

1 Timothy 4

Day 1

Departure from Faith. Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5

1. After addressing the deep truths of faith in Christ, what warning did Paul give? 4:1 (Contrast Colossians 1:23.)

Digging Deeper

Who is the source of deceit?
John 8:44; 1 John 5:19; 2
Corinthians 4:4

FYI: *Abandon/fall away/depart from* NT:868 *aphistemi*; to remove...instigate to revolt; usually to desist, desert...

"*Aphistemi* is always used in the sense of betraying something or someone. It's a choice. One cannot accidentally become an 'apostate'...Rest assured that apostasy will not bear the obvious imprint of demons. False teaching will never enter your church with the name 'Church of Satan' printed all over it. Deceitful spirits cleverly drape their doctrines in the respectable, even pious robes of religion. The teaching appeals to the flesh and is presented with charm and charisma. False teachers speak convincingly to the issues of their day and often use the Scriptures (almost always out of context) to give the appearance of good-faith teaching."
- Charles Swindoll (80)

"Some lies are so powerful that they have an evident spiritual dynamic behind them. These are lies crafted and promoted by deceiving spirits. We find the first demonic doctrine in Genesis 3:4,5. Since then, every demonic doctrine has found its way back to this root: the idea that we can be gods, and operate independently from God." - David Guzik

2. What characterizes these false teachers? 4:2 (See Eph. 4:19)

- What did Paul call them in 2 Timothy 3:13?

Digging Deeper

What did Jesus say about false teachers/prophets in the end times?

- Matthew 24:10,11

- Mark 13:21,22

FYI: "*Hypocritical liars*" is scathing. Their sin was doubly deliberate. As John Stott notes, hypocrisy is a deliberate pretense, and a lie is a deliberate falsehood – double liars! They did not believe their own teaching!" - K. Hughes (99)

3. What are examples of the false teachings they give? 4:3a Why can these sound so spiritual?

- What is the proper response to these things? 4:3b (See Genesis 2:18,24; 9:3)
- What did Jesus say about food? Mark 7:18-20

FYI: "Some early gnostic corruptions of Christianity taught that the soul or spirit can be nurtured only by denying or abusing the body. This is called asceticism, which condemns any activity that satisfies the body's craving beyond what is absolutely necessary to live."
- Charles Swindoll (81)

"Paul was never opposed to spiritual discipline for the purpose of godliness (vv. 7,8) We also know that spiritual discipline sometimes involves restraint...But asceticism is altogether different because it involves the intentional denial of things that God has declared to be good. It declares that abstinence from these things is essential to spirituality. And ultimately it lays the ax to the life of the gospel...Asceticism can begin the imperceptible *drift* from pure belief to that which is ultimately not belief at all."
- R. Kent Hughes (98,103)

4. How should we evaluate these things? 4:4,5 (See Romans 14:17,18)

Digging Deeper

What had the Lord shown Peter about O.T. laws? Acts 10:9-13 (See also Galatians 2:11-15)

FYI: "The Christian life is not meant to be lived in the negative but in the positive – as Jesus showed us by example. We are to be 'saying grace' every minute of our lives. This gives glory to God!... "Legalism is self-centered, but discipline is God-centered." - R. Kent Hughes (103,108)

"Addressing the root of the false teachings, the apostle mentions two specific errors: they **deny** the goodness of God, and they **distort** the Word of God. When we put these two characteristics together, we're reminded of how sin entered the world. The serpent emphasized God's power and greatness, while minimizing His love and goodness. He tempted Eve to doubt that God had her best interest in mind. He asked, 'Did God really say, "You can't eat from any tree in the garden"?' (Gen 3:2) He was leading her to question God's goodness and distort God's Word, and Eve bought into the lie and sinned." - Platt et al. (73,74)

"We often think that if we sacrifice something for God...then He *owes* us something. This is legalism at its worst; trying to manipulate God into giving us something. The idea is that we can make God indebted to us, make Him our servant and make ourselves His master. In this we fulfill the original doctrine of demons – that we should be gods." - Guzik

5. Surprisingly, from where can these teachers originate? Acts 20:30; 2 Peter 2:1

FYI: "False teaching was rampant in the first century, and it is rampant now. The world and the church are full of theology that is unbiblical. For example, prosperity theology says that if you trust Jesus, He will give you health and wealth. Cult theology, on the other hand, typically says that Jesus is not who you thought He was. An alternative is offered, which always turns out to be an unbiblical picture of the Son of God. And then there's what we might call popular theology, a theology consisting of ideas about life and possessions and heaven and the afterlife that come more from best-selling books than from God's Word. Be on guard against such errors." - Platt et al. (73)

6. From Colossians 2:16-23, underline what we are not to be judged about and why it is deficient or wrong. Circle where our focus should be.

