

## 1 Timothy 4

### Read verses 1 – 3

1. Paul gives us a warning from the Holy Spirit. Paul says, “There will come a time when people will fall away from having faith in Jesus.” This is called an apostasy. Apostasy means a falling away or abandonment of religious belief. This is not the Great Apostasy mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 which says, *Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.*” This verse in 2 Thessalonians is talking about End Times prophecy. Paul is speaking about an apostasy that happens with time.
2. Paul continues in verse 1 that along with the apostasy, people will “*follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.*” If you compare sharing the Gospel with people in the U.S. today to people 60 years ago, you would see a big difference. Today more and more people are not being raised in a Christian household. The number of people attending church since Covid is down significantly even though it was declining before Covid.
3. Look at the number of cults and pastors teaching things that are not biblical in churches today. Consider God warned Adam and Eve in Garden that if they ate from the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, they would surely die. He didn’t mean that they would be struck dead at that moment. He meant that death would enter the world. Paul is saying something similar. He was saying that at some future time, then number of new believers would start diminish. At the time of Paul’s writing, the number of believers was less than 1000 but by 350 AD, today the number of believers is estimated to be 34 million. At some point, Christian growth will become Christian decline.
4. In verse 2, Paul continues his thought from verse 1. There will be those that do not teach the true Gospel and have “abandoned the faith”, as well as “*follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.*” “*These people are hypocrites and liars, and their consciences are dead.*” (NLT) These people are of Satan, the master of deception.

5. This verse is Paul's version of what Jesus said in John 8:44, "*You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*" Again, there are so many people preaching false Gospels today. They can sound close to the true Gospel, like Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventists, prosperity Gospel and many would add Catholicism to the list.
6. At the end of verse 2, Paul says that these false teachers have no conscience. The NLT says that their consciences are dead. The NASB says that their consciences were seared with a branding iron. They are able to teach what they know is not in the Word of God and aren't bothered by it.
7. In verse 3, Paul continues speaking about the things that false teachers will teach. He says, "*They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods.*" Guzik says, "This describes the legalistic teaching of those who have departed from the faith. They taught that it was by following this list of man-made rules that one was justified in God's sight — that you would be more holy to God if you didn't marry, and if you did not eat certain foods."
8. In Acts 10, Luke records visions by Peter and a Roman centurion named Cornelius. The visions are given by God to teach Peter that there isn't anything that God has created that is unclean, both men and for food. Paul is teaching the same thing. Paul is speaking about man-made laws. Remember from the laws of God, man increased the number to more than 600. Many of these laws were meant to suck the pleasure out of life.
9. Paul covered marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:8-9, "*Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. 9 But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.*" He was not opposed to marriage, it just wasn't for him. He felt that it would distract him from God.
10. Paul concludes that nothing is forbidden as long as it is "*received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.*" James 1:17 tells

us that “*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above*”. Paul is saying the same thing but he adds that we should thank God for all of the blessings that we receive.

Read verses 4 – 5

11. Paul continues with these same ideas. Paul says what God had to teach Peter in Acts 10, God does not make any unclean things, either people or food. When God created in Genesis 1, He finished by saying “*it was good*.” At no point did God create and say “Oh this is a bad one.”
12. We are the ones that make it bad by not being thankful or wasting it. Again Paul tells Timothy that whatever we get from God is good if we thank God for it.
13. In verse 5, Paul spells it out why it is good when we are thankful. He says, “*it is made acceptable by the word of God and prayer.*”

Read verse 6

14. In verse 6, Paul says that we are to teach others the correct way to live. If they are not living right then we should point it out to them. Instructing them to live can be by example. When Jesus taught His disciples how to be a servant leader, he did not preach to them. He showed them. He lead by example. John 13:4-5 says, “*so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.*” He didn’t say “You go do it.”
15. In order to teach them from God’s Word, then Timothy must remain grounded in God’s Word. Just like Timothy then we should do the same. It is more than just listening to a sermon once a week. It is doing what you can to grow as a Christian. Spending time in God’s Word.
16. I keep going back to this but how do we know that what Pastor Brian is teaching from the pulpit is correct if we don’t spend time reading and studying God’s Word. Just because the Bible uses the example of us being sheep, we

don't want to follow blindly. As it says in verse 6, *"you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed."*

