

# *This Deserves* **Your Attention!**

by Robert Hatfield

It seems as if America no longer pays attention to that which simply *must* be heard. The fact that each verse in the Bible has been revealed to mankind by the grace of God (Titus 2:11-12) further emphasizes the need to hear and obey. The apostle Paul wrote to a young preacher Timothy and gave to him the very basics of the work of a preacher. While every member of the church is not a “preacher” (that is, one who stands before the congregation to preach on any given Sunday), *all* Christians have been called to evangelize by spreading the gospel to as many people as will hear it. Therefore, every Christian would do well to heed Paul’s inspired instructions:

“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:13).

To “give attendance” is simply to pay attention to the enumerated areas. All three of these progressive points are crucial to walking in the light.

**Give attendance to reading.** What was Timothy to read? He was to read those things which would equip him to do that which he was told to do. Timothy was charged by an inspired apostle, and in the presence of God and Christ, to preach the word (2 Tim. 4:1-2). Some have suggested that the reading was to be a public reading of the scriptures since bound volumes of the bible did not exist. Whatever the case may be, the point is clear: all people must hear the word of God. Further, one can be sure that the reading was not to be a simple “browsing over” of the sacred text. Timothy was told to “meditate on these things” (1 Tim. 4:15), and to “study [or ‘give diligence,’ ASV] to shew thyself approved unto God” (2 Tim. 2:15).

**Give attendance to exhortation.** The Greek word from which “exhortation” is translated seems to indicate qualities of imploration and consolation. The idea is that Timothy was urgently to plead with lost souls; he would diligently study to become knowledgeable, then he would plead with lost souls to come to the knowledge of the truth.

**Give attendance to doctrine.** The word “doctrine” refers to teaching or instruction. Many people today would do well to pay closer attention to God’s instructions. Timothy’s job as a preacher and as a Christian was to be sure to teach only that which was scripturally sound.

Far too many make attempts to exempt themselves from God’s instructions. Christians and non-Christians alike would do well to pay close attention to equip themselves with a knowledge of God’s word (cf. 1 Pet. 3:15), to exhort others to come to that knowledge (Mat. 28:19), and to examine the true doctrine given by God.

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