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.¹⁸ Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind.¹⁹ They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²² These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. ²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

7. How strongly did Paul feel about the any distortions of the gospel? Galatians 1:6-9

- What did he say about trusting in anything else? Galatians 3:3
- What did that do? (*Circumcision was the primary law that Jews said had to be followed for salvation; other were added in.*) Galatians 5:1-4

8. Underline what people can be led astray or turned away from.

- 2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his trickery, your minds will be led astray from sincere and pure devotion to Christ.;
- Galatians 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Food for Thought: *"A man confronted me on Sunday morning, desperate to hear my answer to a question burning in his breast. I waited till the end to talk to you, because I've got a question that may take a long time to answer." His wild-eyed intensity took me aback at first.*

'Ask,' I invited.

*'I want to know from you, **what is the truth?** I've heard you talk, and I've listened to other preachers, and I hear other people refer to it. What do you mean when you refer to it. Remember, Pilate asked the question when interviewing Jesus, "What is truth?"'*

I saw a Bible cradled in his folded arms. I reached for it and thumped it playfully a couple of times. 'Everything between the covers of that Book.'
- Charles Swindoll (79)

Applying the Word: *What do you feel sometimes pulls you off track from believing in God's goodness and blessings and sufficiency?*

Day 2

A Godly Servant. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10

9. What would instructing people in these teachings say about Timothy? 4:6

- What would nourish Timothy? 4:6b

FYI: *"point these things out...Paul's gentle tone is evident right from the beginning. He does not say that Timothy must 'order' or 'command' the brothers and sisters in the church...Barclay says that the Greek word here 'is a gentle, a humble, and a modest word."*
- Coleman and Peace (30)

"Timothy is to be continually feeding himself with the content of the gospel and apostolic teaching. Significantly, this nourishment in the Word was essential to Timothy's being 'a good minister.' The most effective ministers have been those who persevered as students of the Word."
- R. Kent Hughes (107)

"Jesus instructed His disciples, but with His presence, His life, and His practice as well as with His words.

10. What did Jesus say about being nourished?

- Matthew 4:4
- John 6:35,51
- John 4:14; 7:37-39

11. What was Timothy to avoid? 4:7a (Cross-ref. 2 Timothy 2:15-18)

- What was he to pursue? 4:7b (See Titus 1:1)

FYI: old wives tales/myths fit only for the godless and gullible "Today, we would encourage pastors to avoid urban legends and folk theology (cf. 1:4; 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16; 4:4; Titus 1:14)." - Charles Swindoll (86)

"Paul refers to foolish and absurd teaching several times in his letters to Timothy and Titus (1Timothy 4:7, 1Timothy 6:4,20, 2Timothy 2:23, Titus 3:9). We sometimes call some piece of superstitious nonsense 'an **old wives' tale**'. I doubt that Paul is referring to old wives as such, for he will shortly (in chapter 5) show the greatest respect for older women in the church.

There is a class of women in the **pagan world**, however, who mumble spells and tell superstitious tales, and pretend (or deceive themselves) that they have ancient magical powers, second sight, and contact with the spirit world. Such old women are shown by the gospel to be foolish, their teachings insane and their powers demonic. When false teachers replace the gospel with their own speculations...their teaching is worthy of no more respect than the tales these women tell." - <https://www.simplybible.com/f94d-1tim4-fads-and-fables.htm>

"In calling it 'old wives' talks, ' Paul issued a sarcastic insult...they would believe anything. What a concoction it was! The primitive history of the Old Testament was overlaid with ridiculous legends, its genealogies were given absurd symbolism, and then it was sugarcoated with demon-inspired asceticism that promised spiritual superiority through sexual an dietary abstinence. Junk teaching! Reject it, say Paul." - R. Kent Hughes (106-107)

12. How do physical training and godly training differ? 4:8

- Why do you think Paul emphasized this? 4:9 *Most connect 4:9 with 4:8 and but others with 4:10.*

FYI: "A trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance, means to add extra emphasis to a particular teaching (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8). In this case, the 'trustworthy statement' is the eternal worth of godliness over the temporal worth of physical fitness." - Charles Swindoll (87)

Digging Deeper

What do you learn the source of **godliness** from:
Titus 2:11-12

2 Peter 1:3-8

13. Why was Paul willing to "labor and strive/struggle/suffer reproach"? 4:10 How does this differ from the hope of asceticism or godless myths and old wives tales?

FYI: "'Labor' and 'strive' are both strong terms in the Greek. The first verb (*kopiaō*) means 'grow weary' and so in the NT 'work with effort, toil.' The second (*agonizo*, 'agonize') was used for competing in an athletic contest. So it meant 'struggle' or 'strive.' Just as athletes exert what seems to be their last ounce of energy to win a race, so Paul was giving the ministry all he had." - The Expositor's Bible Commentary

14. In 2 Corinthean 4:10-12,15 **why** did Paul say he endured sufferings?

- Where was his focus ? 2 Corinthians 4:17,18.

Digging Deeper

For examples of the struggles and suffering that Paul endured, see 2 Corinthians 6:3-10; 11:23-27.

