

1 TIMOTHY

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Dr Robert E. Self 2018

This was originally an expository series of sermons given in the church where I was serving as Pastor. A few years later, they were edited to be used as a Bible Study. There are a few things I feel I should share with you before using this material:

First: I had no intent of sharing or publishing this material until encouraged to do so by some friends. While I did consult several commentaries as I was preparing the original sermon series, I did not make notes of the references used in the messages. There was not in the beginning, nor is there now, any intent to plagiarize. Should you see anything you feel is the original thought of another, I ask for your grace and mercy.

Second: In my notes for teaching (or preaching), I tend to spell certain words phonetically for the purpose of emphasis. When transforming these notes from sermon notes to teaching notes, I felt inclined to leave a number of these phonetic spellings. They help me to make emphasis in the lesson at particular points.

Third: In my notes for teaching (or preaching), I make little effort to conform to rules of grammar. One example is that I often use a hyphen (-) to indicate a point where I may want to pause slightly and to keep certain thoughts connected as I speak. Another example is that I will use local colloquialisms to make points in the message.

Please accept that these notes are not an academic work. But I do hope they will help the preacher or teacher to be able to more quickly prepare their own sermon or teaching.

The beginning of the First Letter to Timothy was clear – Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, was instructing Timothy to command the false teachers to stop teaching. In the remainder of this letter to Timothy, Paul will address several specific issues.

It will be helpful to keep in mind that while several different issues are being specifically addressed, the overall context of this letter is the stopping of false teachers in the Church. In the section of the letter we will begin to examine in this lesson, Paul is addressing the issue of prayer.

It sounds right and almost expected to hear someone say that “prayer” is not only an important part of church, but “prayer” is pretty much a major part of the foundation of the church. As simple and as straightforward as this might appear at a quick glance – the reality is that there was mis-understandings and mis-conceptions about prayer in the days of the early church – and sadly, they are still in the church today.

Let me share with you a few of these misconceptions that are common among Church people:

One misconception - is that the church is just supposed to pray a BROAD prayer that covers all leaders. This is usually taught without any specifics being stipulated about the direction in which we are to pray for these leaders. This is simply a misconception – if not a misunderstanding - of the Holy Spirit’s instructions that were given through Paul. Our Prayers are Not to be Broad non-specific prayers - but they are to be as specific as we know how.

Another misconception - is the GOAL of our prayers for leaders - is the quiet and peaceful life. Those perpetuating this line of teaching usually say that the more violent and chaotic the world around us becomes, the more we need to strive to live quietly and peacefully within that world.

These teachers usually encourages Believers to live a “low profile” kind of life – and they teach that Christians should not draw attention to themselves. This probably sounds familiar - because it is taught by some today! The best way to interpret any portion of Scripture is to make sure it LINES UP with all others portions of Scripture.

1 Timothy – 11 Pray For Everyone

This principle is certainly true when it come to interpreting this portion of First Timothy. When we consider the other teachings of Paul and the teachings of Peter – this “low profile”, - “under the radar” - living out of Christianity appears to be a different theological or doctrinal view. It’s kind of hard to be effective evangelistic when no one NOTICES that you are around!

If we are to be going about the Christian lifestyle with an evangelistic purpose, then we need to re-evaluate this portion of 1 Timothy about praying for our leaders.

Read 1 Timothy 2:1 and make notes:

As part of the commanding false teachers to stop – “first of all” – or the first thing - “I urge” - this means - I beg you – I plead with you – I strongly encourage you. “I urge” – requests; “I urge” – prayers; “I urge” – intercession; “I urge” – thanksgiving; “be made for everyone”! We will reflect back on these 4 types of prayer in a few minutes.

This is very “inclusive” – when the texts says “everyone” - this tells us that not a single person is to be excluded. “Everyone” - includes all the lost - as well as all of the saved. “Everyone” - includes all those in leader-ship - as well as all those in follow-ship. “Everyone” - means every person - every where.

Read 1 Timothy 2:2 and make notes:

And just so that we don't mistakenly think - that we are only supposed to pray for those – who are “like us” - We are told that we should make our requests, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving - for everyone – including those in the highest places of authority (kings) – and for people at every level of authority (those in authority). Those two statements at the beginning of V2 - just expand or clarify the “everyone” in V1.

