FULFILL YOUR MINISTRY

2 Timothy 4:5(ESV) As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Why Was Timothy in Ephesus

I Timothy 1:3&4a As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies.

I Timothy 3:14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

Be Sober-minded

“Sober-minded” translates the Greek word *“nepho,”* “free from the use of intoxicants.” (Vines) It is translated “sober” in I Thessalonians 5:6&8.

I Thessalonians 5:6-8So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

I Peter 1:13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

I Peter 4:7The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray.

I Peter 5:8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Endure Suffering

“Endure suffering” translates *“kakopatheo,”* a Greek word formed by combining *“kako,”* meaning bad or evil, and *“pathos,”* meaning suffering. It is used in 2 Timothy 2:9 and James 5:10 (in the noun form) & James 5:13. (Vine’s)

2 Timothy 2:8&9 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal.

James 5:10&11 Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job’s perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

James 5:13a(ESV) Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.

Do the Work of an Evangelist

“Evangelist” is *“euangelistes.”* The Greek word for Gospel is *“euangelion.”* The Greek word usually translate “preach the gospel” is *“euangelizo,”* used to describe what Philip did in Acts 8:12 (where it is translated “proclaimed the good news) and Acts 8:40 and what Peter and John did in Acts 8:25.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 8:25 After they had further proclaimed the word of the Lord and testified about Jesus, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.

Acts 8:40 Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Philip is the only New Testament individual called an evangelist. Acts 21:8 Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven.

For some Christians, evangelism will be their primary gift. Ephesians 4:11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,

The admonition to Timothy is to not get so involved in his primary responsibility of teaching believers and correcting error that he neglected preaching the Gospel to the lost.

Fulfill Your Ministry

“Ministry” is *“diakonia,”* a word usually translated as ministry or serving. A Deacon, *“diakonos”* in Greek is one who serves or ministers to the needs of others. It is translated service in Ephesians 4:12. *“Diakoneo”* means to serve and is translated that way in I Peter 4:10.

Ephesians 4:11&12 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

I Peter 4:10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.

The word “ministry” in this passage does not mean Timothy was clergy, a concept not found in the New Testament, but it means that as a follower of Jesus Christ he had been given a spiritual gift that he was supposed to use faithfully.

“Fulfill” translates a Greek word meaning to do something completely or well.

Applying This Verse to All of Us

Timothy was told to be sober-minded, not under the influence of intoxicants. All Christians are told to be sober-minded, not under the influence of intoxicants. We all need to be awake and alert to what is going on around us. If possible, we should refuse anything that dulls our ability to think clearly.

We should all be prepared to suffer hardship for following Christ. There are probably more countries where Christians are persecuted than there are countries where they are not. If the United States continues on its present course the persecution of Christians will likely become common in this country.

Timothy was left as an associate missionary in Ephesus primarily to teach believers how to do church correctly and to correct those who were teaching false doctrine. But the fact that his primary engiftment was in teaching, and the fact that his primary responsibility was teaching, did not exempt him from the responsibility to proclaim the Gospel. Some may be especially gifted in evangelism, but we are all called to be witnesses.

Timothy was told to faithfully and completely do what God had equipped and called him to do. So are we all. We all have spiritual gifts that equip us to serve, to minister in the body of Christ. If we want to be obedient to Christ, we need to figure out what those gifts are and then use them faithfully to serve.