

# THE YOUNG MINISTER

## (CHARGE 4): TO BE A MAN OF GOD

### 1 TIMOTHY 06:11–16

#### *Introduction*

This is a straightforward charge to the minister of God. The minister is called the “*man of God*.” This is one of the great titles of the minister of God.

=> Moses was called “the man of God” (Deu. 33:1; Psa. 90, the title).

=> Eli was called a man of God (1 Sam.2: 27).

=> Samuel was called a man of God (1 Sam. 9:6).

A concordance will show how often the servants of God were called “*the man of God*.” What a dynamic challenge to the minister: to be a “man of God.” Four charges are given to the *man of God*.

- I. Flee the passion for wealth (v. 11).
- II. Pursue, follow after the things of God (v. 11).
- III. Fight the fight of faith and lay hold of eternal life (v. 12).
- IV. Keep this charge — keep this commandment (vv. 13-16).

#### **I. 1 Timothy 06:11 *Flees the Passion for Wealth***

The man of God flees the passion for wealth. A person is to flee the love of money — run away from all that has just been covered in verses 9-10. Note a shocking fact — shocking because so many people love money and the things it can buy:

=> the man who loves money is not a *man of God*. The man of God is the person who flees the love of money. (See 1 Tim. 6:9-10.)

The man of God does not love the world nor seek after the things of the world. He flees from the love and passion of this world.

**Rom 12:2** *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

**2 Cor 6:17-18** *“Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”*

**1 John 2:15-16** *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.*

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## II. 1 Timothy 06:11 *Seek the Things of God*

The man of God pursues, follows after the things of God. The word “pursue” (dioke) is strong. It means to run after; to run swiftly after; to hotly pursue; to seek eagerly and earnestly. It has the idea of aiming at and pursuing until something is gained: of never giving up until we have reached our goal. There are six things the man of God is to pursue.

1. The man of God pursues righteousness (dikiaosune). Righteousness means two things.

a. Righteousness means *being right* with God.

=> It is having a heart that is *right with God*, that has approached God exactly as He says: through His only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

=> It is having a heart that has *allowed God* to recreate and remake it *in righteousness*: through the Lord Jesus Christ.

=> It is having a heart that has participated in the divine nature of God (2 Pet. 1:4).

**Mat 5:6** “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

**Mat 5:20** “For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

**2 Cor 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

**Eph 4:24** And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

b. Righteousness means *doing right*, that is, living exactly as God says to live. Simply stated, a righteous person is a person who *lives right* — a person who does his duty both to God and to man. He lives doing what he should do. He lives a righteous life, walking righteously before God and man day by day. As a result, he is free from guilt and has a free conscience and a strong self-image. The man of God follows and runs after righteousness.

**1 Cor 15:34** Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God — I say this to your shame.

**Phil 1:11** Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God.

2. The man of God pursues godliness (eusebeian). Godliness means to live in the reverence and awe of God; to be *so conscious* of God’s presence that one lives just as God would live if He were walking upon earth. It means to live seeking to be like God; to seek to possess the very character, nature and behaviour of God. The man

of God follows and runs after godliness. He seeks to gain a consciousness of God's presence — a consciousness so intense that he actually lives as God would live if He were on earth.

Note: godliness means to be *Christlike*. Godliness is *Christlikeness*: it is living upon earth just as Christ lived.

**2 Cor 3:18** *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

**Eph 4:24** *And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

**Col 3:2** *Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.*

**1 Tim 4:7** *Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.*

**Titus 2:12-13** *It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

**2 Pet 3:11** *Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives.*

3. The man of God pursues faith (pistin). Faith means both to believe and to be faithful.

=> The man of God seeks faith: to learn to trust God more and more; to be a man of faith, a man of great faith and belief. He wants to believe, trust and depend upon God — to grow more and more in believing God.

=> The man of God seeks to be faithful: be faithful to God more and more. He wants to be loyal, obedient, and attached to God. He wants to please God in all that he does.

**1 Cor 4:2** *Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.*

**1 Th 2:4** *On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.*

**1 Tim 1:12** *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.*

4. The man of God pursues love (see *Love*, 1 Th. 3:12).

5. The man of God pursues endurance (hupomonen) (see *Endurance*, 2 Th. 1:4-5).

6. The man of God pursues gentleness (praupathian). Gentleness means to be tender, humble, mild, considerate, but strongly so. Gentleness has the strength to control and discipline, and it does so at the right time.

a. Gentleness has a *humble state of mind*. But this does not mean the person is weak, cowardly and bowing. The meek person simply loves people and loves peace;

therefore, he walks humbly among men regardless of their status and circumstance in life. Associating with the poor and lowly of this earth does not bother the gentle person. He desires to be a friend to all and to help all as much as possible.

