

Four Keys to Spiritual Success

2 Tim. 4:5

Introduction:

- A. Baptism does not guarantee spiritual success.
 - 1. Baptism essential to salvation from sin (Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).
 - 2. Baptism does not complete our obedience — is near the beginning.
 - 3. Baptism puts one in a position to spiritually succeed — a prerequisite.
- B. Paul's words to Timothy contain Four Keys to Spiritual Success:

Discussion:

I. Watchfulness.

- A. Failure to watch leads to tragic results physically and spiritually.
 - 1. Railroad crossings, busy road intersections.
 - 2. Weather watches: hurricanes, tornadoes and floods.
- B. Need for watchmen and watchdogs (cf. Isa. 62:6; 56:10).
 - 1. Two dangerous watchdogs — Never barking and ever barking.
 - 2. If have choose between two — ever barking.
- C. Must watch for ourselves and others (cf. 1 Tim. 4:16).
 - 1. Alert to the dangers to our souls.
 - 2. Alert to the dangers to the souls of others (cf. Acts 20:31; 1 Cor. 4:14; 1 Thess. 5:14)
 - 3. Alert to the dangers to the peace and purity of the church.

II. Endurance.

- A. Text is not speaking the common afflictions of humanity.
 - 1. Have no choice but to endure or suffer these.
 - 2. Being a Christian can help us endure or suffer them better.
- B. Text is speaking of the afflictions of a Christian.
 - 1. These are sufferings due to being a Christian (cf. 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:16, 19)
 - 2. These are endured by choice to serve God (Heb. 11:25, 35)

III. Evangelism.

- A. Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Lk. 19:10).
- B. "Evangelist" used three times in the NT (Acts 21:8; Eph 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5)
 - 1. Speaks of those who especially give themselves evangelism
 - 2. Literally preachers of the gospel.
- C. Evangelism is not the exclusive work of "evangelists."
 - 1. Just as "watching for souls" is not exclusive work of elders.
 - 2. Just as "serving" is not exclusive work of deacons.
- D. Evangelism is a work of all Christians (cf. Acts 8:4).

IV. Fulfillment.

- A. Means to fulfill (NKJ) or carry out ministry to the fullest.
- B. Our ministry is manifold — all facets to be done fullest.
 - 1. To worship and glorify God.
 - 2. To reach spiritual maturity (Eph. 4:15,16)
 - 3. To edify Christians in the process (Heb. 10:25; Eph 5:19; 1 Cor. 14:5, 12, 17, 26).
 - 4. To prepare of our departure (vv. 6-8).

Conclusion:

- A. Baptism does not guarantee success, but cannot succeed without baptism.
- B. Why not be baptized today and then follow teachings of our text carefully?