The reason we should pray for “everyone” – and I mean “everyone” - is so that we “may live peaceful and quiet lives - in all godliness and holiness”.

For those who are determined to drive through this text at a high rate of speed – it is understandable how they might drive away thinking - “we should pray for our government leaders to provide us with a quiet and peaceful lifestyle.” But, as we have already pointed out, other New Testament texts let us know that this is probably not the right view of this text.

We should pray for “all those in authority” so that we might live quiet and peaceful lives – But the “quiet and peaceful life” is NOT “what” we pray specifically for those in authority.

Before I explain that statement, let's consider the 4 types of prayer for a moment.

“Request” (petitions) – this is when we ask God FOR something – in this case, on behalf of another person.

“Prayers” – this is general COMMUNICATION with God – when we talk to God about others, even if we are not asking for something – maybe we are just pointing them out to God – maybe we are complaining about them to God.

“Intercession” – this is standing in the GAP for someone – maybe pleading for their punishment to be withheld – or the punishment to be reduced – maybe asking for them to be protected in a time of danger/.

“Thanksgiving” – this is expressing APPRECIATION for something this other person has brought into our lives. Maybe something this other person has made possible for us – which could be material things – or could be emotional or spiritual things.

All of these “kinds of prayer” - are to be made for “everyone.” As Christians, we should not limit ourselves to just one kind of prayer. The prayer activities of a Christian should be multi-faceted.

Sometimes we need to be asking on another person’s behalf, And before we complain too loudly about this person in authority – we should Ask ourselves: What are we asking God to give to them? What are we asking God to do for them? Whatever it is - that we think they are lacking – whatever it is, - we should be asking God to give it to them.

Sometimes we need to be talking to God about someone. The fact is, - until we have talked TO God about someone, we should never talk to anyone else - about someone! So if we know we are going to meet with somebody tomorrow and we know that when we get together with them, we are going to talk about the pastor - then we need to talk to God - about the pastor tonight, before we talk to anyone else about the pastor.

Sometimes we need to intercede for another persons - “Lord, please keep them in a safe path” - “Lord, please don’t let harm come to them” - “Lord, please let your blessings cover them completely.”

Sometimes we need to say “thanks” to God - for sending this person our way – or allowing them to come our way.

Sometimes we get so worked up when a person “grates” on us to the point of making sparks fly. We want to cast them down when we realize they are causing sparks to fly. But do we realize that these are the people who often make us sharper? “Lord, I didn’t enjoy the grinding and grating – but I do appreciate this new sharpness you have given me - so thanks for allowing this person to come my way.”

1 Timothy – 11 Pray For Everyone

It is a terribly short sighted view of this text to apply it only to government authorities. “Everyone – all those in authority” - means all kinds of “authority” – civil, religious, and family.

So, we are to pray this multi-faceted kind of prayer - “that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.” It could be a “peaceful and quiet life” if one is living in solitary confinement - separated from all other people – there would be peace – and it could be very quiet. But Paul was not instructing us to simply make “quiet and peaceful” our goal. The real goal is to live our lives “in all godliness and holiness.”

“Godliness” is living our life as “God lives His.” “Holiness” is living our life in a clean manner. The word used in the original language, literally translates to “respectability.”

We have already pointed out that other teachings of the New Testament instruct us to be evangelistic – that means we take the message of the gospel - to others in some manner. So we must live our lives with some contact - with other people to do this.

Living our lives with “respectability” is rather meaningless - if we are never AROUND other people. We can’t be “respectful” - if we are never around others. We can’t live our lives with “respectability” - if we never do anything. So, living our lives “peacefully and quietly” - in a monastery - miles away from civilization – even though we may be maintaining some degree of holiness – sorely misses the target altogether for a Christian Life.

1 Timothy – 11 Pray For Everyone

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson, we were told to make “request, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving” for everyone. So, why does God want us to pray for all other people in all these ways? Some have concluded that it is simply “so we can have a quiet and peaceful life.” Friends, it is so much bigger than that!

Read 1 Timothy 2:3-4 and make notes:

God has instructed us to Pray – all these different ways for people for 2 reasons:

First – It PLEASES God. When we pray all these different ways for other people especially all those in authority – it pleases God our Savior.