Applying the Word: *Do you have any superstitions or childhood imaginations or beliefs that frighten you and hold you captive? Do you need someone to pray with you about that? Who would you ask? How can we be careful to not bring these things into our children's lives?*

Day 3

A Godly Ministry. Read 1 Timothy 4:11-14

15. How strong is Paul's statement in 4:11? What would be included in "these things" (Compare 4:6)
16. What was one issue with Timothy's authority? 4:12a (Compare Titus 2:15) *How might following in Paul's footsteps have created problems?*
- What do the directions Paul gave the Corinthian church say about difficulties Timothy faced? 1 Corinthians 16:10-11

FYI: "[Timothy] is living in a culture that respected age. Furthermore, the elders that he is called upon to discipline are almost surely literally older than him."
- Coleman and Peace (31)

"The Ephesian church was troubled by false teachers, some of whom were actually in leadership. No congregational 'call' had been extended to Timothy...There is no indication that anyone in Ephesus had asked for him to come, much less appointed or elected him to leadership. We sense from the opening chapter of this letter that Timothy would rather be somewhere else (cf. 1:3)."
- R. Kent Hughes (114)

17. In what ways was Timothy to "set an example"? 4:12 (See Colossians 4:5,6) *How would this compare with the false teachers' speech and behavior?*

FYI: "We see that Paul is telling Timothy that Christian leadership is a matter of godly character from beginning to end. The ministry is a character profession. Godly character creates moral authority. Ultimately, godly character wins over those who would naturally look down on one's youth."
- R. Kent Hughes (115)

18. What primary work was Timothy was to engage in? 4:13 (Cross-ref. 2 Timothy 4:2)

FYI: "The Word of God should resound from the pastor's lips, and he is to speak with authority. Read the Bible. Explain the Bible. Exhort from the Bible. Teach the Bible. That's the charge. Demonstrate your submission to the authority of Scripture, and you will lead rightly in the church as you declare the truth."
- Platt et al. (74)

|| **Video:** "Public Reading of Scripture" – Bible Project (3:30)
|| <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/public-reading-scripture/> ||



19. Read the following about the care given to reading and teaching scripture. Underline what is meaningful to you.

- Joshua 1:7,8 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸ Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.
- Nehemiah 8:5-8 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was *standing* above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶ And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground.⁷ Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people *stood* in their place. ⁸ So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to understand the reading.
- Psalm 1:2,3 but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. ³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.
- Psalm 119:97-101 Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.
⁹⁸ Your commands are always with me and make me wiser than my enemies.
⁹⁹ I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes.
¹⁰⁰ I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts.
¹⁰¹ I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word.

20. How else did Paul encourage Timothy? 4:14 (Compare Acts 13:1-3)

21. Underline what Paul credited for his good ministry.

- 1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was with me*
- 2 Corinthians 3:5,6; Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God, ⁶ who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- Ephesians 3:7 of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.
- Philippians 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Applying the Word: *During this past week, how or to whom have you been a godly example? Ask God for continued wisdom and growth to be that again!*

Day 4

Timothy's Example. Read Timothy 4:15,16

22. From 4:15, list the 2 commands given to Timothy. *Compare different translations.*

Digging Deeper

See Peter's advice about diligence in 2 Peter 1:10; 3:14,17,18.

- What positive results would come from this?

23. Why do you think Timothy's example of growth and godliness would be so powerful?

FYI: "When a pastor or other Christian minister becomes steeped in biblical truth and grows in wisdom and godliness, people notice. Authenticity is observed and respected. Eventually, they begin to believe they can experience the same transformation. Keep growing in your walk. As you grow older, grow deeper." - Charles Swindoll (92)

24. From 4:16, list the 2 commands given. Compare different translations. *What tone do you read in these commands?*

- What beneficial results would come from this? (Cf. 2 Timothy 2:10)

FYI: "Paul says, 'Persevere in these things,' referring to the commands he had already given Timothy earlier in the letter."
- Platt et al. (76)

"Timothy had already experienced personal salvation through faith in Christ, but through the delivering and transforming power of God's Word, he and the church could experience daily victory over the power of sin."
- Tony Evan (1436)

25. Underline the benefits that diligence and perseverance yield.

- 1 Peter 1:6,7 In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.
- Romans 5:3-5 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
- James 1:4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything

26. What can make this battle even more intense? Ephesians 6:10-13

27. In the following verses, underline what stands out to you about the confidence we can have in the battles we face:

- Philippians 4:19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.
- Hebrews 13:6 So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.
- Philippians 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
- Romans 8:15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."
- Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
- Romans 8:31,37 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?...³⁷ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.
- Romans 4:21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.
- Ephesians 3:20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,
- 2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.
- Hebrews 13:5 ...God has said, "**Never** will I leave you; **never** will I forsake you."

28. How rigorously did Paul strive to win others to the Lord? 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

29. How would you explain the differences in focus and motives with the spiritual disciplines Paul is encouraging versus the ascetic practices of the false teachers (4:3)?

Applying the Word: *What types of problems can easily discourage a person in leadership? How can you be an encouragement to someone who leads you?*