

Christian, Save Thyself! (Part 1)
1 Timothy 4:13-16

Introduction:

1. Do you think it is possible to get so busy serving in the Lord's work that you neglect your own spiritual health? Do you think it is possible to be so busy helping others that you fail to do the things necessary to help yourself spiritually?
 - It is very much a possibility, and many times a reality for God's servants.
2. Thus, we have Paul's admonition to his son in the faith, Timothy (vs. 16). On the surface you may read, "*Save thyself,*" and scratch your head. "I thought we were saved by Jesus Christ and that we couldn't save ourselves?" You are absolutely right!
3. But this verse is not discussing Timothy's eternal destiny. The word "*save*" simply means "to deliver." Paul did not want to see Timothy fall by the wayside and become a casualty of war. He wanted Timothy's life to have high impact over the long haul.
4. Many believers burn out, or quit, or fall into sin, because they did not take heed unto themselves. They were so **busy** that they neglected their **own** spiritual walk and welfare.
 - They were so busy in the work of the Lord that they forgot the Lord of the work!
5. When you trusted Christ as your Savior you were saved from the **penalty** of your sin. But you must take heed unto yourself, if you are to be saved daily from the **power** of sin.
 - Verse 16 is is not discussing your eternal salvation in heaven. It is discussing your daily deliverance from the power of sin.
6. Paul told Timothy, "You'd better pay attention to your own spiritual health, and in doing so you will save yourself from a ruined and wasted life. In turn, you will be able to help others. But a burned out, ruined, and wasted life cannot help anybody."
7. Paul told Timothy, "*Save thyself.*" Nobody can do it for you. You have to take responsibility for your own spiritual walk with the Lord. You must care for your own spiritual health. How can you do this?

First, stay a self-feeding believer. vs. 13

1. Paul told Timothy to "*give attendance.*" This means "to pay attention to; to apply oneself to."
2. What was Timothy to pay attention to and apply himself to?

Reading – In context, Paul would be referring to the reading of God's Word or books that will edify you in your understanding of God's Word (Proverbs 4:20-22). Many of our questions in life would be answered by simply taking the time to read God's Word consistently.

Exhortation – We don't read God's Word to simply puff ourselves up, but we use our knowledge of God's Word to exhort and challenge others. As you **use** your Bible knowledge to help others, it reinforces God's truth in your heart, and others are also changed for Christ. Hebrews 5:14

Doctrine – This is simply speaking of God's instruction. You need to pay attention to God's instructions for you today (as a grace-age believer). Again, this requires you getting into God's Word, specifically Paul's letters to the churches.

- There is doctrine that nourishes (vs. 6), and there is doctrine of devils (vs. 1). Unfortunately, many believers do not know the difference between the two. Anything that sounds good and tickles their ears, they accept. 2 Timothy 4:3
 - This is why it is so important that you take time to read and study God's Word. As God's Word gets in your heart, it insulates you from doctrines of devils and the world's philosophy. 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 14-17
 - People can try to give you instruction from the Bible, and they can have a chapter and verse, but yet be teaching doctrines of devils. Why? They are twisting and distorting the Scriptures and taking them out of context.
3. Let me just reiterate that **you** have to take responsibility to read and study God's Word and feed yourself from the Word of God. You cannot depend on others.
- If you are not growing, and you feel stagnant, the mirror is the first place to look. Paul said, "*Take heed unto thyself; save thyself.*" You must care for your own spiritual health.
 - Through the years, I have seen believers leave churches that I know were teaching and preaching God's Word. This, in and of itself, is fine. It is a believer's choice where they want to fellowship. But what gets me is when they use as an excuse, "I'm just not being fed there anymore."
 - They are telling on themselves when they say something like this. Every believer should be mature enough to feed himself from God's Word. God's Word is readily accessible. So when believers say this, they are saying that they either are spiritually immature, or they simply are not putting any time into their personal walk with Christ.
 - The spiritual nourishment that we get at church should be like a vitamin supplement. We are digging our own food out all week long. What we get at church is supplemental.
4. You must become a self-feeding Christian and take heed unto thyself.
- You must take personal responsibility for your spiritual growth in Christ.
 - Blaming your husband, your wife, your parents, your pastor, etc., is not going to work. You don't want your life to end up a shipwreck. 1:19
5. Save thyself. Take heed unto thyself. You must take responsibility for your spiritual walk with the Lord. The good news is this: you can!
- Get a plan. Get a Bible reading schedule. Set aside time for prayer each day. Find some good Bible study helps and read!
6. Christian, how is your walk with Christ? Are you growing or have you been stagnant? Nobody can force you to grow in your walk with Christ, and nobody

can grow for you. It has to be a desire from within your heart. *“Take heed unto thyself; save thyself.”*