

1 Timothy 4

A special message to Timothy about a coming apostasy

-**Why would it be good for Paul to warn Timothy?** So he could be prepared for it

1 Timothy 4.1-5

V1 – A direct revelation from the Holy Spirit

-**When would the apostasy take place?** Later times (or "last days" - *Acts 2.17*)

-**What could Timothy expect?** Some would fall away from the faith

-**Did Jesus ever talk about people falling away from the faith?** Parable of sower (*Matthew 13.1-9*) (This destroys the "Once Saved Always Saved" doctrine)

-In every generation and in every congregation, some will fall away

-**What will lead them astray?** Deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons

-**What is deceitful about false doctrines?** They promise to have a "new" understanding on something

-Notice again the plural form for "doctrine" (referring to false doctrines)

V2 – **Were those false teachers sincere?** No – hypocrites

-**How much had they been hardened?** Like skin burned with a hot iron

-In branding cattle the branding spot has no feeling anymore

-When people get caught up in a false doctrine, they also become numb to the truth (we have all known people who cannot be reasoned with; the evidence means nothing)

V3 – Paul's list of some of their errors: forbidding marriage, abstaining from food

-**Do we see any of this today?** Yes: Catholic Church (Lent) and many Protestant groups, Seventh Day Adventist (vegetarian), Mormons (coffee)

-**How should Christians accept food?** With gratitude – in other words, with a prayer before the meal

V4 – **Paul's attitude toward food?** All can be eaten with gratitude – **Spinach? Broccoli?**

V5 – We are to constantly look to God as the provider of our food

1 Timothy 4.6-10

V6 – **What was Timothy to point out to the congregation at Ephesus?** Dangers of false doctrines (*vs. 1-5*)

-Timothy had the authority to preach to the congregation

-Some have taught that only elders can preach to the church, that the preacher is to preach to those outside the church (as an "evangelist")

-This is called the "mutual edification doctrine" (also called the "anti-located preacher doctrine")

-But Timothy was the preacher, and Paul told him to preach to the church and help them work through their misunderstandings

-**How was Timothy to remain faithful to his commission of preaching the gospel?** Constantly studying the gospel

-One of the teachers at a Christian college said that it was a big mistake when preachers stopped

having a “study” and started having an “office”

-He said that it should be called the preacher's study, not the preacher's office

-In other words, it is easy to get caught up in the administrative tasks at a congregation and lose sight of the need to study the Bible constantly

-The power of preaching comes from knowledge of the Word of God - we are to study it daily

-It is not how many visits the preacher can make or how many times he can conduct workshops on personal evangelism

-The preacher can make visits day and night and have all kinds of Bible studies set up with people in their homes, but it will not have the impact of presenting organized and well-prepared sermons based on the Word of God!

-It has been said that there are two types of preachers: those who study the Bible every day and those who move to a new congregation every 2-3 years (there is a connection there)

-We begin to see why the books of *1-2 Timothy* and *Titus* are called the “pastoral” epistles (letters to preachers) (even though the word "pastoral" is misused in most reference books)

V 7 – What was Timothy staying away from? Worldly fables (traditions of the rabbis and pagan religions)

-What should Timothy do for himself? Discipline himself

V 8 – Should Timothy fill up his basement with exercise equipment? No

-Bodily discipline? Of little profit (not of no profit, just a little profit)

-Some good comes from exercise in moderation

-What kind of discipline is best? In godliness

-Why? Best for this life and the life to come

V 9 – The third “*trustworthy statement*” (1.15, 3.1) (5 altogether: see also 2 *Timothy* 2.11 and *Titus* 3.8)

V 10 – God gives all people the potential to be saved, but the believers are the ones who are actually saved

1 Timothy 4.11-16

V 11 – Meaning of “prescribe”? To lay down the guidelines

-It is not just, “Now all y'all be good now, ya' hear” – It is much stronger than that

V 12 – What problem did Timothy have at Ephesus? People were not listening to him because he was so young

-It is common for older people to disregard younger people.

-The writer of these notes is familiar with a preacher who was 32 years old, but a church dictator kept referring to him in public as "a novice"

-The writer is aware of another congregation where a well-trained preacher in his early 30's was referred to repeatedly in public as "the kid"

-He was highly criticized there because he did not cut the grass at the church building often enough

-So it is easy to understand how Timothy must have been treated

-Are there any examples in the Bible of older people being badly mistaken and younger

- people being right?** *1 Kings 13* – the older prophet who misled the younger prophet
- What did Paul recommend to Timothy?** Don't let them make fun of your youth
 - In other words, an argument does not depend on the age of the person making it; it depends on the truth about the matter
 - We have many fine young people and many fine young adults at every congregation
 - They can make good suggestions; we should never discount a suggestion or request just because it comes from a young person

V 13 – What three areas of work was Timothy to concentrate on?

1. “*Public reading of the Bible*” (probably Old Testament and parts of the New Testament that had been written at that time)
 2. “*Exhortation*” – urging the members of the church to be faithful
 3. “*Teaching*” – teaching in Bible classes
- An excellent summary of the work of the preacher – just excellent
 - At some congregations, the preacher gets saddled with a lot of things that have nothing to do with preaching (driving the church bus, making visits that should be made by the elders, doing paperwork that could be handled by someone else)

V 14 – Advice of Paul? Don't neglect the spiritual gift (we are not told which gift Timothy had)

- (See: *2 Timothy 1.6* – Laying on of Paul's hands)
- Who gave Timothy the gift?** Presbytery and Paul (working together)
- In other words, either Paul assisted the elders at Lystra, or this may be a reference to the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem (with Paul assisting)
- Another possibility: two different spiritual gifts: one given by the eldership in *1 Timothy 4.14* and another one given by Paul
- Only apostles or those baptized by Holy Spirit could pass on spiritual gifts (so maybe apostles and elders at Jerusalem)

V 15 – Advice in *v 15*? Work hard on all things

V 16 – Two roles of preachers? To take care of his own faith and to help others also receive salvation

- Many preachers have met their downfall here
- They can be very effective in preaching to others, but they neglect their own salvation and fall into sin

Summary of *1 Timothy 4*:

- A great chapter for preachers on their role and for elders overseeing the work of the local preacher

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