

THE CHARACTERISTICS 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: Pray for pastors to exhibit the characteristics of a good minister of Jesus Christ.

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 wrote to Timothy from his prison in Rome and exhorted him to be a good minister by propagating the word of God with intensity (2:1-13) and protecting the word of God from impurity (2:14-26). He gave Timothy seven characteristics of a good minister and related them to a teacher, a soldier, an athlete, a farmer, a workman, a vessel and a slave to help him remember and apply these truths. To be a good minister, he needed to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 2:1).

What characteristic of a teacher did Timothy need to have? 2:2

Timothy needed to have the steadfastness of a teacher. He was to teach exactly what Paul had taught him. He was not to change the doctrine in any way, because Paul had received pure doctrine from God. He was to look for students that were faithful in doing their assignments and for those that were able to teach others also. He was to concentrate on teaching students with these character traits.

What characteristic of a soldier did Timothy need to have? 2:3-4

Timothy needed to have the single-mindedness of a soldier. He needed to endure hardness in the battle, ready to suffer for Christ to gain the victory for Him. He must not occupy himself with worldly pursuits that would distract his witness for Christ, but focus wholly on heavenly affairs so he is effective in his witness. He must make it his top priority to please Christ as his Commander.

What characteristic of an athlete did Timothy need to have? 2:5

Timothy needed to have the self-discipline of an athlete. He must rigorously train himself to follow the rules of the Scriptures, laying aside every weight and any sin that would disqualify him. He must be disciplined to run his race well to the end of life so he can be rewarded and receive a crown from Christ.

What characteristic of a farmer did Timothy need to have? 2:5-13

Timothy needed to have the steadiness of a farmer. He must have a steady witness of the Lord to lost sinners to have a fruitful harvest of souls. He will be the first to enjoy the fruit of his labors in fellowship with his new converts. His greatest joy will be the eternal reward he will receive from God for steady, hard work in witnessing. Christ and Paul were examples to him and to us of suffering before success. "If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."

What characteristic of a workman did Timothy need to have? 2:14-19

Timothy needed to have the scrupulousness of a workman. He would not allow unprofitable debates to destroy the church, but would interpret the Scriptures precisely, so he could be an approved workman by God. He would stop false teachers, expose apostates and put his confidence in God's Word.

What characteristic of a vessel did Timothy need to have? 2:20-23

Timothy needed to manifest the splendor of a valuable vessel. He must trust God, flee from sinfulness and follow godliness to display the beauty of a vessel of honor and to be set apart for the Master's use.

What characteristic of a slave did Timothy need to have? 2:24-26

Timothy needed to have the submissiveness of a slave. He must not quarrel, but be gentle, teaching truth with patience to those whom the devil has snared by false doctrine. He should seek their sincere sorrow for sin (2 Cor 7:10) so God would grant them repentance and be set free from the devil's control of their lives.