- b. Gentleness has *a strong state of mind*. It looks at situations and wants justice and right to be done. It is not a weak mind that ignores and neglects evil and wrong-doing, abuse and suffering.

=> If someone is suffering, gentleness steps in and does what it can to help.

=> If evil is being done, gentleness does what it can to stop and correct it.

=> If evil is running rampant and indulging itself, gentleness actually strikes out in anger. However, note a crucial point: the anger is always at the right time and against the right thing.

- c. Gentleness has *strong self-control*. The gentle person controls his spirit and mind. He controls the lusts of his flesh (sinful nature). He does not give way to ill-temper, retaliation, passion, indulgence or license. The gentle person dies to himself, to what his flesh would like to do. and he does the right thing — exactly what God wants done.

In summary, the gentle person walks in a humble, tender but strong state of mind. He denies himself and gives utmost consideration to others. He shows a control and righteous anger against injustice and evil. A gentle man forgets self and lives for others because of what Christ has done for him.

=> God is gentle.

**Gal 5:22-23** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

=> Jesus Christ was gentle.

**Mat 11:29** *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”*

=> Believers are to be gentle.

**Gal 6:1** *Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*

**Eph 4:1-3** *As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

**2 Tim 2:25** *Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.*

**Titus 3:2** *To slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate and to show true humility toward all men.*

**James 1:21** *Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.*

**James 3:13** *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.*

**1 Pet 3:4** *Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.*

### **III. 1 Timothy 06:12 The Good Fight of Faith**

The man of God must fight the good fight of faith and lay hold of eternal life. This is a picture of an athletic contest. The word fight (agonizou) means to agonize, struggle, battle, contend and fight for the prize. It is the idea of a *desperate effort and struggle*.

Note: the believer is in a desperate struggle for eternal life. Laying hold of the prize of eternal life is the struggle. Eternal life is the goal for which the man of God is fighting. Mathew Henry described it well:

*“Those who will get to heaven must fight their way there. There must be a conflict with corruption and temptations and... the power of darkness. Observe. It is a good fight, it is a good cause, and it will have a good [end and purpose]... Observe...*

*“Eternal life is the crown proposed to us, forever encouragement to war, and to fight...*

*“This we must lay hold on [eternal life], as those that are afraid of coming short of it and losing it. Lay hold, and take heed of losing your hold....*

*“We are called to the fight, and to lay hold on eternal life” (Mathew Henry's Commentary, Vol. 6, p. 830).*

Kenneth Wuest says, *“Paul exhorts Timothy to lay hold of eternal life, he does not imply that he does not possess it. Timothy was saved, and possessed eternal life as a gift of God. What Paul was desirous of was that Timothy experience more of what this eternal life is in his life” (The Pastoral Epistles. “Wuests Word Studies,” Vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1952, p. 98).*

Note an extremely significant point: what the profession of a minister is. When a man commits his life to the ministry, he is professing...

- that he believes in eternal life — that eternal life is a reality.
- that he and all others who trust Christ shall live forever.

He professes the reality of eternal life before “many witnesses” — all who know him and come in contact with him.

The point is this: the man of God must live up to his profession. He must do exactly what he professes: fight the good fight of the faith and take hold of eternal life.

**Mat 10:22** *“All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.”*

**2 Tim 2:4** *No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer.*

**1 Cor 9:24-27** *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*

**Gal 6:8** *The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction: the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

**Heb 12:3-4** *Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.*

**Rev 3:11** *I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.*

#### **IV. 1 Timothy 06:13–16 Keep the Commandment**

The man of God must keep this commandment. What commandment? The commandment just covered in v. 11-12. Five reasons are given for keeping these commandments.

1. God has the power to quicken, to give life to everything. The phrase “gives life” (*zoogonountos*) means to quicken; to bring forth alive (Robertson). God is life; He possesses the very energy and power of life within Himself. Therefore, God actually has the power to inject and infuse *eternal life* into us. There is no greater reason for keeping the commandments of God. If we keep His commandments, He will quicken us to live forever; He will give us eternal life.
2. Christ has set the example of a good profession before us. When Christ stood before Pilate. He said:

**John 18:36-37** *Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.” “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”*

The man of God is to make the very same profession that Christ made: Jesus Christ is King, the Supreme majesty of the universe, the “blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (v. 15). This is the second reason for keeping the commandments of God.

