sup> See Philip Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction*, 259. In the course of his discussion, Towner provides a summary of the viewpoint and (in a note) lists a number of authors/works that have advanced it. Towner’s refutation of this viewpoint was published in 1989, but the idea has persisted.

of the Christian.”<sup>29</sup> This view of Christian existence sees the Christianity of the Pastorals as a *christliche Bürgerlichkeit*, often translated “*bourgeois* Christianity.”

Philip Towner has argued against this hypothesis in his insightful monograph *The Goal of Our Instruction*. His work, along with others, provides a thorough refutation of the *christliche Bürgerlichkeit* viewpoint, so in-depth interaction with its proponents is not necessary in the present study. In his treatment, Towner rightly highlights what he calls “a missionary or witness motive” in the Pastorals. Indeed, this “witness motive” is so conspicuous, and so conspicuously provides the ground for much of the ethical material, that it is difficult to understand why any responsible interpreter would feel compelled to adopt the *christliche Bürgerlichkeit* theory to begin with. The ethics of the Pastorals do not spring from a diminished sense of urgency. They spring from the true urgency of the church’s mission in the world.

This mission is so crucial that God’s people dare not endanger it through a careless lifestyle that is unworthy of their stature as members of God’s household. And it is a mission so crucial that the man of God dare not be casual about his own personal sanctification as he exercises spiritual leadership in the household of God.

#### *First Timothy 2:1–8*

In chapter 2, Paul offers directions for prayer in the assembly (2:1–8). The Christian congregation is to engage in public prayers on behalf of political rulers.<sup>30</sup> The passage indicates that these prayers are to be accompanied by the lifting up of “holy hands.”<sup>31</sup> Key to offering prayers in holiness is offering them “without wrath and dissension” (2:2a).<sup>32</sup> The behavioral goal of prayers accompanied with a peaceable demeanor and a holy lifestyle is designed to promote an important outcome: a “tranquil and quiet life” characterized by “all godliness and dignity” (πάση εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σεμνότητι, 2:2). The passage’s layered collection of ministry goals culminates in a goal greater than merely a non-disruptive lifestyle, however. Far from being the end goal of Christian existence, a godly, dignified, peaceable life is important precisely because it furthers the salvific purposes of “God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1:3–4).

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<sup>29</sup> Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 39.

<sup>30</sup> The passage seems to focus on the role of the men in corporate prayer, addressing the women later on in the chapter.

<sup>31</sup> Apparently, the prayer posture involving uplifted hands is both assumed and affirmed. However, holiness is the larger point of emphasis in this passage. See Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 129, and Towner, who notes that “the image of ‘purified hands’ acquired metaphorical status in its reference to moral purity (e.g. *1 Clement* 29:1; LXX Pss 25:6; 72:13) just as the image of ‘bloody’ or stained hands signified metaphorically the reverse (Isa 1:15)” (*The Goal of Our Instruction*, 202).

<sup>32</sup> It is possible that this warning against wrath and dissension has in view an attitude of hostility Christians could easily develop against government officials who in many ways may be opposed to their faith. If this is indeed what is in view, the passage indicates that the scriptural response in such a situation is holy prayer rather than angry, subversive attitudes and rhetoric. However, it is quite likely that the point of the exhortation really is for the worshippers to avoid wrath and disputation among themselves. On this last point, see Marshall, 446.

*First Timothy 3:14–16*

Paul writes in order to give direction for Christian behavior, as the explicit purpose statement of 3:14 makes clear. In the immediately previous verses Paul has given instructions regarding the prayers of the congregation (especially the men), proper behavior for women, and qualifications for church leaders. Now he emphasizes that he is writing “in order that you should know how one must live in the household of God”<sup>†</sup> (3:14). This ethical emphasis permeates the letter. But the ethics are not there merely for their own sake. Nor are they there simply to create the right conditions for a *bourgeois* Christianity that, in light of a longer stay in the world than anticipated, enables the church to get along successfully in the world. At the heart of Paul’s burden to provide guidelines for the conduct of God’s people is his concern for the God-ordained role of the church in the world, as the further development of the passage reveals.

Christian conduct is important because the church’s mission is important. “This [description of the church as *στῦλος και ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας*] is perhaps the most significant phrase in all the PE. It shows more clearly and more dramatically than anything else what is at stake in the Ephesian heresy and why it is essential that the church, especially the church leaders, conduct themselves properly.”<sup>33</sup>

The relative clause immediately following Paul’s purpose statement identifies the church itself as the “pillar and support” of the truth, charged to uphold apostolic doctrine and the common confession of believers (3:15–16). The central feature of this common confession of true Christians is the theological and historical message regarding the life and work of the incarnate Christ. This memorable and concise confession of the gospel paints in bold, vigorous strokes the truth that the church is to defend. And as the confession reveals, proclamation of the gospel to the Gentiles is an essential mission of those who confess it. First Timothy 3:14–16 connects the goal of right behavior in the household of God with the church’s mission to proclaim and defend apostolic truth. In doing so, it highlights the close connection between Christian conduct and Christian mission that is so crucial to understanding the epistle.

*First Timothy 5:14*

This passage highlights the goal of stable Christian individuals and families and discourages church support of a spiritually unhealthy lifestyle for young widows. Ultimately, the passage has in view the mission of the church in the world. In following Paul’s instructions, the younger widows will avoid giving the enemy “occasion for reproach” (5:14). As elsewhere in 1 Timothy, Paul highlights an outward dimension to church ethics; the church must seek to maintain a bright gospel witness in the world.

