

**Sermon or Lesson: 1 Timothy 4:14-15b** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: The Crucial-ness Of Doing Ministry God's Way

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READ: 1 Timothy 4:14-15, with vv.11-13 for context

**BACKGROUND:**

- - Good ministers are to regularly teach the truths of the faith to their audience people. (v.11)
- - In order to elicit and establish necessary credibility and respect from the audience people, good ministers of God's Word must also be living an exemplary life of godliness. (v.12)
- - Having the overall goal of facilitating God's transforming impact upon the audience people, good ministers therefore should be utilizing an expository presentation approach, which reads, exhorts, and directly teaches God's Word to the people. (v.13)
- - Now let's investigate further to find out what else good ministers are instructed by God to do.

v.14 - READ

[Lesson Question: What "gift" was given to Timothy, what else was given, and what is he being instructed to do in response?]

SECTION POINT: Those persons who function as ministers of Christ Jesus are to persevere in striving to develop and enhance the gifting God has given them to do ministry.

**"Do not neglect your gift"**

- - The "gift" being referred to here is the spiritual gift or God-empowering of Timothy to excellently, skillfully, and effectively "preach" and "teach" the Word of God. (v.13; cf. 2 Timothy 1:6-8)
- - As a "good minister of Christ Jesus" (v.6), Timothy is to prioritize, develop, utilize, and refine this gifting (2 Timothy 1:6), not treating this gifting in a casual, "neglectful", "careless", insignificant, or ignoring manner (Strong's #0272).

**"which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you"**

- - Previously, the official elders of the church, probably in Ephesus, had met formally as a group to commission Timothy to the ministry. (v.1:3)
- - In this commissioning, the church elders determined that Timothy was being called by God to do the work of the ministry.
- - Thereby, the church elders acted in a spiritual capacity of representing God in expressing, establishing, confirming, designating, applying, imposing, authorizing, and commissioning Timothy to function as a leader in ministry, which includes preaching and teaching God's Word. (Strong's #1936; v.13)

- - As part of their official commissioning of Timothy, the church elders "laid their hands" on Timothy as a visible representation of the official commissioning that God was therein doing upon Timothy.
  - - Prophecy was presented during this commissioning by the church elders, but not in the sense of predicting the future.
  - - Instead, the prophecy was in relation to the church elders by faith following the perceived direction and leading of the Holy Spirit at that time in recognizing, declaring, and authorizing Timothy to lead in ministry thereafter into the future. (Zodhiates, #4394, p.1242)
  - - And within this commissioning, the church elders were furthermore identifying and "giving" attestation that they had seen evidence that Timothy had "within" him empowering by God to extraordinarily do preaching and teaching of God's Word. (Strong's #1722, #4671)
  - - This commissioning and spiritual gifting are an honor, and a God-ordained gift of designation and responsibility for ministry duties "given" to Timothy that he should steadfastly regard with seriousness.
  - - Therein this delegation of ministry authority and responsibilities upon Timothy warrants that he develop towards excellence all of the skills he is going to need to do the ministry work he has been assigned by God to do.
  - - So Timothy is being instructed by God here to persistently work at utilizing and improving his ministry skills, proficiency, depth of academic training, Bible knowledge, sound doctrines, communication, sermon delivery, lesson approach, interpersonal interactions, administration, management, pastoral counseling, and everything else that his ministry assignments require.
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#### v.15a-b - READ

[Lesson Question: What "matters" are being referred to here, and how are they to be treated?]

SECTION POINT: Those persons who function as ministers of Christ Jesus are furthermore to stay fully engaged in implementing all that God has directed in His Word for them to do as ministers.

Being a minister of Christ Jesus comes with many responsibilities, functions, and expectations from God, such as:

- - "point out" false teachers and false doctrines "to the brothers"; (v.6)
- - "have nothing to do with godless myths" in theology; (v.7)
- - "train yourself to be godly"; (v.7)
- - "command and teach" the Word and sound doctrines; (v.11)
- - prove yourself to be qualified and competent in doing ministry even though you are fairly young or new at doing ministry; (v.12)
- - "set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity"; (v.12)
- - "devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching, and to teaching"; (v.13)

- - "do not neglect your gift" from God, through which He authorizes and empowers you to do ministry with excellence. (v.14)

**"Be diligent in these matters"**

- - In verse 15 is added another directive for ministers of Christ Jesus - to be "diligent" in doing these ministry functions.

