

1 Timothy 4

Verse by Verse

Keep a Close Watch

Introduction

The Future
Departure
4:1-5

A Good
Servant
4:6-11

A Good
Example
4:12-16

Conclusions



St. Paul, imprisoned, ends the letter to the Ephesians, and hands it over to Tychicus. Wood engraving, 1886, Gustave Dore (Wikimedia Commons)

Introduction

Previously in 1 Timothy

- In **1 Timothy 3** Paul was preparing Timothy for an important task - to assess potential candidates for ministry.
- Therefore, Paul outlined some qualifications for those who desired to lead.
- These “credentials,” along with those given to Titus, comprise the biblical standard for designated leaders within the body of Christ.
- Paul ended the chapter with a reminder of why he is writing to Timothy in the first place.

What's in
1 Timothy 4

From
John Stott

Key Verses

What's in 1 Timothy 4?

- This chapter contains a number of personal insights from Paul to his younger friend.
- These things will all help make a healthy minister as well as a healthy ministry.
- Paul begins with a warning - about those who will depart from the faith, opting for the "teachings of demons" instead.
- He then reminds Timothy of the things that make a good servant of Jesus Christ.
- He encourages him to lead by example and to make sure he puts his gifts to good use.

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John Stott (1921 - 2011)

[Paul's] preoccupation throughout this chapter is with ... two sets of teachers in opposition to one another. On the one hand, some people are abandoning the faith and embracing falsehood. On the other, some are questioning the truth Timothy is teaching, on account of his comparative youthfulness. So here are the two topics which Paul develops: first, how false teaching may be detected and exposed, in spite of its plausibility (1-10); and secondly, how true teaching may be commended and endorsed, in spite of Timothy's youth (4:11-5:2).

- John Stott , in *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus: The Life of the Local Church*

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1 Timothy 4:14-15

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The Future Departure 4:1-5

- **4:1 depart** This word is related to the one translated “**falling away**” in **2 Thess 2:3** and our English word “apostasy”.
- The point is not so much that people are leaving the church, but that the church is leaving the faith.
- Paul contends that these new teachings in reality have demonic origins.
- They are designed to corrupt the purity of the faith.
- In this case it seems it was through a severe works-based righteousness.

Christian
Asceticism

Colossians
2:20-23

A Seared
Conscience

Christian Asceticism

Definition:

- The teaching that spirituality is attained through renunciation of physical pleasures and personal desires while concentrating on "spiritual" matters.
- Jesus himself advocated certain practices such as fasting (Mt 9:15) or, for some perhaps, celibacy (Mt 19:12) for the sake of the kingdom; yet some Christians have overemphasized the role of ascetic practices.

--- Grenz, Guretzki, and Nordling, in
Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms

**Colossians
2:20-23**

**Pendulum
Swings**

Colossians 2:20-23

20 If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— 21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” 22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? 23 These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

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- **4:3** Customs like forbidding to marry or abstaining from certain foods might appear to many as something spiritual.
- In a self-indulgent culture like our own, such teaching might become especially attractive as a way of contrasting with the world around us.
- **4:4-5** Paul emphasizes that such practices cannot lead us to a higher level of spirituality.
- They are actually another form of bondage.
- Fringe groups that split from the Christian faith have often been either too permissive or too strict, rejecting a biblical balance.
- But their ideas begin in the church - before they split.

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A Seared Conscience

From
Tony Evans

- 4:2 A seared conscience is one that is burnt (literally “cauterized”) to the point of complete insensitivity.
- This person is now fully deceived and, therefore, fully prepared to be used by the deceiving spirits to influence as many other people as possible.
- They may sincerely believe that what they are saying is true.

The conscience, rightly trained, helps us to know right from wrong. But these false teachers had burned theirs to the point that they were numb; they could no longer discern goodness from wickedness.



Tony Evans, Bible Teacher
and Commentator

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A Good Servant 4:6-11

- **4:6 Servant** [*diakonos*] The same Greek word was translated as “deacon” in **3:8 & 12**.
- Some translations use the word **minister**.
- Originally, that word meant the same thing as servant.
- A servant's job is to carry out the will of another.
- Paul and Timothy both understood that they were never really in charge.
- They were obligated to do the will of Christ Jesus and fulfill his plan for the churches in which they served.
- **4:11** Timothy was to "command and teach these things."

Godly
Training

Trustworthy
Sayings

Savior of All
People

Godly Training

- The first step is to be "trained [also "educated" or "nourished"] in the words of the faith and of ... good doctrine" (v.6).
- Then you are ready to "train yourself for godliness."
- Eventually we need to "toil and strive [agonize]."
- And yet this is all in contrast to the Christian asceticism that Paul condemned earlier.
- Grace does not mean our faith is without effort, rather that our effort flows out of our faith.

