

THE CONDUCT OF A GOOD MINISTER

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have prayed and read the Bible for this lesson to learn what the Holy Spirit wants you to teach your students. Then let Him guide you in using these notes. When you follow this procedure you will be a better teacher of your students.

Lesson aim: For believers to know how to conduct their lives to be ready for Heaven.

Suggestion: The teacher lesson will call attention to some important truths to teach. After the lesson, give your class next week's Student Lesson so they can share their answers in class next week.

Introduction: Paul gives a solemn charge to Timothy with five commands for his preaching ministry (3:1-2). He tells him that the time is coming when people will not listen to sound doctrine, but will listen only to what pleases them. Then he gives Timothy four more commands on how he should conduct his ministry, which can apply to our witnessing ministry. Then he encouraged Timothy to follow his example to have a good departure from this life. "Watch in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry " (2 Tim 4:5).

Why should believers give serious thought to proclaiming the Gospel? 4:1

Paul solemnly charged Timothy before the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead, so will all believers be judged by the Lord to reveal how well they witnessed for Him. It will determine what reward each will receive, which will decide how they will serve Him in His Kingdom on earth. He taught this in his parable about two servants that did well and ruled over ten cities and five cities (Lk 19:11-19).

What is one of the most important works of a believer? 4:2

Paul told Timothy to "preach" the Word. The Greek verb also can mean to "proclaim." Believers are to make disciples in all nations (Mt 28:19). Jesus told His disciples (and all believers) in His last words to them that they were to be His witnesses from Jerusalem to the ends of the world (Acts 1:8). Witnessing is one of the most important works of a believer.

How should believers proclaim the Gospel? 4:2

A believer should proclaim the Gospel when it is convenient and when it is not convenient ("in season and out of season"). He or she should correct incorrect thoughts ("reprove"), rebuke false doctrine ("rebuke") and encourage right decisions ("exhort") with a good amount of patience ("all longsuffering").

What should believers do with their lives? 4:5

Believers should be alert in doing their best work for the Lord, enduring the suffering that comes with serving Him, doing the work of telling others the good news of His salvation, completing the work He has given to them.

What is the day of judgment where all believers will be examined? 4:8

After the Rapture, all church believers will be summoned before Jesus Christ to have their works examined by Him. If they have done well, they will receive a reward for what they have done for Him. This reward will be useful when they rule with Jesus Christ in His Kingdom. Jesus told a parable that gives this use of rewards for work well done. The very diligent servants will be rewarded with ten cities to rule for Him in His Kingdom, while less diligent servants will rule over fewer cities (cf Lk 19:11-19). Since it is the purpose of believers to bring glory to Christ Jesus in His Kingdom, the ones who receive the greater reward will be able to bring greater glory to Christ when He rules all nations. This is what happened to Daniel when he served in Nebuchadnezzar's court.

What is the cause of failure in a believer's Christian life? 4:10

Demas had been a fellow worker with Paul (Col 4:14; Philemon 1:24), but when Paul was about to be executed as a believer, Demas left Paul. It must have been a great shock to Paul to have Demas forsake him when he needed him most. Why did Demas forsake Paul? It was dangerous to associate with Paul at that time since anyone who did it might be taken and executed with Paul. Paul gives the reason why Demas did it: "he loved this present world." We must not let this world captivate our hearts or we will fail in our Christian life (1 Jn 2:15-17).