Read verses 7 – 10

17. During Paul's time in this region, almost everything had a myth connected to it. Paul is saying don't get caught up in these things, focus on things that help you grow in godliness. Sound familiar? Jesus said something similar in Matthew 6:19-21. He said, *19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*
18. When we studied Tony Evans book on "Living as an Overcomer", he devoted an entire chapter to "some practical applications for not only pursuing godliness but for continuing to grow in godliness." (Chapter 12) Our goal is to be like Jesus. Our godliness can never be as good as Jesus but we have to move in His direction. He will give us some practical applications of pursuing and growing in godliness.
19. In verse 8, Paul says that don't just focus on the physical aspects of life but they have limited value. Godliness will impact every aspect of your life. The Holman New Testament Commentary says, "Godliness affects everything: our view of self, marriage, parenting, business, civic responsibilities, environmental outlook, relationship with our next-door neighbors."
20. As we read above in Matthew, godliness has benefits in Heaven. We are to store up treasures in Heaven and godliness is one of those treasures. Godliness is not just beneficial in the present and future here on Earth, it has benefits in Heaven. It is the only thing that we can take with us when we die.
21. Paul says in verse 9 that striving for godliness is the best thing. We and Timothy should accept it this statement fully. Paul uses this statement several

times in 1 Timothy. He says that “*spiritual godliness has value for all things*” is just about as important as these things.

- a. 1 Timothy 1:9 – “*We also know that the law is made not for the righteous*”
- b. 1 Timothy 1:15 – “*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.*”

22. Verse 10 gives the reason to strive for spiritual godliness which that we “*have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.*” We learned in Revelation that when it comes to Christianity, we are to be all in, not lukewarm (Laodicean church). James 4:4 says that “*friendship with the world means enmity against God*”.

Read verses 11 – 14

23. In verse 11, Paul says it straight out. Timothy and a church leaders job is to “Command and teach” others about Jesus. Holman’s Commentary says, he is to command and teach about our Savior and that “Grace is no side issue. Legalism is no weak enemy. Rules are great for discipline but not for righteousness.”
24. This verse gives Timothy the right to take control of the church at Ephesus. He tells Timothy not to give his opinion but to preach the true Gospel. He is not to water down the Gospel message.
25. In verse 12, Paul says for Timothy not to let others belittle him because of his age. Physical age has nothing to do with spiritual growth. I have seen boys with more spiritual develop than men. For some reason, people associate age with spiritual growth. Timothy was estimated to be in his late 20’s or early 30’s. He was about the same age as Charlie Kirk at the peak of his ministry.
26. In verse 13, Paul tells Timothy to spend his time waiting for Paul’s arrival in Ephesus by preaching and teaching the Gospel message. The NIV also says public preaching. Unless he goes out into the public to preach, then he is not going to reach the lost. Interesting though, the KJV and NKJV says, “*Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*” The NASB is

like the KJV except it says, “public reading of the scriptures”. This is not like what Jesus warned us about, being seen praying or reading the scriptures so that people could see you doing so. He wants Timothy to publicly read the Word of God so that the people of Ephesus could hear what it says. There is power in the Word of God to change lives. In Romans 10:17, Paul said, “*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

27. When Paul says “public reading of the scriptures”, he is also saying that the Word of God should be read in the church. It should be read during the worship services. It should be read during Sunday School and VBS. We should never get to the point as Israel did. During the reign of King Josiah, they were surprised when they found the Word of God in the Temple.
28. In verse 14, Paul tells Timothy and us not to neglect his spiritual gifts. We can neglect or even waste our spiritual gifts if we do not recognize what they are and ask God to help us use them to the fullest. Guzik says that “At Timothy’s ordination service, when church leaders performed the laying on of the hands, they recognized God’s call on Timothy’s life to ministry.” If you haven’t done so, then you should be sure to take a spiritual gifts test that can help lead you to knowing your spiritual gifts.
29. In verse 15, Paul tells Timothy and us to “meditate on what Paul is teaching about the ministry within the church.” There are types of meditations that are not acceptable in Christianity. They usually include emptying your mind to decrease your stress as in Zen or Yoga. Paul is telling Timothy to meditate on what Timothy is telling him in this letter so that they can become a part of his life. If we meditate, it should be on a verse or verses from the Word of God.
30. If Timothy makes Jesus, God’s Word and Paul’s teachings his focus then it will be life changing. It will become obvious to others that he knows and encounters that Timothy is growing in his walk with Christ. They will see that he knows and has a personal relationship with Christ. They will know that they can trust what Timothy is teaching them.

31. In verse 16, Paul tells Timothy and every teacher and pastor today to examine (take heed) yourself and doctrine to make sure that you are teaching and leading your flock what is right and true and comes from God. The NLT says, *“Keep a close watch on how you live and on your teaching.”*
32. This is similar to what Jesus taught in Matthew 7:13-14, *“13 “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”* If Timothy stays true to the Gospel in how he lives and what he teaches then he will be on the road that leads to salvation or entering the narrow gate. Paul adds that not only will Timothy get salvation but so will those that hear and live what Timothy is teaching.

“The outward life of a person flows from his or her inner spirit. Those who discipline themselves to follow after Jesus Christ, who are focused on living out the truth of God's revelation, will develop a life of growing intimacy with Christ. They will delight God, producing goodness and godliness in what they do.”  
(Larson, Knute. *Holman New Testament Commentary*)