

1 Timothy 4:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine (ἐπεχε σεαυτῷ καὶ τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ, epeche seautō kai tē didaskalia)—'pay attention to yourself and to the teaching.' Epechō means to hold toward, pay attention, watch carefully. Pastoral ministry requires vigilance over both personal life (character) and public teaching (content).

Continue in them (ἐπίμενε αὐτοῖς, epimene autois)—'persevere in these things,' remain steadfast. **For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee** (τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν καὶ σεαυτὸν σώσεις καὶ τοὺς ἀκούοντάς σου, touto gar poiōn kai seauton sōseis kai tous akouontas sou)—faithful perseverance in godliness and doctrine results in salvation for both minister and hearers.

Paul speaks of 'saving' not in the sense of earning salvation by works, but of persevering in faith to final salvation (Philippians 2:12). Timothy's vigilance over life and doctrine guards him from apostasy and protects his flock from error. Ministers must watch themselves as carefully as they watch their teaching—both matter eternally.

Historical Context

The Ephesian church faced false teachers who had wandered from truth (1:6, 19-20). Some had shipwrecked their faith. Paul warns Timothy that perseverance

requires constant vigilance—guard your heart and guard sound doctrine. Neglect either and you imperil both yourself and your congregation. Ministry is serious eternal business.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Why must pastors guard both personal godliness and doctrinal purity equally?
2. How does faithful ministry result in 'salvation' for both pastor and people?
3. What specific practices help ministers 'take heed' to themselves and their teaching?

Interlinear Text

ἐπεχε	σεαυτὸν	καὶ	τῇ	διδασκαλίᾳ	ἐπίμενε	αὐτοῖς·
Take heed	thyselv	and	G3588	unto the doctrine	continue	in them
G1907	G4572	G2532		G1319	G1961	G846
τοῦτο	γὰρ	ποιῶν	καὶ	σεαυτὸν	σώσεις	καὶ
this	for	in doing	and	thyselv	save	and
G5124	G1063	G4160	G2532	G4572	G4982	G3588
ἀκούοντάς	σου					
them that hear	thee					
G191	G4675					

Additional Cross-References

Titus 1:9 (Parallel theme): Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Titus 2:7 (Parallel theme): In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

1 Chronicles 28:10 (Parallel theme): Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.

Hebrews 12:15 (Parallel theme): Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

2 Timothy 4:2 (Parallel theme): Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

2 Timothy 3:14 (Parallel theme): But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

Hebrews 13:9 (Parallel theme): Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

Isaiah 55:11 (Parallel theme): So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Ephesians 4:14 (Parallel theme): That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

1 Timothy 1:3 (Parallel theme): As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,