

6 In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. 7 But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; 8 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. 9 It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. 10 For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. 1 Tim 4:6-10

In the passage we looked at last week Paul wrote by the Holy Spirit a prophecy for the later times in church history. He wrote, *the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. 1 Tim 4:1* Jesus had told the disciples, *the Spirit of truth* was to come and He would guide believers *into all the truth*. The Spirit will *speak and disclose to you what is to come. John 16:13* Here we find the Spirit disclosing to Paul there was going to be a falling away from the faith. Believers turning from God to follow *deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons*. Having their consciences seared, *cauterized, having their “spiritual nerve-endings”* destroyed. What was Paul was referring to? Can you imagine what these *deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons* might be? Do see evidence of this in the world today?

Remember, Paul wrote this letter to Timothy. Paul was equipping Timothy to be able to instruct the church at Ephesus *to conduct themselves in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. 1 Tim 3:15* The church was established to support the truth, the reality of God's redeeming purpose in the world. The church is to be the standard of what is good and true, to *examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good. 1 Thes 5:21* So how could *doctrines of demons* penetrate this bastion of truth that was to be protected by the spiritual armor of God?

11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Eph 6:11-12

In the Reformation the Bible was, for the first time, in the hands of the people. The Bible had been translated into the languages of the common man. Men understood that they were sinners, Adam's seed. They read how God had sent His Son to pay, the debt we could never pay, to restore a right relationship with God. John wrote, *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. 1 John 2:1,2*

But what of *deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons*. Some major deceptions that took shape in the 1800s; Evolution, Charles Darwin's theory that all species of organisms arise and develop through the natural selection, Communism, Karl Marx's atheistic worldview, an ideology, that is not only irreligious but antireligious, and Julius Wellhausen's higher criticism that argued the Bible was an important source for historians, but could not be taken literally. These developments must be viewed as the work of *deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons*. They devastated the Church.

Rather than combating these theories as heresies and denials of the truth, the church mounted little defense. These deceptive beliefs were allowed to penetrate into the church. Take Darwin's theory. If man evolved as he postulated over millions of years the Bible account of God creating the world was to be questioned. We constantly hear the theory of millions of years. If this was true the Bible could not be trusted. Had Adam and Eve really eaten the fruit in the garden? This

must be a myth. No sin no need of a savior. If Marx's communist system was true it did away with all of Christian ethics, there would be no God determining right and wrong. Wellhausen may have been the worst for his theory attack the heart of the church, it removed the miraculous from the Bible. The Bible wasn't inspired by God it was just the creation of men. The Christian singer, Keith Green wrote a song called, *No One Believes In Me Anymore (Satan's Boast)*

*I'm gaining power by the hour, They're falling by the score
You know, it's getting very simple now, 'Cause no one believe in me anymore.*

The Church is meant to defend the truth of the Bible and the God that inspired it. But *in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons*. Paul's words have come true in so many ways. Men and women have come unhinged from the truth, even in our churches. Christians have deserted the faith and sound doctrine. Jesus wanted believers to remain anchored on the truth of the scriptures, the truth of the Gospel and the most holy faith, the mystery of godliness. He wanted us holy and prayed to the Father, *Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. John 17:17* So let's go back to Timothy.

Timothy was to lead the Ephesian church to avoid the *doctrines of demons*. and also to avoid making the faith about asceticism, severe self-discipline, not marrying, and abstaining from foods.

6 In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. 1 Tim 4:6

Timothy was to be a good servant of Christ by being *constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine*. The Church would not have strayed, suffered so much loss and distraction if in the last 200 year it would have held to that which is true. The devil is ready to *deceive even the elect*. We are talking about last times and we are to on the lookout for false teachers, *For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Matt 24:24* So a good recommendation for us is to be *constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine*. Read the Bible and good Christian books and listen to the spoken word, *sound doctrine*. Paul says that in later times, men *will not endure sound doctrine*.

2preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. 3For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. 5But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 2 Tim 4:2-5

7 But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; 1 Tim 4:7

In addition to *doctrines of demons*, we must beware of *worldly fables fit only for old women*. Here both the Jews and the Gentiles shared fictional stories that were not profitable to the truth.

Profane - The word here used does not mean that the fables here referred to were blasphemous or impious in their character, but that they had not the character of true religion; 2 Timothy 2:16. But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness

And old wives' - Old women's stories; or such as old women held to be important. The word is used here, as it is often with us, in the sense of silly. *Fables* - Fictions, or stories that were not founded on fact. The pagan religion abounded with fictions of this kind, and the Jewish teachers were also remarkable for the number of such fables which they had

introduced into their system.

These *doctrines of demons and worldly fables* deny the true creator God. They tell false stories of who God is and of how life began. If people follow this type of teachings their faith is shipwrecked

8 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. 9 It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. 1 Tim 4:8,9

This is an interesting statement. Paul isn't saying that it isn't good to exercise but it is temporal, it disciplines the body. It is however, immensely more profitable to pursue godliness. Later in this book Paul writes, *godliness with contentment is great gain. 1 Tim 6:6*

Teach these things, Timothy, and encourage everyone to obey them. 3Some people may contradict our teaching, but these are the wholesome teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. These teachings promote a godly life. 4Anyone who teaches something different is arrogant and lacks understanding. Such a person has an unhealthy desire to quibble over the meaning of words. This stirs up arguments ending in jealousy, division, slander, and evil suspicions. 5These people always cause trouble. Their minds are corrupt, and they have turned their backs on the truth. To them, a show of godliness is just a way to become wealthy. 6Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. 7After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. 8So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. 1 Tim 6:2-8 NLT

2Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1 John 3:2,3

Paul writes we are to pursue godliness because we are being drawn into a divine relationship with God. We are pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Phil 3:14*And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. John 3:3*

9It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. 10For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. 1 Tim 4:9-10

12Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained. Phil 3:12-15

7Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 9In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 1 John 4:7-11

Love God and love you neighbor (live godly)