

Glass House

1 Timothy 4:12 *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

One of the strongest pieces of advice that Paul gave to Timothy as a young minister was for him to be an example of the believers. He was saying live out publicly your godly convictions and beliefs for all to see. The way we live as leaders and ministers influences others because they are watching us 24/7. We are an open book! If we are not being an example, we will be despised.

Romans 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

- a) Some folks believe that living a godly and sacrificial life is only for the ministers, preachers, or the clergy. Nothing can be further from the truth, but this verse removes all of that. It is for all believers. This is everyone's basic and elementary entry-level service. It is not just for a few "chosen" special super dupers."
- b) How we live as ministers or believers is more important than we realize and think! We live transparent lives. Our life is a see-through. We can't hide. People are always noticing.

This message is about us living as an example. God and people—everyone is watching, and we are living in a glass house. We need to be God-conscious. What we do in private—good or bad will make its way out. I'm going to live my life in a way that no one is going to accuse me of anything, and if they do, there will be enough collaboration to expose and debunk their lies.

You should **not** have a different private life. If you were living in a literal glass house, would you be doing what you are doing, or watching what you are watching? If not, then you need to repent. Christian life is **not** a private conviction, but much more a public conviction as well. We are deceived into thinking that no one is watching us.

Telling your kids, *"This movie is only for adults (Daddy and Mom) go to your room and play or read your book,"* is very telling. If you cannot watch a movie with your children and be comfortable with it, you should not be watching it. It is not a good and godly movie.

I'm going to live in such a way that if someone said bad things about me or tried to character-assassinate me, no one will believe it.

Example:

I heard of a Pastor who was counseling a woman alone, and she screamed, ripped her blouse, and accused the pastor, and he lost his church and ministry. He had nothing wrong, but the environment he was in with her alone set him up for false accusation.

We have to live in a way that what we do is seen right and appears right because it is. What you are doing ought to appear right. Do not give people ammunition to misinterpret what you are doing.

A single guy should not be going to a single girl's place alone. It's wrong and inappropriate. It is setting yourself up for failure. It's making provision for the flesh.

As a minister, you have to live an exemplary life because people do notice. As a minister, you are not at liberty to do whatever you want to do. You need to think about how people will perceive things—more like a politician. Politicians—some are careful of what they say, their associations, and how they live because it could hurt and haunt their future political aspirations and career. In a sense, this is true for ministers and believers as well.

We need to remember that we are all representing the Lord, and we need to live our lives without accusation. Do not give people an opportunity against you.

Ministering Death

I heard someone say that if someone is preaching something right, but living the opposite of what they are preaching, it ministers bad things and death to the people they are preaching to.

We need to watch the way we live and align it with the Word.

Ministering or Ministry is not just what we say or share with people, but how we live. Teaching and preaching are the least part of ministry. The major part is living ministry rather than ministering or doing ministry. **If you are living differently from your message and teaching, soon or later, people will find out, and it will negate your ministry. You or a minister of the Word can regain his fellowship with God, but it is harder to regain their followership!**

The way you live gives strength to the words you say.

A Christian or a minister is a minister 24 hours. Why? Because our way of life is ministering to others, consciously or not. You are in ministry and a minister all the time, specifically in the way you live, not in activity.

You cannot act a certain way anytime or any place, especially if you are a minister. You do not have a secular, carnal, and spiritual life.

1 Peter 5:2-3 *"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."*

a) Feed/Shepherd the flock of God

b) Oversight

- i) This oversight is not forceful. It ought to be of one's free will and volition. God is looking for willingness, not compulsion.
- ii) **No one should be in ministry out of compulsion or a need for a need, not a need to be needed.**
- iii) The motivation should also be a godly one. It shouldn't be for filthy lucre—money's sake. Filthy lucre simply refers to dishonest gain. Many shepherds are in to prey on the sheep, not pray for the sheep. Rather than feed the sheep, they whip the sheep.
- iv) Those who are in it for the money do not have the right attitude.
- v) True leadership under the new covenant is not domineering or loading over others, but rather to serve. **The best leader of all is the best servant of all.**
- vi) Notice that the flock has been entrusted to the shepherd. They are not his, period.
- vii) Those who love to load it over others aren't good examples. The best leaders are exemplary.

c) Examples to the flock.

One of the best forms of teaching is by being an example. **We need to grow from positional authority to moral authority or leadership.**

If you won't or can't model it, you have no business teaching it. Wait until you can model it.

- i) A shepherd ought to be an example to the flock in how we live, give, love, and serve.
- ii) 1 Timothy 4:12-16 [12] *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. [13] Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. [14] Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. [15] Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. [16] Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*

We need to lead by example, not by might or fiat. For instance, Obama used the IRS, the FBI, and the CIA to lead. He did not lead by example, but by fear and terror. Be an **example** to the believers. How?

- In word = what we say. The mouth and control of it is key in being an example and winning people over.
- Conversation = This is speaking about a lifestyle.
- Charity = God's kind of love
- Spirit = Attitude. A leader ought to display and be an example of a good attitude.
- Faith = For a leader to have a huge influence on others, he ought to be strong in faith.
- Purity = Integrity
- This is the way you become an example and stop others from despising you. It's in our power not to let anyone despise us.

- It is in our power not to let others despise us.
 - Notice that Paul did not write to the church of Ephesus not to despise Timothy as a youth. He rather told Timothy a way to win them over to him by being an EXAMPLE in both actions and motives. It shows some responsibility on us as individuals of other people's opinions of us. It is not entirely up to people and what they think. We have a larger part to play in all of that.
 - Rather than complain about how others view and think of us, we can influence a change in the way others view us. This may not be successful all the time, but it is something that we ought to do because, to a larger extent, we can bring about a positive change and impact.
 - In an effort to become great leaders and ministers of the Word, we should not become lousy Christians.
- iii) Paul often pointed to his life, living a godly life of an example, and asked others to imitate him or follow him as he followed Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17) and Philippians 4:9 *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*
- iv) Notice the word "Flock" (1 Peter 5:2-3). We do not use the word flock while referring to one but many. This shows us together as one.

I say it this way: **first, practice before you preach, then preach what you have practiced and do practice.**

Ezekiel 7:10 *For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.*