Second - God – “wants all men to be SAVED. ” God wants all people “to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

I will agree that this appears very subtle to some people but let us at least agree that it is here. The purpose of our praying in these different ways for all those in authority - is so that people will get saved. The purpose of praying this way - is Evangelistic.

Read 1 Timothy 2:5-7 and make notes:

The false teachers in those days – just like those today - try to convince Believers that there are multiple paths to God. We must stick with what the Bible says – “there is one mediator between God and men” and that is “Christ Jesus.”

The Bible does not say there is one savior in each GENERATION. The Bible does not say there is one savior for each CULTURE. The Bible SAYS THERE IS ONE - and that is JESUS CHRIST!

And for those false teachers who want to use Paul's teachings for other purposes - "for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle" - "this purpose" is the gospel message of Jesus.

The highest priority of any Believer is PRAYER. The first practice of any Christian is to PRAY. The first practice of the church is to PRAY.

If we are not willing to pray – then we should not even try to minister. If we are not willing to pray – then we should not even try to be a church. The purpose of our praying – just like the purpose of our lives - is to bring other people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

We can not pray - ONLY for Quietness and Peace – and pray against anything that might disturb our quiet and our peace. That makes us come across as very selfish. We must pray that others get saved. If it takes me giving up some quiet and some peace – so that another person can come to the knowledge of The Truth – Jesus Christ - Am I willing to pray for that?

When we pray for someone to get saved – and we say "Lord, do whatever it takes" - sometimes we find our quiet and our peace – noticeably disturbed – for a time. Sometimes a person who has prayed like this for someone they love and care about finds their heart torn out of their chest and stomped on. And the pain can be so intense that they think they are not going to be able to breath again. But if that person comes to salvation in Jesus – we will most likely say - the pain "was worth it."

It isn't completely wrong to pray for a quiet life. It isn't completely wrong to pray for a peaceful life. If we want peace – we should ask for it. If we want some quiet – we should pray for it. But be sure and follow that with - "nevertheless, Lord, let your will - supersede my will."

1 Timothy – 12 Highest Priority

Our goal is not to achieve “peace and quiet.” Our goal is SALVATION offered to every person. If all those in authority over us would get saved – we would have a quieter and more peaceful life.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In V8 of chapter 2, - Paul continues with the theme of prayer he began in V1. It is noticeable that a large number of Bible teachers place the emphasis of this text upon verses 11-15, where it talks about women teaching in the church. In the modern church, some use this text to teach that Paul was returning the Christians to the Patriarchal system – while others use this same text to teach that Paul was saying that women are unsuitable to teach in the church.

These few verses are not an addendum, inserted to teach on a separate topic, they are part of the framework of the teaching on “propriety” in V9 and V15. And this would also fit within the framework of that culture of the expected and appropriate behavior of women in public.

Read 1 Timothy 2:8 and make notes:

At this place in the letter, we find Paul engaging Timothy and the church at Ephesus according to gender groups. In accordance with the household code of that day, he takes the men first, and enlarges his teaching on community PRAYER. The Greek word used here is one that can be used for “men” or for “husband”, - and many Bible scholars believe it is used most often for “husband.” If it was used by Paul in reference to “husband”, - then that would make this portion of the teaching to have primarily to do with “husband/wife” relationship.

Before we make too much of that, it is important that we remember that in the culture of that day, the norm was for men and women to be married. It was unusual for a man or a woman to remain unmarried. However, historical records reveal that it was becoming a trend among the more wealthy women of that day, if they became a widow, that they did not remarry quickly. They were often seen as taking on a liberated lifestyle and dress code. Some even described these “new women” as appearing to be demonstrating a level of promiscuity.

It could be that Paul intended to use the terms “men” and “women” to address the issues with a little more precision. But look again at V8 – it is apparent that Paul is concerned about the HOLINESS and the overall demeanor of men when they pray.

The instruction of men praying is set in positive terms. First it is set in the posture of men raising their hands in prayer. And the mention of raising “holy hands” should not go unnoticed.

In the Jewish culture of that day, it was the customary practice of the Jews - for a man to raise his hands toward God as he prayed. It was seen as very disrespectful to place “dirty” hands in the face of God. It was the usual and expected thing for a man to wash his hands before lifting them upward in prayer. The washing of the hands was a fundamental preparation step, for not only the priest, but for any man, to take before praying to God.