*First Timothy 6:1*

In 6:1, Paul gives instructions for members of the church who are “under the yoke.” Slaves are to honor their masters “so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against” (6:1). The

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<sup>33</sup> Mounce, 222.

point of concern is the church’s witness in the world and its effect on the world’s reception of the Word. Here as elsewhere, the gospel mission of the church guides Christian behavior.

### Summary

The ethical teaching of 1 Timothy equips believers to reach the lost world with the gospel by maintaining an excellent testimony individually and corporately. Since the minister’s own right conduct is indispensable for his right modeling and credible teaching of God’s ethical ideals,<sup>34</sup> his personal sanctification is a crucial component in effectively reaching the lost with the gospel message.

### Conclusion

First Timothy consistently links the minister’s sanctification and the effectiveness of his ministry. His sanctification lends credibility to both his leadership and his teaching. It has a direct impact on the eternal destiny of his hearers. It enables his continued faithfulness to a scriptural ministry. It enables a ministry that elicits divine commendation. And it provides his people with an example of godliness they can imitate, helping them to meet God’s goals for their spiritual lives and behavior and ultimately influencing the testimony of the church to a watching world. Table 2 summarizes the key passages in 1 Timothy that present a direct connection between the minister’s sanctification and his ministry effectiveness.

**Table 2. Key Passages Revealing a Connection between the Minister’s Sanctification and Effective Ministry in 1 Timothy**

Expectation/Approbation	Minister’s Sanctification	Connection
“fight the good fight” (1:18)	“keeping faith and a good conscience” (1:19)	The good fight is performed by means of “keeping faith and a good conscience.”
“take care of the church of God” (3:5)	“one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity” (3:4)	“If a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?” (3:5)
“good servant of Christ Jesus” (4:6)	“constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sounds doctrine which you have been following” (4:6)	“In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished [ἐντρέφόμενος] on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.”  The ministry described in the passage not only earns the minister the description “good servant”; it also has the result of furthering his own sanctification.

<sup>34</sup> See “Sanctified for Effective Ministry as a Teacher and Model for God’s People” above.

Expectation/Approbation (cont.)	Minister's Sanctification	Connection
<p>“Let no one look down on your youthfulness. . . . Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching.” (4:12–16)</p>	<p>“in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe” (4:12)</p> <p>“Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you.” (4:14)</p> <p>“Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them.” (4:15)</p> <p>“Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things.” (4:16)</p>	<p>This passage weaves together highly personal instructions for Timothy’s spiritual life and growth with ministry instructions. In 4:15, “these things” apparently encompass both the personal and ministerial exhortations in the immediate context. If the man of God gives proper attention to his own spiritual life and his ministry duties, his “progress will be evident to all.”</p>
<p>“fight the good fight of [the] faith” (6:12)</p>	<p>“take hold of the eternal life to which you were called. . . . keep the commandment without stain or reproach” (6:12, 14)</p>	<p>Seamless integration of the man of God in his personal spiritual life and in his role as a man of God</p>
<p>“you made the good confession” (6:12)</p>	<p>“take hold of the eternal life to which you were called. . . . keep the commandment without stain or reproach” (6:12, 14)</p>	<p>Seamless integration of the man of God in his personal spiritual life and in his role as a man of God</p>
Edification	Minister's Sanctification	Connection
<p>“Let no one look down on your youthfulness. . . . show yourself an example of those who believe” (4:12)</p>	<p>“but rather [ἀλλά] in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe” (4:12)</p>	<p>The conjunction ἀλλά signals the contrasting circumstance that will prevent others from looking down on Timothy’s youthfulness. Paul’s command for Timothy to be an example (τύπος) implies that he intends for the congregation to follow that example. This intention is implicit in the very idea of a τύπος.</p>
<p>“you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you” (4:16)</p>	<p>“Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things.” (4:16)</p>	<p>“Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this [τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν] you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.” (4:16)</p> <p>The Christian minister is motivated (“for”) in his own sanctification (“pay close attention to yourself”) by the truth that giving attention to his own sanctification is one of the God-ordained <i>means</i> for bringing others to the Lord.</p>

<b>Mission</b>	<b>Minister’s Sanctification</b>	<b>Connection</b>
“For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.” (4:10)	“discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (4:7)	Diligent effort in both personal godliness and labor in ministry springs from the same motivation. Energizing the minister’s personal sanctification <i>and</i> ministerial labors is a confident expectation regarding the eternal profitability of godliness and the assurance that God desires to grant salvation (see in-text discussion).

In 1 Timothy, Paul connects the minister’s spiritual life and apostolic expectations for his public ministry, either by generally expressing apostolic expectations as such or by describing the kind of ministry that earns commendation. Tight connections between ministry and the minister’s sanctification indicate strong continuity between who a man is personally and who he is ministerially. In this letter, both explicit statements and lexical and thematic connections link the minister’s sanctification to his effectiveness in promoting spiritual growth and obedience among God’s people. By carefully guarding his own testimony, the minister maintains credibility for his message and models right living for those in the church. The teaching of 1 Timothy also reveals connections between the minister’s sanctification and his ability to further God’s missional goals for the church. His personal and ministerial labors are motivated by the eternal profit of godliness and fueled by a confident expectation that God is working to bring people to himself. Since the minister’s own behavior affects the testimony of other believers by influencing them toward godly behavior, his personal sanctification ultimately furthers the gospel mission to a lost world.