

# **Installation Service for the Rev. Scott Simmons**

## **The Minister's Character**

*1 Timothy 6:11-14*

**Rev. Freddy Fritz**

January 2, 2022

# The Minister's Character

## Scripture

We are installing the Rev. Scott Simmons as the part-time Assistant Pastor at the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church.

I would like to draw your attention to Paul's words in 1 Timothy 6:11-14 where he describes the minister's character.

You may recall that Paul had left Timothy as the pastor of the church in Ephesus, and these words constitute Paul's description of the minister's character.

Let us read 1 Timothy 6:11-14:

**<sup>11</sup> But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. <sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. <sup>13</sup> I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, <sup>14</sup> to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 6:11-14)**

## Introduction

Much of what I have to say today comes from John MacArthur's *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*.<sup>1</sup> MacArthur points out that in Scripture, different titles such as prophet, elder,

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<sup>1</sup>MacArthur, John. *Rediscovering Expository Preaching* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishers, 1997, c1992) 85-102.

evangelist, and pastor often refer to God's spokesmen. Generally these titles refer to the task that the man executes. One title, however, refers to the *character* of the man holding an office. That title is **"man of God."**

By calling Timothy a **man of God**, Paul identifies him with a long line of spokesmen for God extending back into the Old Testament. Paul reminds Timothy that he is "God's man" for the task that God has set before him and called him to.

Scott, you are God's man, the **man of God** if you please, and you are being installed as the Assistant Pastor here today. You have proven that you are a **man of God** by your many years of faithful service. You are no spring chicken!

## Lesson

1 Timothy 6:11-14 shows us four marks of a man of God.

### I. **A Man of God Is Marked by What He Flees From (6:11a)**

First, a man of God is marked by what he flees from.

Paul says in verse 11a, **"But as for you, O man of God, flee these things..."** From what must the **man of God** flee? The immediate context indicates that it is a love for money. In verses 9-11, Paul warns that the **man of God** must flee the evils associated with love of money, which is essentially greed. It will destroy the **man of God**, so he must **flee these things**.

A greedy love of money is a common sin of false teachers. Throughout the Scriptures, from Balaam, that greedy prophet for hire (Deuteronomy 23:4; 2 Peter 2:15), to Judas, who betrayed our Lord for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 27:3), to the money-hungry televangelists and prosperity preachers of

our own day, false teachers have been characterized by greed.

But that is not true of a **man of God**. A **man of God** is not like those who, in Paul's words, "peddle the word of God for profit" (2 Corinthians 2:17). He is not a spiritual con artist. He has to proclaim God's message, not what he thinks will sell. He is in the business of piercing men's hearts with God's truth, not tickling their ears. He does nothing for personal gain.

In other places in his writings, Paul lists other threats to ministry from which the **man of God** must flee: immorality (1 Corinthians 6:18), idolatry (1 Corinthians 10:14), false teaching (1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 2:16), and lust (2 Timothy 2:22).

Scott, you as a **man of God** must be a life-long fugitive, fleeing from these things that will destroy you and your ministry. Thankfully, you have been doing that faithfully for many years. You have a track record of doing so. But having started well does not mean that you will necessarily end well.

Therefore, it is essential that you continue to **flee** all the days of your life from all **these things** that will tear down your ministry and make you ineffective in God's service.

## II. **A Man of God Is Marked by What He Follows After (6:11b)**

Second, a man of God is marked by what he follows after. Paul says in verse 11b, "**Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.**"

Paul lists six virtues to be pursued by the man of God. Let me briefly define each virtue.

**"Righteousness"** in this context means "giving God and men their due," that is, "doing what is right."

**"Godliness"** means "piety." This is Christlikeness, the devout and practical expression of Christianity.

**“Faith”** connotes “fidelity, faithfulness.” It is wholehearted trust in the Lord.

**“Love”** in this context means a high, holy love that seeks the best for others.

**“Steadfastness”** means patience, endurance that perseveres in the most difficult of circumstances.

**“Gentleness”** is meekness that is the opposite of the argumentative, divisive, envious spirit of those who run after money.