- - "Give care to" them, and "take care of" them, suggesting to continually be aware of, thinking about, and dwelling on them inwardly in your mind while simultaneously taking practical steps outwardly to implement, develop, enhance, and refine them. (Strong's #3191)

**"give yourself wholly to them"**

- - Furthermore, the directive is to "give yourself wholly to them" (*NIV*), "be absorbed in them" (*NAS*), "throw yourself wholly into them" (*AMP*).

- - Essentially, ministers of Christ Jesus are to be totally focused on these functions, oriented in these functions, immersed in these functions, and proceeding forth by these functions.

- - Over time though, while leading or doing ministry it is easy to get bogged down, discouraged, unmotivated, depressed, lackadaisical, bored, disinterested, distracted, diverted, burned out, or drained.

- - These symptoms of decline are especially prone to be prevalent when the results of one's ministry efforts are disappointing, mediocre, insignificant, or lacking of positive feedback.

- - Nevertheless, good ministers persevere in fulfilling in excellence the ministry duties God has assigned them to do, regardless of how the results of their ministry work turn out. (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:4-8)

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**BIG IDEA: Those persons who function as ministers of Christ Jesus are to stay focused on shaping, developing, enhancing, and implementing their ministry activities in accordance with God's guidelines, which He has stated, listed, and directed in His Word.**

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**IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS:**

- - For those of you who do ministry work, take a few moments to evaluate what you are doing and how.

- - Upon what is your ministry philosophy and work based? Your own understanding? Your own preferences? Your own comfort zone? Your own limited or inadequate knowledge of Scriptures? Your own divergent interpretation of Scriptures or questionable doctrines?

- - Or is your ministry philosophy and work based solely and directly on specific applicable verses in the Bible, interpreted soundly? And if so, on which verses or biblical principles? List as many as you can think of that actually guide your ministry functioning.

- - Sorry, but the reality here is that if you cannot list hardly any biblical principles or verses upon which your ministry functioning is based, then you are trying to engage in doing ministry under your own determination, and most likely you are not adequately proceeding under the guidance and empowering from God.
  - - Therefore, it would be wise and advisable for you to immediately become "diligent" in pursuing how God wants you to do ministry.
  - - Research the Scriptures. You can start by examining the Book of 1 Timothy, which is filled with numerous directives on how to do ministry. Go through 1 Timothy verse by verse, identify each directive, and then add it to a list that you will intensely study, repeatedly refer to, and strive to fully implement in your ministry functioning.
  - - The Internet has websites where ministry books and resources can be found that point to Bible verses and teach biblical principles on how to do ministry God's way.
  - - Ask your pastor to start offering or arrange for monthly ministry-training workshops or periodic seminars.
  - - Investigate into taking some distance-learning courses from a Bible college on how to do ministry.
  - - Go on Amazon.com or Ebay.com to buy some books on how to do ministry in your particular field or type of ministry work.
  - - The point here is that you need to take distinct and specific steps to educate yourself on how to do ministry God's way. Otherwise, subliminally picking up how to do ministry God's way will not occur substantially enough for you, if at all.
- - Be focused on enhancing and doing the very best in your ministry activities by collaborating with God to perform your ministry functioning with excellence in the ways He has gifted you.

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[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - If you are a true believer in Christ Jesus, have you accurately identified every spiritual gift that God has endowed upon you?
  - - Of the spiritual gifts that you have identified or suspect you have been given, is God's empowering evident for each gift when you exercise it? Or, are you trying to exercise your spiritual gift utilizing mainly your own power, abilities, and means? Or have you "neglected" to develop your spiritual gift(s)?
  - - Because we believers are instructed in verse 14 to not neglect our spiritual gift, then how does God regard our failure to develop our spiritual gift He has given us? Hint: see James 4:17.
  - - Likewise, because leaders of ministries are instructed in verse 15 to "be diligent" and dedicated in pursuing, developing, and implementing doing ministry in God's way, then how does God regard their failure to improve their ministry skills accordingly, consistently, and thoroughly?]
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