Philippians
3:13-14

From
Tony Evans

From
Chuck
Smith

Philippians 3:13-14

13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

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Godliness provides a deeper experience of God's reality at work in our lives. Our passion for and pursuit of spiritual growth should be greater than our drive to be physically fit. Our souls need a regular workout program. You don't become godly by chance.



Tony Evans, Bible Teacher
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Chuck Smith (1927-2013),
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Many people get so involved in physical exercise that they become obsessed with their bodies.

It is certainly a good thing to take care of your body as it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. But real and lasting benefit comes from spiritual exercise as we do those things that make us more like God.

Godliness reaps eternal rewards. Let's not neglect our spiritual health.

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Trustworthy Sayings in 1 Timothy

1:15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

3:1 The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.

4:8-9 8 For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. 9 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance.



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- **4:10** ... we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.
- There are two senses in which God - and specifically Jesus, who is God the Son - is the Savior of all.
 1. Christ's death is sufficient to cover the sins of the whole world.
 2. There is no other Savior but him. No other has paid that price.
- Yet the Bible is equally clear that we must put our faith in him.
- To reject Christ is to reject the only remedy God has provided for our sin.

1 John
2:1-2

Acts
4:11-12

1 John 2:1-2

1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Savior of All People

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Acts
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Standing before the rulers and elders of the people, Peter said,

11 "This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. 12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

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A Good Example 4:12-16

- Timothy was evidently just young enough to not receive automatic respect from everyone in the church.
- He might have been in his 30s by this time, so he needed to make sure he was not intimidated by this fact.
- One way to overcome this was to live his out his faith consistently and allow others to see it.
- In his letters, Paul often drew attention to his own example and to the example of others.
- **The Christian faith is a way of life in addition to a set of beliefs or doctrines.**