3. Christ is to come again and be exalted as King of kings and Lord of lords. The point is judgment. Every one of us must confront Christ: we will be called forth and be forced to stand face to face with Him. We will have to give an account of how well we kept His commandments.
  - => “Keep [the commandment] with an eye to His second coming, when we must all give an account of the talents we have been entrusted with...
  - => “The Lord Jesus Christ will appear; and it will be a glorious appearing... Ministers should have an eye to this appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ in all their administrations...
  - => “Till his appearing, they [ministers] are to keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable” (Mathew Henry. Mathew Henry’s Commentary, Vol. 6, p. 831).

Jesus Christ shall return to earth and be exalted:

**1 Tim 6:15** *Which God will bring about in his own time — God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords.*

This is the third reason why we must keep the commandments of God.

4. Christ alone possesses immortality and dwells in the transcendent and unapproachable light of God’s glory. This is one of the magnificent doxologies of the Bible. Its message is powerful.
  - a. Christ alone has immortality: no person shall ever live forever apart from Jesus Christ.

**John 8:51** *“I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”*

**John 11:26** *“And whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”*

**2 Tim 1:10** *But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

- b. Christ alone dwells in the light which no man can approach unto, the glorious light of God’s presence. No person shall ever approach God or dwell in the light of God’s presence apart from Jesus Christ.

**John 14:6** *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

**1 Tim 2:5** *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

5. Christ alone has seen and can see the light of God’s presence and glory. No person shall ever be allowed to see the light of God’s presence and glory apart from Christ.

**Exo 33:20** *“But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”*

**John 1:18** *No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known.*

**John 5:37** *“And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form.”*

**Col 1:15** *He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation.*

**1 Tim 1:17** *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

**1 Tim 6:16** *Who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honour and might forever. Amen.*

Therefore, to God and Christ alone belong honour and might forever. Amen.

*“This whole passage is a magnificent embodiment of the attributes of the living God, supreme blessedness and almighty power, universal dominion, and unchangeable being, inscrutable majesty, radiant holiness, and glory inaccessible and unapproachable by his creatures, save through the mediation of his only begotten Son” (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21. p. 123). ■*

# THE RICH MAN AND THE MINISTER: THE FINAL CHARGE

## 1 TIMOTHY 06:17–21

### *Introduction*

This is the final lesson and study in the book of First Timothy. The lessons have been many and the studies very helpful and stirring. This last lesson and study is no exception. It is a strong charge both to the rich of this world and to the ministers of the gospel.

- I. The charge to the rich man (vv. 17-19).
- II. The charge to the minister (vv. 20-21).

### **I. 1 Timothy 06:17–19 Duty of the Rich: Share**

The final charge to the rich man. The word “command” (*paraggelle*) is a strong word. It has the force of a military command, yet it has the tenderness of an appeal to it. It means to beg and beseech a person — strongly so — to the point that the person is commanded to act. In this command God is appealing and begging the rich person, but He is doing it so strongly that it is a command. The rich person is approached in love and tenderness and an appeal is made to him, but he is expected to do exactly what God says. Five strong charges are given to the rich.

1. The rich person is not to be high-minded, proud or arrogant. The world honours money. Practically everyone in the world wants more money, and most are actually seeking more money. Few persons would turn down money. Money — the thought of riches and wealth — is so interwoven in the fabric of this world that it is probably the most honoured thing in this world. The result is that the rich person is lifted up in the minds of most people. Most people want to be like the rich person. Most people put the rich person upon a pedestal. This makes it extremely difficult for a rich person to keep a proper perspective of himself.
- => There is great danger that the rich person will begin to think too highly of himself. There is the danger that he will become high-minded, prideful and arrogant; that he will begin to feel above other persons and to esteem himself better than others. There is the danger that he will begin to look down upon others and downplay others. The rich person — just because of his riches — must guard against feeling more important than other people. Riches and possessions do not make a person a *good person*: they do not make a person a *quality person*. Therefore, riches and possessions do not make a person *better, of more quality* than anyone else.