But there is more to this simple practice. It was understood, that washing of the hands would do no good at all, if the man had SIN in his heart. That culture and tradition, called for the man to offer the necessary sacrifices to make atonement for his sins, before washing his hands. The overall idea was that when a man was seen washing his hands in preparation for prayer, he had already taken care of the sin in his life and had received forgiveness for them.

Now, look at the last part of this verse; - “without anger or disputing.” The acceptable prayer would certainly be devoid of attitudes and actions that put relationships at risk.

Paul highlights two of the most common attitudes that put our prayer and relationships at risk:

A. - The presence of **ANGER** indicates the absence of patience, kindness, and forgiveness at the very minimum. Any of these characteristics missing in a relationship is putting the continuation of this relationship in jeopardy.

B. - The presence of **DISPUTING** indicates hostile actions on the part of the person. There is a less forceful word typically used when referring to “disagreeing” – but the word used for “disputing” typically refers to loud words and other actions to get the public to refuse the other person’s position.

The false teachers were reported to have resorted to “disputing” the teachings of Christianity more so than just disagreeing with them. Without question, Paul wanted the Christian men to look and act differently - from the false teachers. What a better place to look and act differently than in the way they prayed. And as we review the other teachings of Paul in the New Testament, we have no problem discovering that Paul felt the moral condition of a person greatly affected their prayer.

Another thing to notice here before we move on - is something that appears to be overlooked by a great many who teach from this passage. “I want men everywhere to lift up.” There are two basic ways this phrase is interpreted:

The first is to interpret this as referring to “all men” – The second is to interpret this as referring to “every place” men may find themselves.

This second interpretation is in line with the rest of the Bible - one example is in Malachi 1:11. The emphasis should be on the word “everywhere” – it is “in every place” in some translations - and it is “by every nation” in at least one.

Prayers are not to be offered only in certain places – but men are to pray to God “everywhere”. There is no place that is NOT an appropriate place to offer prayer to God.

This brings to the forefront an interesting point. If we, as men, are to pray everywhere, then that means we must keep our hands clean. So that everywhere we are, we are prepared to raise “clean hands” up to God in prayer. And To have clean hands, we must first be free from the guilt of sins.

In the culture of that day – this was pointed toward the men - but we live in the culture of “Our Day.” Does this still apply only to the men - or does this apply to the women as well?

1 Timothy – 13 Acceptable Prayer

Pray Everywhere. A church is wrong, if it teaches people they can only pray “at the church”. Believers should pray in every place – wherever they may be is an appropriate place to pray.

We call ourselves Christians:

Do we pray in our homes?

Do we pray in our places of employment?

Do we pray in the market places?

Do we pray in the school?

Do we pray in our automobiles?

Do we pray outside?

Is there any place we think we should not pray?

Before we raise our hands in prayers of thanksgiving - Before we raise our hands in prayers of petition and request - many of us need to bow our heads in prayer of confession and ask forgiveness. That act changes the way our Father in Heaven sees us - when He looks upon us.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

Paul said in V8 that “I want” men to pray - and then reveals what is the appropriate way for men to approach prayer. Now he is saying “I also want” women to pray – and then reveals what he considers appropriate for them.

We need to keep in mind that this teaching is about “prayer”. When Paul began the section of the letter we call chapter 2 – he teaches that we need to “pray first” – before we do ministry things, we need to pray. Then he moved on to teach how men should approach prayer – with holy hands, which automatically include a forgiven life – and that men should pray “everywhere.”

Read 1 Timothy 2:9-10 and make notes:

“I also want” is a transition marker shifting attention from the men - to the women. Now Paul has moved on - to teach how women should approach prayer – not with elegant physical clothing – but with GOOD DEEDS.

Do you remember what Paul said concerning men? It is important that a man not approach prayer with a wrong attitude and/or wrong behavior. He is now saying that a woman should not approach prayer with a wrong attitude and/or wrong behavior.

In that culture it was becoming a trend among some of the wealthy women of that day - who became widows - to begin to live out their lives as something of a “new woman.” What Paul is saying here is – “woman, when you come to pray, - don’t approach God in prayer wearing elegant clothes and fine jewelry – when you have been living your life as though it is all about me attitude.” “Woman, when you come to God in prayer, make sure you are adorned with good deeds.”

