

Your Progress May Be Evident to All

Introduction

1 Timothy 4:12-16 (Apostle Paul to an evangelist – we too can apply

1. **Developing our character to be more like Jesus is something that each and everyone of us should strive to do each day that we live.**
 - A. **Webster defines “character” as: “a distinctive mark”, “a distinctive trait or quality,” “one’s pattern of behavior or personality”**
 - 1) **Character is what we are. When we do something out of the ordinary one might say “that’s out of character.”**
2. **In this morning’s lesson we want to learn what kind of things should make up our character; **How** can we progress in our Christian development; and **Why** it is important to progress as a Christian.**

What Should We Be?

What makes up our character?

1. **In verse 12 Paul tells Timothy to** “be an **example to the believers** in **word**, in **conduct**, in **love**, in **spirit**, in **faith**, in **purity**.”

A. In Word:

1) **In daily conversation and in preaching.**

2 Timothy 1:13 Hold fast **the pattern** of sound words....

2) **That pattern was one in which he had learned from Paul. Paul told the Ephesians:**

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

a. **Words make up our character. Corrupt, abusive, filthy words will not hold a Christian in high esteem, it is sinful, and needs to be repented of!**

Matthew 12:37 "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

B. In Conduct:**1) This is the manner of one's life, the way one behaves.**

Ephesians 4:22 that you put off, concerning your **former conduct**, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

1 Timothy 3:15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to **conduct** yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

2) We can compare Peter's language in 2 Peter 3:11 and Paul's words to the Philippians in Phil 1:27.

2 Peter 3:11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in **holy conduct** and godliness,

Philippians 1:27 Only let your **conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ**,....

- a. **Each individual young or old should learn to conduct themselves in a way in which God would be pleased.**

C. In Love:**1) Timothy is encouraged to have a "love from a pure heart" (1 Timothy 1:5). This love is agape which Paul refers to as a genuine love.**

Romans 12:9-13 Let **love be without hypocrisy**. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be **kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love**, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

D. In Spirit:

- 1) **This would encompass our passions. A mild, meek, forgiving disposition.**

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

E. In Faith:

- 1) **A true fidelity meaning “a faithful devotion to duty, obligations, or vows; loyalty.”**

Titus 2:10 showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

F. In Purity:

- 1) **We must be careful and think about the situations that we find ourselves in. Is it one that is pure?**

I John 3:2-4 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him **purifies himself, just as He is pure**. Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

How to Progress in Our Christian Development

These things should make up our behavior and personality

1. **Paul tells Timothy** "Till I come, **give attention to reading**, to **exhortation**, to **doctrine**. **Meditate on these things**; give yourself entirely to them."

A. **Give attention to reading:**

1) **Our character can be and will be developed in a Christ-like manner when we "give attention to reading.**

2 Timothy 2:15

Matthew 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and **learn from Me**,

2) **We will never learn to be Christ-like if we don't attempt to learn about Christ - that comes by giving attention to reading.**

B. **Give attention to exhortation:**

1) **This would be the practical duties of religion. This is the individual that will present the promises and the warnings of God to excite men to the proper discharge of their duty.**

2) **We need to get to the point where we can exhort others in the gospel of Christ. Paul did it.**

PROMISE:

2 Timothy 4:8

WARNING:

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

C. Give attention to doctrine:

- 1) **Doctrine is the principles set forth by Jesus Christ. To make progress in our Christian development we must not only learn, but to obey the principles of Christ.**

Romans 6:17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you **obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine** to which you were delivered.

1 Timothy 4:6 If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the **good doctrine** which you have carefully followed.

D. Meditate on these things: Give yourself entirely to them.

Psalms 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.

- 1) **Let your mind be deeply impressed with these things; make them the subject of profound and serious thought.**
- 2) **The Christian is one that will give himself “wholly” to the work of practicing his Christianity.**

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-- meditate on these things.

- a. **When we meditate on the instructions and values that God has given to us then we WILL progress as Christians!**

The Importance of Progressing

1. **It is important to progress because when we do our “progress may be evident to all.”**

A. When we set the right example and give the proper attention to Bible things, then we will make progress spiritually.

B. Our steady improvement will be apparent to all persons who see us.

1) **Others will see our steady advances in knowledge, wisdom, love, and all things in our manner of life.**

Matthew 5:16

Philippians 2:15-16 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you **shine as lights in the world**, holding fast the word of life

2) **When we are setting the right example and learning we will NOT have to tell others that we are progressing because it will SHOW!**

Philippians 1:25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,

a. **The progress that we make will be seen and appreciated by others. On the other hand when we fail to progress that also is seen by others.**

C. When others see us continuing in our progress for the Lord then something else happens:

2. **We "will save both ourselves and those who hear us."**
 - A. **By holding the truth properly and by the faithful performance of our duties, we will secure salvation!**
 - B. **When others see our good example and faithfulness then they will listen to us. A hypocrite won't be able to save himself or others.**

1 Corinthians 9:27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Jeremiah 23:22 But if they had **stood in My counsel**, and had caused My people to hear My words, then they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings.

- 1) **Only when we remain in God's counsel and take the opportunity to teach others can we have an effect on their soul. Neglecting either one will not save the lost!**

Conclusion

1. For our **"progress to be evident to all"** we must:
 - A. **Be the right example in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity.**
 - B. **Make daily progress by giving attention to reading, exhortation, and to doctrine.**
 - C. **Meditate on these things and give ourselves entirely to them.**
2. **As a result we will save our own soul and those who hear us.**
 - **Your progress as a Christian should be "evident to all!"**