The charge is forceful: “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant.” The temptation is there — always confronting the rich — because of the world’s attitude toward riches. But the charge of God is clear: “[The rich are] not to be arrogant.”

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**Luke 22:26** *“But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.”*

**Rom. 12:3** *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

**Ph. 2:3-4** *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

**Jas.4:10** *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

**Mic. 6:8** *He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

2. The rich person is not to trust in the *uncertainty of riches*. Riches are about the most uncertain thing in life. The world’s economy is never certain, fluctuating up and down every few years; crisis follows crisis in world affairs and the markets respond and react to each crisis. Even if a person can keep his wealth in this life, disease or accident can happen overnight, and the person’s wealth does him no good whatsoever. Riches — their value and benefit — may be here today, but they are just as easily gone tomorrow.

The charge is forceful: “Command those who are rich in this present world...[that they not] put their hope in wealth.”

**Mk. 10:24** *The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!”*

**Lk. 12:19-20** *And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you.’ Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?”*

**1 Tim. 6:17** *Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.*

**Job 31:24-25, 28** *“If I have put my trust in gold or said to pure gold, ‘You are my security,’ if I have rejoiced over my great wealth, the fortune my hands had gained, Then these also would be sins to be judged, for I would have been unfaithful to God on high.*

**Psa. 52:7** *“Here now is the man who did not make God his stronghold but trusted in his great wealth and grew strong by destroying others!”*

3. The rich person is to *trust in God*. The word “hope” means to fix and set one’s heart and life upon God. God is — He actually exists. He is living and He is the only Person who possesses every good and perfect gift. Therefore, He alone can give us...

- the good and perfect gifts necessary for this life.
- the good and perfect gifts necessary for the next life.

In fact, every *good gift* that we receive now — including riches — has come from God. This fact is not to be missed; it bears repeating: every good gift that we now have has come from God. Therefore, if we want more and more of the good things of this life, we must put our hope in God.

**Jas. 1:17** *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

**Mt. 6:33** *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

**Jn. 15:11** *“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”*

**Exo. 23:25** *Worship the Lord your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you.*

**Psa. 65:9** *You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.*

**Psa. 68:19** *Praise be to the Lord, to God our Saviour, who daily bears our burdens.*

4. The rich person is to do good and to be rich in good works or deeds. What deeds? The deeds of a rich man are clearly stated: he is to distribute his wealth and be generous in it. Too many rich people shut their ears when they hear this. They turn their attention elsewhere, for they do not want to think about giving large amounts of money. They reject the fact that God expects them to give — to give to the point of sacrifice just like God did when He gave His Son and just like God’s people do. But think about something — think honestly and realistically.

=> First, literally millions of people are hurting and dying every day from hunger, disease and lack of fresh water; from ignorance, sin, loneliness and emptiness. When God looks down upon earth and sees someone hurting and dying and He sees us — the rich of the earth — what do you think God expects us to do? The world is one community; God expects us to meet the needs of the earth — to sacrificially meet the needs.

=> Second, why do you think a person has wealth? To hoard it? To bank and store it up and just let it lie around and never be used? We know better — every one of us knows better.

God expects the rich to do good and be rich in good deeds. He expects the rich to distribute and to be generous and sacrificial in meeting the needs of the lost and poor and dying of this world.

**Lk. 12:33** *“Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.”*

**Acts 20:35** *“In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”*

**Rom. 12:13** *Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*

**Gal. 6:10** *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

**1 Tim. 6:18** *Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.*

**Heb. 13:16** *And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*

5. The rich person is to lay up wealth for the world to come. How does a rich person lay up wealth for the world to come?

=> By distributing and giving generously and sacrificially (v. 18).

=> “By giving it away” (A.T. Robertson. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. 4, p. 596).

=> By using “their wealth to do good [and being]... ready to share...[remembering] that a Christian is essentially a man who is a member of a fellowship” (William Barclay. *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*, p. 159).

=> “By work of charity” (Mathew Henry. *Mathew Henry’s Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 83).

**Mt. 6:20** *“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.”*

**Mt. 19:21** *Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”*

**Lk. 12:33** *“Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.”*

**Ph. 3:8** *What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.*

Again, think of all the desperate needs of the world and of our own communities and cities. Any example of any need could be taken, but consider a person who is starving to death. If a rich person does not reach out and save the starving person and give life to him, how can the rich person expect God to give life to him in the next world? The only way we — any of us who are rich — can lay hold of eternal life is to give life to those who are dying in the sins and deprivations of their world.