Scott, a man of God is known not only by what he runs from, but also by what he runs toward. Behind are the sins which could destroy him and his ministry; ahead lie the virtues that make his ministry powerful.

As long as the man of God lives, he can never stop running. If he stops fleeing evil, it will catch him. And if he stops pursuing **righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness**, it will elude him.

The entire life and ministry of the man of God is one of flight from what is wrong and pursuit of what is right.

### **III. A Man of God Is Marked by What He Fights For (6:12)**

Third, a man of God is marked by what he fights for.

Paul says in verse 12a, **“Fight the good fight of the faith.”**

The man of God is a fighter. He is a polemicist, a contender, a battler, a soldier. He must understand that ministry is war and he is fighting on the side of truth against error. To perceive ministry as anything else is to lose. He battles the world, the flesh, and the devil and his kingdom of darkness. He battles sin, heresy, apathy, and lethargy in the church.

Sadly, many pastors are so entangled in the affairs of everyday life that they do not realize fully the intensity of the battle. Others are fighting the wrong battle.

In the second part of verse 12, Paul offers encouragement for the fight: **“Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”**

What does Paul mean by that? He does not tell Timothy to get saved, because he was already saved. What he says is, “Get a grip on eternal life. Live in the light of eternity. ‘Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth’ (Colossians 3:2), because ‘our citizenship is in heaven’ ” (Philippians 3:20).

If he does that, he will not mind making sacrifices in this life. The man of God has an eternal perspective; he is not in the ministry merely for what he can gain in this life. Living and ministering in the light of eternity keeps the focus of the man of God on the importance of the battle.

The man of God rises above the struggles for perishable, useless things. He fights for what is eternal – the truth of God. It is only by divorcing himself from the things of this world and living in light of eternity that he can hope to succeed.

#### **IV. A Man of God Is Marked by What He Is Faithful To (6:13-14)**

And finally, a man of God is marked by what he is faithful to.

Paul says in verses 13-14: **“I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and**

**free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

I simply want to draw your attention to one point here, and that is the charge of Paul **to keep the commandment**. What is this **commandment**? Some argue that it is the gospel. Others say it is the content of this epistle. And still others say it is the entire new covenant.

I believe it is best interpreted in the broadest sense of the complete, revealed word of God. Being nourished in the word, by preserving it purely, the man of God is first and foremost a guardian of the treasure of the truth he is to proclaim. He must preserve it from any error or misrepresentation.

Paul warned Timothy to guard it and handle it accurately (1 Timothy 4:6–7; 6:2–4; 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:13; 2:15) as well as to work hard at preaching and teaching it (1 Timothy 5:17 and 2 Timothy 4:2). Paul commands Timothy to keep or guard the word. How is this done? It is done not only by preaching the word, but also by living it.

God forbid that our lives should ever bring a stain or reproach on the word of God.

### **Conclusion**

Scott, there is no greater privilege than to be a man of God and to preach his word. But being a man of God also includes a tremendous responsibility. As you take up your work here as the part-time Assistant Pastor at the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church, I pray that your life – like that of every pastor here today – will be characterized by the four marks that Paul mentions for us in his letter to Timothy. Amen.

# Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church  
is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ  
and membership in his church family,  
develop them to Christlike maturity,  
equip them for their ministry in the church  
and life mission in the world,  
in order to magnify God's name.*

## Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

This sermon, and other sermons, by the Rev. Freddy Fritz can  
be found at:

1. [www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons](http://www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons).
2. [www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp](http://www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp).
3. [www.sermonaudio.com/source\\_detail.asp?sourceid=Fred-dyFritz](http://www.sermonaudio.com/source_detail.asp?sourceid=Fred-dyFritz).

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