**1 Timothy: 4:1-16 – The Genuine Article**

Paul continues his letter to Timothy in Chapter 4 by revisiting the topic of false teachers. Yet he spends the majority of the chapter instructing Timothy on what a Godly teacher/pastor should look like to the Body of Christ. One of the biggest challenges in determining a false teacher is working through the mixture of half-truth and deception. Paul even tells us in 2 Corinthians 11:14 that Satan disguises himself as an Angel of Light. As teachers and leaders who are responsible for handling the Word of God, we need to be the genuine article. That means we need to study God’s word, meditate on it, pray over it; so we can faithfully teach it.

Everyone studying this letter read 1 Timothy 4:1-16 on your own. Then if you are in a group setting, have someone read it out loud.



**Observation:** What do you see?

1. What stands out in the fourth chapter as being important?
2. Are there any comparisons or contrasts that stand out in the chapter?
3. Key words or phrases that are used?
4. Paul speaks of those who will depart from the faith. How can we identify these individuals in the church?
5. Look at Paul’s instructions on a faithful teacher (verses 6-16). Write them out and consider the areas you currently are doing well with and the areas that you need to improve on.

**Those who will fall away – vv 1-5**

As laid out in Chapter 1, false teaching was present in the Church of Ephesus. As lesson 1 described what false teaching looks likes, this section of 1 Timothy is addressed specifically concerning those who are false teachers intermingled in the church. Paul gives Timothy guidance on identifying these individuals by describing their behavior and a couple of areas where they were deceiving the church.

** *Helpful Notes:*** **OVERVIEW OF 1 TIMOTHY 4:1-5:** Paul starts with a warning from the Holy Spirit that he gave to the elders in Ephesus years earlier in Acts 20:29-30. The New Testament is filled with warnings from the Holy Spirit concerning the dangerous influence of false teachers. He states that in “latter times” some will depart from the faith. The Greek word for depart means the same as the word “apostatize.” This means to move away from your original position. Firstly, the latter times Paul speaks of is a period of time from the first coming of Jesus on earth until His return. This period of apostasy will increase as we get closer to the return of Jesus. These individuals who depart from the faith were never truly saved (Reference 1 John 2:18-19). They have left the truth to commit themselves to what Paul describes as “deceitful spirits” and the “teachings of demons.” The deceitful spirits are demons who directly, or indirectly through false teachers, influence people to false doctrine through the practice of deception. The teaching of demons is the false doctrine that influences individuals to deny the truth. This was prevalent in the time in which Paul was writing Timothy and will continue to increase as we approach the return of Jesus.

**What false doctrine is prevalent in your country, city, community, church?**

Paul describes these false teachers with “insincerity of liars” and have their “conscious seared.” These false teachers were hypocrites promoting the doctrine of demons. The scary truth of false teachers is they have their consciousness seared. This is a medical term that speaks of cauterization or removing the nerve’s ability to feel. The souls of these individuals were numb to the conviction of the Holy Spirit as a result of the devotion to false doctrine. He references two specific areas where the church in Ephesus was being influenced by false teachings.

- Marriage

- Dietary Restrictions

The goal of the false teachers was to promote a form of ascetism as a pre-requisite for salvation. This means that false teachers promoted actions that were required for salvation. In this case they attacked the institution of marriage and dietary restrictions. Just like false teachers, they take truth and twist it. We know that Scripture commends being single as well teachers fasting as a spiritual discipline. Yet, the false teachers were saying that these were necessary for salvation by forbidding them. But marriage and food were given to us by God and declared as good by God in His word. Paul was identifying for Timothy a couple areas where the church was being attacked. This false teaching needed to be thwarted by the truth and the false teachers needed removed from the church.

**What is the process of church discipline? (Read Matthew 18:15-20 &**

**1 Corinthians 5)**

I was teaching at church on a Wednesday evening. While I was teaching one of the people in attendance (who was not a believer) went to visit a woman in the church who was sitting with the children. After church I was approached by the woman who was watching the children. She asked me about all of the lies I was teaching. She said that this woman who visited told her the Bible was not true and I was teaching lies. I went directly to the woman and told her she was no longer welcome in my church. She was speaking the teachings of demons and had attacked one of the sheep.

* **Some in the church will depart the truth because they were not truly saved (vs. 1)**
* **They will follow false doctrine and attempt to influence others (vs. 1-2)**
* **They will teach half-truths and twist Scripture to deceive the body (vs. 3-4)**
* **If God’s word teaches it is good; it is GOOD. If God’s word teaches it is bad; it is BAD. (vs. 5)**

**Read 4:6-16 - The Responsibility of a True Teacher**

Paul spends the rest of the chapter instructing Timothy on what he and others who serve in this office should look like for the church and the world.

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**Interpretation – Ask a Question:** What’s the author’s main intent or purpose?

1. Paul teaches Timothy in verse 6 that the Word of God needs to be ever present before him. If Timothy wants to master the teachings of the word, he needs to stay in it. **What are the disciplines needed to accomplish this? Read the verse and fill in the answer.**

- 2 Timothy 2:15:

- Psalm 1:2:

- Psalm 119:11:

1. True teachers are to have nothing to do with false teachings, myths, superstitions and any of the like. **(vs. 7) Why are we commanded this?**  (2 Timothy 2:14-18)
2. Paul urges Timothy to train in godliness. **(vs. 7-8)**
	* Godliness is the proper attitude and response towards God. It is from godliness that Christians can have effective ministry.
	* Training speaks of rigorous, self-sacrificing exercise. Paul teaches that physical exercise, like an athlete does, is short term and only effective for the physical body in this life. Training for godliness proves effective for the spiritual man in both this life and the next.
3. Our training is not in vain because in the end our hope is in the Living God which teachers must faithfully teach. (vs. 9-11) **Paul says, “Savior of all people especially of those who believe.” What does this mean?**

The believer in Christ reaps eternal benefit because of Jesus. Yet the unbeliever also experiences a temporary benefit as a result of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. These include:

* + Common Grace: God’s goodness shown to all mankind; for example: through restraining sin and judgment, maintaining order in society, giving us temporal blessings.
	+ Compassion: This is the broken-hearted pity that God shows to unregenerate sinners who rebel against him.
	+ Call to Repentance: God gives all mankind the chance to repent of their sin and follow Him.
	+ Invitation to Salvation: All mankind has been afforded the opportunity to believe. God shows this favor with no discrimination because He is a saving God.
1. Pastors/Teachers must be an example regardless of their age. **(vs. 12)**

- In speech: Matthew 12:34-37 - In conduct: 1 Peter 1:15

- In love: John 15:13 - In faithfulness: 1 Cor 4:2

- In purity (especially sexual purity): 1 Timothy 3:2

1. Stay devoted to teaching the word by practicing the gift you have been given. This is how you show your progress. Commit yourself to the calling you have been given. **(vs. 13-15)**
2. Leaders are mindful of their behavior and teachings. Commitment to godliness and Biblical teaching result in the benefit of themselves and those who hear them. **(vs. 16)**

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**Application – Put into practice**

• **Be on guard** – Be watching for wolves in sheep’s clothing. Guard the sheep from false teachers and their deceptions.

**• Be committed –** The work of a pastor/elder is a humble calling. It is also challenging. It requires devotion and commitment that goes past the normal call to salvation. It opens one up to attack and temptation as Satan wants to see Godly men fall to sin. Stay committed and God will reward your faithfulness!



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