The charge is militarily strong: charge them that are rich in this world, that they lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation against the time to come.

## II. 1 Timothy 06:20–21 *Duty of the Minister*

The final charge to the minister. The charge is twofold.

1. Guard what has been entrusted to your care. What is it that has been entrusted to the minister? What is the trust committed to him?

*“It is the deposit of truth delivered to him....It is the teaching which Paul imparted to Timothy, ‘the sound words’ [of the truth]”* (Kenneth Wuest. *The Pastoral Epistles*, Vol. 2, p. 102f).

*“The truths of God, the ordinances of God, keep these”* (Mathew Henry. *Mathew Henry’s Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 831).

*“Let nothing cause you to deviate from the Gospel message of the grace of God”* (Oliver Greene. *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Timothy and Titus*, p. 241).

The great trust committed to the minister of God is...

- the faith.
- the glorious truth of God which God has revealed to men in His Word and in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- the wonderful gospel of God — the gospel that is revealed in the sending of God’s Son to earth in order to save men.

The picture here is that of a *deposit*, of a faithful and diligent banker who looks after the money *deposited* into his care. The minister of God is to guard and keep, look after and care for the faith and truth of God, the faith and truth of His Son and of His Word, of His Revelation and of His gospel. The minister must never forget that God has deposited — actually laid — the truth of God into his hands. The minister has been entrusted with the gospel of God, the glorious message of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Pulpit Commentary has an excellent comment on this fact:

*“Timothy here is to keep diligent and watchful guard over the faith committed to his trust; to preserve it unaltered and incorrupt, so as to hand it down to his successors exactly the same as he had received it. Oh that the successors of the apostles had always kept this precept”* (A.C. Hervey. *First Timothy*. “The Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21, ed. by HDM Spence and Joseph S. Exell. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1950, p. 124).

William Barclay’s comments are also worthy of quote:

*“If in our day the Christian faith were to be twisted and distorted, it would not only be we who were the losers; those of generations still to come would be robbed of something infinitely precious. We are not only the possessors, we are also the trustees of the faith. That which we have received, we must also hand on “* (The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, p. 161).

**1 Cor. 9:17** *If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me.*

**Col. 1:25** *I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness.*

**1 Th. 2:4-5** *On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed — God is our witness.*

**1 Th. 2:13** *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

**1 Tim. 1:11-12** *That conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me. I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.*

**Tit. 1:3** *And at his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Saviour.*

2. The minister is to turn away from false teaching. The description of false teaching is graphic.

a. False teaching is described as godless chatter.

=> The word “godless” (bebelos) means common, irreverent and irreligious talk.

=> The word “chatter” means empty and meaningless.

Therefore, the charge is to take all *empty talk* and turn away from it. Have absolutely nothing to do with common, irreverent, godless and *empty voices* — no matter who is sounding forth the words. This would, of course, include:

=> false claims to truth

=> worldly philosophy

=> suggestive talk

=> all forms of false teaching

=> novel ideas of religion

=> off-coloured jokes

=> cursing

=> criticism

=> gossip

b. False teaching is described as *opposing ideas* and false knowledge.

=> The phrase “opposing ideas” (antitheseis) means antithesis, that is, to stand against some thesis, truth or fact. What is being condemned is the false knowledge of men, the things that men teach that are contrary to God’s glorious revelation in Christ and in the Word of God. The minister of God — in fact, any person — is a fool to stand against truth and fact, whether of God or of true knowledge.

The charge is strong, very strong: turn away from men and their teachings when they stand against Christ and the teachings of God's Word. Have nothing to do with the false knowledge of men. The men and their false teachings may concern philosophy, psychology, education, sociology, religion — any area of knowledge — but turn away from them if they are false. How do you tell if it is false? By the Word of God, the revelation and record of Christ and of the truth of God. If knowledge stands in opposition to the Word of God, turn away from it.

Note that some professing church members had turned to false teaching. The seriousness of the situation is seen in that these are the last words of this letter. The very last thing that Paul says to Timothy is to turn away from false teaching. What a warning to us!

**Mt. 24:12** *“Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.”*

**Lk. 8:13** *“Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.”*

**Lk. 9:62** *Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”*

**Lk. 11:24-26** *“When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.”*

**Gal. 4:9** *But now that you know God — or rather are known by God — how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?*

**Heb. 10:38** *“But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.”*

**Rev. 2:4** *Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. ■*