

“THYSELF AND THEM THAT HEAR”

(I Tim. 4:16)

“16 Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee,” I Tim. 4:16. The appealed is to two groups of individuals in this text. One, the **preacher**, and two, the **hearer**. There is also a “**standard**,” referred to as the “**teaching**,” or, the “**these things**” mentioned in the context of this passage. It will be necessary for us to take a look at each of these listed.

What a **preacher teaches** is referred to in II Tim. 4:2, “2 preach the word.” The **word** is called **Truth** in Jno. 17:17, “17 Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth.” The preacher of the Gospel; or, preacher of Truth is to do just that - teach the Word; or, teach the Truth. It is not **part** of the truth that is to be preached; but rather, **all of the truth**: “27 For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God,” Acts 20:27. The preacher is to declare “**the whole counsel of God.**” It is easy for a preacher to pick and choose what he wants to preach and thus **please** the brethren and cause himself to be esteemed; but, this will cause a preacher to **lose his soul!** We who are preachers of the Word cannot pick and choose what we want to preach and what we do not want to preach – we are bound to preach the “**whole counsel of God.**” If we do not we will lose our soul. The “**these things**” designated in the text has to do with what is presented in I Tim. 4:6 – “6 If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus.” The “**these things**” is designating all of the word, all of the truth, **the whole bundle of TRUTH.**

The idea is that those who are hearing will receive **the whole bundle of TRUTH.** As a result of the truth being taught those who hear will save their souls by being **obedient to that Truth.** Should the preacher not preach all of the truth; then, there would be certain elements of the truth they would not hear and thus would not know and would cause them to be lost. They believed the preacher was teaching the whole truth and he was not; so, they lose their soul because of what they did not hear and were not obedient to that which they did not know about. This becomes a sad state. Preachers holding back part of the truth and causing folks to not hear the truth, can cause hearers to be lost. Let me give an example. Let’s say unlawful marriages are not discussed – **the hearer is left in the dark** – at the end of time he is lost because he did not understand the marriage law associated with God’s Law. This man would be lost because of a lack of knowledge. How sad it is that the truth was withheld and this person is lost!

The Holy Spirit through the apostles delivered a message to us that is whole and complete, II Tim. 3:16-17. Herein is the work of the Evangelist and the responsibility of those that would hear him. This process is demonstrated in Jno. 6:45, “45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be **taught** of God. Every one that hath **heard** from the Father, and hath **learned, cometh unto me.**” The preacher preaches the truth, the people hear and learn and come unto the Father! This is why it is so important for a preacher to preach the “**whole counsel**” of God; that, those who hear may know what God expects of them.

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