1 Timothy – 14 Proper Adornment

There have been Christian groups who have used this text to teach that women “Should Not” wear jewelry – or fine clothes. A woman certainly can live her daily life doing good deeds, and wear fine clothes and nice jewelry. So, this is not to be used as an injunction against women wearing jewelry, or makeup, or nice clothes. It is saying that a woman is not appropriately dressed for prayer if she does not have GOOD DEEDS as part of her lifestyle.

God is not fooled by our outer clothing. Remember, God looks on the inner man, not the outer.

I know some of us don’t like to discuss the topic, and some of us have determined that we are never going to agree with the issue. But most of us do understand – and we probably agree – that the outer clothing of a woman sends signals and messages to other people they meet. Regardless of how expensive - or how inexpensive - the clothing may be – the outer clothing of a woman can say to others things like – “I am a person with dignity” - “I am a modest person” - “I am a promiscuous person.”

The other side of this coin is something like this: Regardless of the outer clothing – the good deeds - or the lack of good deeds - on the part of a woman also says something to others. A lack of good deeds says: “I am selfish, and its all about me.” A history of good deeds says: “I want to help, - I am limited in resources or time, - but I will do what I can.” And the circumstances of good deeds can say: “I am here for you no matter what.”

For Paul, - just like it makes a difference when a man goes to God in prayer – that he be able to lift up “clean hands” - the message of her “good deeds” makes a difference when a woman goes to God in prayer.

Read 1 Timothy 2:11-12 and make notes:

1 Timothy – 14 Proper Adornment

Verse 11 makes an interesting shift. Some translations say “wife” while others say “woman.” The Greek word used here - can be interpreted either way.

The interesting part is that in the previous verses the use of the word has been in the plural sense – “wives” or “women”. And here in V11 it becomes singular – “wife” or “woman.” It is not appropriate to separate these verses, nor the next few, from the others of this chapter. What is in these verses is still in the context of Paul’s teaching on prayer.

This portion of the letter continues with the concept that there is a concern that some of the Christian wives – and/or women - may have begun to follow a dangerous cultural trend. In Vs11 & 12, we find an appropriate behavior for women in the church. Paul even mentions a contrast between the barest of essentials; - learning, which is encouraged, and teaching, which is prohibited.

From the early church days right up to our contemporary time, there have been two basic interpretations of these two verses. One views the reference to Adam and Eve in the next verses as a reason to make this a universal application – that at no time, - under any circumstances – is a woman to ever teach a man. The other view tends to consider other teachings of Paul to render these verses as being limited to the occasion and culture of that city and that time.

It has been taught by some that it was a significant step forward that in the Christian movement of the early days of the church – for women to be allowed to learn – trying to make a distinction between the practices of Judaism and this new Christianity. This just isn’t true. Even in Judaism, it was not uncommon for the women of what we would call middle class and upper class families to receive and education.

The emphasis by Paul in this text isn’t upon women being allowed to “learn” – the emphasis is upon “learning in QUITENESS. The Greek word used in the original text can be translated in a variety of ways – it can range from “quietness as in peacefulness” to “absolute silence.” The context of the usage is expected to dictate the exact translation.

1 Timothy – 14 Proper Adornment

Again, a reminder of the social setting of this church – Gentiles are getting saved - and joining the church – they do not come with the Jewish traditions that the saved Jews bring with them.

Roman wives were getting saved and many of them are hosting some of the Christian gatherings in their home. Some of these - were the women who were taking part in the “new woman” trend. Some of these Roman “new women” were assuming an authoritative position in their new found religion of Christianity. And they were forcefully pushing their false teachings upon the other New Believers.

In parallel to the “in quietness” is the phrase “full submission.” The “submission” in this context is not necessarily that of the wife to the husband, but rather that of the woman to the teacher. The person teaching would certainly not be the husband to every woman present.

If we set out to interpret “submission” as the subservient position of a wife to her husband – we will get into some sticky mud - in this text. Would any husband want his wife to give that kind of submission to another man teaching in the church?

In this text, it would be “in quietness or peacefulness” of posture and attitude toward the teacher. This would not exclude wives or women from participation in certain speaking activities – which include - not only being a part of discussion, - but also praying, prophesying, or even speaking in tongues.

Verse 12 is certainly at the focal point of many teachings on this passage. “I do not permit” – falls within the arena of apostolic authority. It is in the same context of “I want” or “I desire” that was in v8.

