

The Young Teaching the Old (Part 2)

1 Timothy 4:12

Introduction:

1. How many of you are young today? “Young” is a relative term, isn’t it? It depends on who you are being compared to.
2. Paul is writing this book to his son in the faith, Timothy. As we read verse 12, we see that Timothy was obviously a young man. *“Let no man despise thy youth...”*
 - Paul used this term to describe himself, referring to his younger years. Acts 26:4
3. Apparently, Timothy was sent to Ephesus to represent Paul and his apostolic ministry. There may have been some resistance from the church because of Timothy’s youthful age. Paul tells Timothy, “Don’t let them despise your youth.” **Illustration:** When I became pastor, I wanted to look older because of people’s reactions to a 27-year-old being chosen as senior pastor. Now I’m a grandfather, and I want to look young!
 - “*Despise*” means “to think against.” We should never be guilty of judging somebody based on their age. There are people who will not allow somebody younger than them to tell them or teach them anything. This is very sad.
4. Godly wisdom and godly living does not necessarily have anything to do with age. It has to do with your yieldedness and submission to Christ. Godly wisdom doesn’t come from physical age, but it comes from Christ and His Word. Colossians 2:3, 3:16
5. There are older believers that make really bad decisions and do not evidence any spiritual wisdom whatsoever. There are young people that make very good decisions and evidence great spiritual maturity.
6. *“Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers...”* This is the balance. If Timothy did not want people to despise his youth, then he must have been the right kind of example.
 - It would have been useless for him to demand respect. He had to earn it. The same is true of all of us.
7. We need godly role models today, both young and old. If you know Christ today, you need to provide a godly role model to others. How?

First, use gracious words.

Second, seek to maintain a holy life.

Third, love fervently.

Fourth, keep a right attitude.

1. Have you ever heard somebody say, “I like his spirit?” What that means is, “I like his attitude.”
2. Your spirit has to do with your inner thinking processes, and as a man thinks in his heart, so is he. Your spirit will come out. Your mental disposition will show.
 - Ever meet somebody with a bad attitude? How did you know he or she had a bad attitude? It showed, didn’t it?

- Is your attitude or inner spirit important? Proverbs 25:28 states, *“He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.”*
 - When your spirit is not under the control of God’s Spirit, you are in a dangerous position. Like cancer, bad attitudes like bitterness, depression, anger, resentment, unforgiveness, etc. can begin to take over your inner spirit
3. Paul told Timothy to be an example in spirit. What kind of attitude do you have? How would those who are closest to you answer that? Do you have a good attitude or a bad attitude? A positive attitude or a negative attitude?
 - Have you ever noticed that some people can give you an instant stress headache? They are demanding, obnoxious, and wired. When you see them coming, you brace yourself (or you turn tail and run the other way).
 - But then there are others that you can’t wait to see coming because you always feel like you have breathed in a breath of fresh air when you around them.
 - What is the difference? It’s their spirit!
 4. Look at 2 Timothy 1:16. This guy had a refreshing spirit. He was like a cup of cool, refreshing water on a hot, Florida, summer day. Paul was going through some rough times, but this guy always had something positive, comforting, and encouraging to say.
 5. Do you desire to be an example of the believers and a godly role model? Have a refreshing spirit. Have a positive attitude and spirit.
 - The Bible says about Daniel, *“Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.” Daniel 6:3*
 - What is the principle? People notice your attitude!
 - Proverbs 17:27 says that *“a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.”*
 6. So many young people today exemplify an obnoxious and arrogant spirit. They won’t listen or take instruction. How refreshing it is to see young people who love Jesus Christ, and Christ is living through them, and they are manifesting a refreshing, godly spirit. They are modern-day Timothies or Daniels. An excellent spirit is in them.
 7. Don’t ever be known for things like gossiping, criticizing others, flying off the handle, incessant griping and whining, always being quick to give your opinion, etc. These things are not indicative of a refreshing spirit, but a foul spirit.
 8. Remember, you choose what kind of spirit you will have. Nobody can make you have a bad attitude. Your thoughts and your attitude are something **you** choose every day of your life. If you have a bad attitude, look in the mirror to discover why.
 9. People can influence us, but they cannot force a certain attitude on us. By the way, that is why you need to carefully choose your friends. Bad attitudes can be contagious! Proverbs 22:24-25
 10. Do you want to be a godly role model to others? Keep a right attitude.

Fifth, possess a growing faith.

1. God’s desire is that you possess a vibrant, growing faith.
2. Faith is mentioned over 25 times just in 1 and 2 Timothy.
3. In this chapter, Paul talked about people departing from the faith (vs. 1), and being nourished in the words of faith. vs. 6

4. When you walk by faith, it simply means that you are living your daily life with a firm and steadfast reliance upon God's Word. You are living your life by the principles of God's Word, as opposed to living by the corrupt principles of Satan's world system.
5. No matter how strong your faith is, it can always grow. How do I know this? Do you know all of God's Word? Do you know all there is to know about God's Word? If not, then your faith can grow! It is God's Word that nourishes you up in the words of faith. Romans 10:17
 - The Thessalonians' faith was growing exceedingly (2 Thessalonians 1:3). It is so exciting when your faith is growing by leaps and bounds. But how did this happen in their lives? Look at 1 Thessalonians 2:13. They were receiving the Word of God as truth and believing it!
6. How refreshing it is to see a young person today who dares to be different and lives by the truth of God's Word. A young person that lives to please the Lord instead of pleasing people.
7. A person that possesses a growing faith is not caught up in the temporal things of this earth, but sees beyond those to that which is eternal and that which really matters. 1 Timothy 6:10-12

Sixth, live a pure life.

1. Paul has already talked about a pure heart (1:5) and a pure conscience (3:9). In the next chapter, he simply tells Timothy "*Keep thyself pure.*" 5:22
2. Paul's desire was that the young man Timothy keep a pure heart, as opposed to following youthful lusts. 2 Timothy 2:22
 - This word "*pure*" carries the idea of clean, innocent, and chaste.
3. The world system of Satan is perverted, vile, and lewd. The Christian is to stay separated and keep himself pure. 1 John 2:15-17
 - "*Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.*" **1 Peter 2:11**
4. Every day the believer has a choice: either walk after the flesh, or walk after the Spirit. The only way to live pure is to walk after the spirit, moment by moment. Galatians 5:17-18
5. You don't need a list of rules and laws when you are walking in the Spirit. Christ is living through you, and you naturally abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good.
6. When you see a young man or a young lady who dares to be different and live a pure life, it is a rare thing in this evil and sensual world that we live in. As they say, "The cream always rises to the top." You cannot help but sit up and take notice.

In Conclusion:

1. We have some incredible young people in this church. I am personally very thankful for them. They challenge me and are a testimony to me in so many ways.
2. Paul told Timothy, "*Let no man despise thy youth...*" We have a church that does not despise youth, but we love them, embrace them, and allow them to serve here at CrossRoads right alongside older, more seasoned believers.
3. We have some young people who are examples of the believers in all six of these areas that Paul mentioned here in our text. Young people – keep it up. Don't quit! You are role

models to so many. Older saints, let's set an example for our young people of how to age gracefully! Let's show them Christ in all that we do and be testimonies in these six areas.