

1 Timothy #14

July 27, 2025

Series: Body Essentials: Imperatives for Church and Leaders

Today's Message: Evaluate the Fitness of Your Pastor! Pt 1; 1 Timothy 4:6-11

Pastors are evaluated all the time. Some people evaluate their pastor based on likeability. "I like pastor *so and so*." Or "He tells it like it is," which is code for "I approve of him going after all those sinners." Some evaluate their pastor based on their age. "I like a younger pastor because he can relate to younger people." Or "I like an older pastor, but not too old, because if he's too old he's out of touch." Degrees and pedigrees come into play. And obviously we each have our personal likes and dislikes. But are our evaluations based on Truth?

1 Timothy 4:6-11 and 1 Timothy 4:12-16 provide powerful teaching on discovering and even evaluating the qualities of a good minister, or pastor. It will be uncomfortable in some ways but today you have an opportunity to move beyond personal *likes* and *dislikes* and evaluate the qualities of your pastor biblically. You get to look at me today. It is important to understand that over the next two weeks each you get to see what God says is the true standard of measure for fitness. This week 4:6-11 and next week 4:12-16.

NOTE: Our outline is basically a list which forms the standard by which we are to evaluate the pastor.

- I) **(4:6a) It is essential that he regularly warns the believers, but with humble persuasion.**
 - A) "Point out"
 - 1) First, the phrase in English is clearly indicating gentleness. The Greek word means, *humble persuasion, or to remind or to suggest*.
 - (a) It does not in any way mean that he is to be commanding people or rigorously demanding obedience.
 - (b) He is to warn but gently. He is to warn continually but with ongoing humble persuasion.
 - (i) Examples:
 - (a) **Acts 20:29-32** Paul continued to warn the Ephesians with *humble persuasion*.
 1. Admonish with tears: three years, day and night! (Continually warning)
 - (b) **Romans 15:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Colossians 1:28; 2:8**
 - B) "These things"—the false teachings listed in 4:1-5.
 - 1) Continually be alert and continually warn the church not to soften their theology to accommodate everyone.
 - 2) In warning he is teaching the congregation to think biblically with good theology.
- II) **(4:6b) It is essential that he is first and foremost a faithful servant of Jesus Christ and a good example.**
 - A) His devotion must clearly be to Jesus Christ.
 - B) His devotion to Christ must be demonstrated through his efforts to build up the faith of believers.
 - 1) That believers will think and act in accordance with biblical teaching.
 - (a) Obviously, he will denounce false teaching, but he will also positively teach and live the truth before the eyes of the flock.
 - (i) 4:12 says so: "...set an example for believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."
- III) **(4:6c) It is essential that he studies, knows and handles the Scriptures well.**
 - A) Is there evidence of a love for, even a burning passion for knowing and understanding the Word?
 - B) The NASB offers a clearer picture of this: "...constantly nourished on the words of faith and of sound doctrine which you have been following."
 - 1) "constantly nourished" means to presently and continually feed on the truths of God's word.
 - (a) Read it! Mediate on it! Master it! This is how Paul says that Timothy will be approved of by God and able to be unashamed as he handles the word of God accurately. **(2 Timothy 2:15)**
 - (b) Being faithful to the Scripture must be one of the key good and desirable qualities in your pastor.
 - 2) "...the words of faith" is the complete body of Christian truth found in the Scripture.
 - (a) His answers, his teaching and his counsel must be rooted in the Scripture. It should be evident.
 - 3) "...sound doctrine" means that he properly interprets the Scripture. Consistently biblical!

- (a) Don't deviate. Timothy had been brought up on Scripture and must remain faithful to Scripture.
 - (i) 2 Timothy 3:16-17 teaches the origin, power, purpose and use of Scripture.
 - (a) "All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, reproving, correcting and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."
 - 1. He must be persuaded by Scripture not by worldly devices and counsel.

IV) (4:7a) It is essential that his influence is dominated by Scripture and not "godless myths and old wives' tales."

- 1) If he is influenced by worldly sources, worldly counsel and unbiblical notions he will be weakened.
- 2) Paul warns every pastor to "have nothing to do with" these things! (The word is strong in the Greek. It means to "reject" or "put away." He uses the same word in **2 Timothy 2:23** and **Titus 3:10**.
 - (a) Constantly take inventory of thoughts and beliefs that fit into these categories.
 - (i) "Be transformed by the renewing of your minds," Paul says in Romans 12:2.
 - (ii) The pastor must be on a **search and destroy** mission concerning the influence of the world in his thinking and his behavior.
 - (b) **Listen to what your pastor** is saying (in season and out of season)!! Is he saturated with the Word in his preaching and in his conversation outside of the pulpit? If he is, you have a good pastor!

V) (4:7b-9) It is essential that he is continually growing in godliness. (Is he self-motivated to grow in Godliness?)

- A) He must see the essential need of his own godliness if he is to lead his congregation toward godliness.
 - 1) Robert Murray M'Cheyne declared, "The greatest need of my congregation is my own personal holiness."
 - (a) Your pastor is struggling with temptations of the flesh.
 - (i) In his struggle can you see or detect a growing dependence of Christ Jesus?
 - (a) Romans 7:21-25 concludes with, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!"
 - 1. Dependence on Christ leads to active repentance from sin and temptations.
- B) (4:8) Unlike *bodily discipline*, which is useful in the short term of this life, godliness is profitable for the soul both in this life and the life to come.
 - 1) You want and need your pastor to have a clear and pure conscience in this life. You will be blessed.
 - 2) You also want your pastor to pursue godliness, not fame, popularity, likeability or reputation.
 - (a) He must be obsessed with pleasing God first, not himself or others. (**See 2 Corinthians 5:9**)
 - (i) "There are two choices on the shelf: to please God or please yourself.
- C) (4:9) "This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance."
 - 1) This teaching on godliness is essential and the pastor must be fully immersed in his pursuit of godliness!

VI) (4:10) It is essential that he be committed to the hard work of the ministry.

- A) Including his pursuit of godliness (see 4:8)
 - 1) Paul describes this pursuit as a labor and striving.
 - (a) Labor: to work to the point of exhaustion, even weariness.
 - (b) Strive: to agonize. The work of godliness and the ministry of the word is agonizing at times.
 - (i) Will he do it? Does he do it? Does his work in the ministry reveal this from time to time?
- B) The source of strength to pursue godliness and to work hard and agonize in the ministry to the Church:
 - 1) The pastor's hope is in the Living God.
 - (a) He is the Savior of all men. (So this also motivates the pastor through the agony of ministry!)
 - (b) But especially to all who believe. (There must be a profound confidence that God will work!)

VII) (4:11) It is essential that he teach and preach the word without fear and with divine authority.

- A) NIV uses the word "command." The NASB95 uses the word "prescribe."
 - 1) His teaching must NOT be suggestions or ideas, but divine prescriptions from God!
 - (a) He will confront sin with authority but tempered with gentleness and free from abuse!
 - (i) The Church is God's sheep and the bride of Christ. The pastor must remember this!