Three
Personal
Qualities

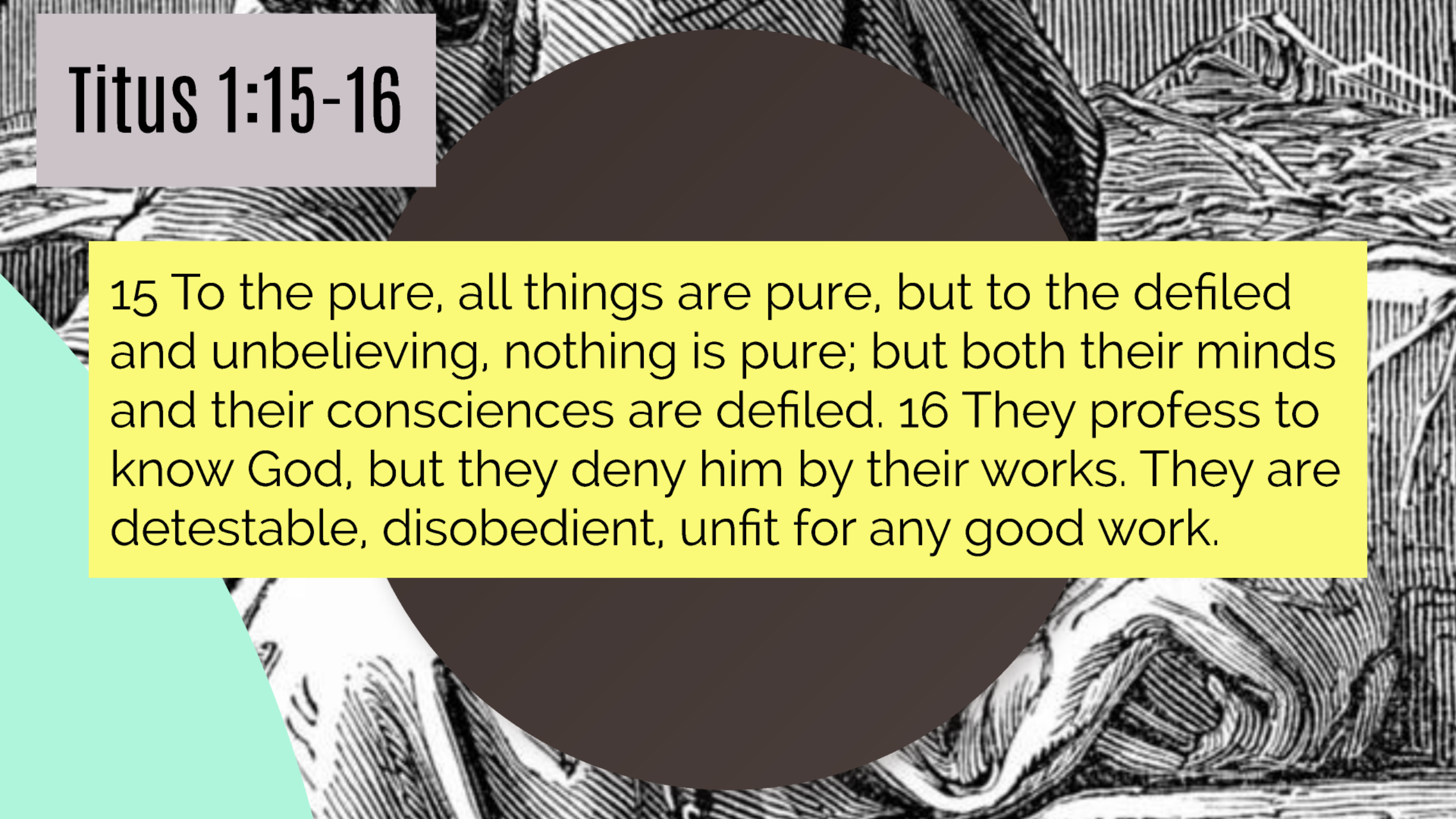
Three
Pastoral
Activities

From
Chuck
Smith

Three Personal Qualities

Titus
1:15-16

- **Love = *agape*** We know this best by the sacrificial love of Jesus.
- **Faith** This can refer to continuous trust in God, but it can also mean the trait of being *trustworthy* or *faithful* - as in Paul's trustworthy sayings.
- **Purity** This is a Christian type of self-control. Paul brings it up again in **1 Timothy 5:2** pertaining to Timothy's dealings with younger women.



Titus 1:15-16

15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. 16 They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

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Three Pastoral Activities

- **The public reading of Scripture** Literally “**the reading**”.
- NLT says “reading the Scriptures to the church.”
- **Exhortation** *paraklēsis* This has to do with encouragement, comfort, or urging the people to do something.
- **Teaching** In this chapter alone we have references to teaching or doctrine in **4:1, 6, 11, 13 and 16**.
- Clearly this is something that Paul expected Timothy to focus on.

Acts
13:15-16

Timothy's
Need for
Diligence

Acts 13:15-16

15 After **the reading from the Law and the Prophets**, the rulers of the synagogue sent a message to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have any **word of encouragement [paraklēsis]** for the people, say it." 16 So Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said ...

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Timothy's Need for Diligence

1 Timothy 4:14-15 - Our Key Verses

14 Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.

15 Practice ["Be diligent in" (NIV)] these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.

- Divine empowering often reveals itself through human diligence.
- Without the gift from God, we cannot be effective. But God intends to work through our exercising of his gifts.
- God's gifts are his ways of empowering us; they must never be left unused.

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When young people have wisdom, it is sometimes not perceived as such just because of their youth. But Paul told Timothy that the best way to deal with that was to be an example by the way he lived his life. If his life was exemplary and if he practiced what he preached, he could win over those who were skeptical of him because of his age.

No matter what age we are, our lives should always confirm the truths we are teaching.



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From Robert
Yarbrough

Key Verses

From
Warren
Wiersbe

A Final
Prayer



Robert Yarbrough,
Covenant Seminary

Paul has in mind disciplines and pursuits [for Timothy] that result in focus, stamina, and self-mastery in the face of competition (in this case, false doctrines and their proponents), fatigue (pastoral work wears one down), distractions (like all persons Timothy has to deal with evil in his own personal sphere), and other threats.

in, *The Letters to
Timothy and Titus*

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Warren Wiersbe
(1929 - 2019),
pastor and Bible
teacher.

The building up of the saved and the winning of the lost are the purposes for our ministry, to the glory of God. But God must work in us before He can effectively work through us. As good ministers, we preach the Word; as godly ministers, we practice the Word; as growing ministers, we progress in the Word.

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A Final Prayer

Heavenly Father,

- We know that the Satan himself is out to corrupt the church and lead us into false beliefs and sinful practices.
- We pray for your help in rejecting him, his lies and all his works, and all his empty promises.
- And we pray for the strength to stand firm in our faith. Help us to be faithful students of your Word and to be diligent to practice what we believe.
- Motivate us to live as good and godly examples to others in your church and to the lost world around us.
- And help us to exercise our gifts as we serve you.
- In Christ, Amen

Conclusions

- This chapter contained a number of personal insights from Paul to his younger friend.
- These things will all help make a healthy minister as well as a healthy ministry.
- Paul began with a warning - about those who will depart from the faith, opting for the "teachings of demons" instead.
- He then reminded Timothy of the things that make a good servant of Jesus Christ.
- He encouraged him to lead by example and to make sure he puts his gifts to good use.

From Robert
Yarbrough

Key Verses

From
Warren
Wiersbe

A Final
Prayer

1 Timothy 4

Verse by Verse

Keep a Close Watch

Introduction

**The Future
Departure
4:1-5**

**A Good
Servant
4:6-11**

**A Good
Example
4:12-16**

Conclusions



St. Paul, imprisoned, ends the letter to the Ephesians, and hands it over to Tychicus. Wood engraving, 1886, Gustave Dore (Wikimedia Commons)