As already mentioned, there are those who use this passage to prohibit women from teaching in the church – in any manner or capacity. When we look at other New Testament passages, there is evidence - there were some women teaching in an authoritative sense in the early church.

1 Timothy – 14 Proper Adornment

In Titus 2:3, the older women are instructed to teach “WHAT is GOOD” - in Acts 18:26, Priscilla, a woman, participated in the teaching of APOLLOS, a man - in Acts 21:9, we are told that Philip the evangelist, had 4 daughters who had the gift of PROPHECY – it is accepted that they used their gifts in the assembly of Believers.

In 1 Corinthians 11:5, women are instructed to cover their heads when they pray and prophesy - How many Christians thinks this applies to them being at home - rather than in the church? And we must not ignore the great equality statement in Galatians 3:28, “there is neither male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians was written by this same Paul who wrote 1 Timothy. Paul didn't change his thinking from the time of one writing to the other. And neither did the Holy Spirit who was telling Paul what to write!

Another interpretation of V12 places the emphasis upon Paul’s decision not to permit women “to teach” men - or to allow women “to have authority over” men – instead of not allowing women to teach or to have authority in the church. If we consider the statement in Galatians 3:28, - we have to wonder what difference it could make whether “women teach men” - if there is no male or female in the Kingdom of God.

The only thing that makes 1 Timothy line up with all the other New Testament Scriptures is to understand it in the context of the culture of that city and era – accompanied with the false teachings that were being pushed upon the Believers there in Ephesus. But, if we take this view, where does that leave us with the next few verses?

Read 1 Timothy 2:13-15

1 Timothy – 14 Proper Adornment

Almost all Bible scholars agree that Vs 13 & 14 provide the support for what is said in Vs 11 & 12 - but not all seem to agree that V15 is to be included. When we look back at the account in Genesis, to which Vs 13 & 14 are referring, - we notice that part of the punishment included the woman experiencing pain in childbirth – part of this pain in childbirth includes the associated danger – which can lead to the loss of the life of the mother.

If we accept salvation in Christ Jesus as setting us free from the deserved punishment of being a fallen person – why not accept the promise of protection from the associated danger of that part of the punishment? Women, who continue in faith, who continue in love, who continue in holiness – with appropriate lifestyle – it is reasonable to believe they will be saved through childbearing.

The problem in Ephesus - that had Paul concerned – was not the participation of women in the activities of the church. If that were the case, then we have a problem explaining the rest of the New Testament.

The problem in Ephesus - that had Paul concerned – was the - assuming of places of authority in the church by those who were accepting the false teachings. Regardless of being a man or a women - Christians are to Approach Prayer - With APPROPRIATE Attitude AND Actions.

We need to come to prayer with our hearts free from anger, vengeance, bitterness, etc. We need to come to prayer with our lives having demonstrated our willingness to do good deeds.

The adornment that God looks at when we come to Him in prayer – isn't the clothes we are wearing – but it is the Heart we are wearing. It is the inner person – it is the condition of the heart and attitude - t is the adornment we have put upon ourselves through our attitude and actions. This means we can pray while wearing our dirty work clothes, if our heart and attitude are right.

1 Timothy – 14 Proper Adornment

As stated in some previous messages, we have some of the same kind of false teaches today. When someone starts trying to teach Christians – that the only appropriate way to pray – is to wear a certain kind of clothing – or to cover our clothes with a certain kind of shawl - they are attempting to lead Christians back under the legal practices of Judaism - where the righteousness came through actions and works. This is in direct opposition to the righteousness by grace through faith that is provided to Christians through the atoning work of Christ Jesus.

It isn't - the outer garments – it is - the inner adornment!

Let's take a spiritual look at ourselves:

How have we adorned ourselves when we come to God in prayer?

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

We have arrived at a place in this letter where the qualifications are given for two categories of leader in the local church. The order of the treatment - and the more elaborate introduction to the qualifications of an “overseer” can be seen as suggesting that this is the role that presented the most pressing need.

Both of the leadership roles listed in this chapter are regarded from the standpoint of qualifications - and not duties. This indicates that the thing that is being stressed is the quality of the leader’s character, more so than the presence of particular gifts and abilities. However - gifts and abilities are needed for the different leadership roles.

In both of the roles covered in chapter 3 – there is a great deal of overlap in the qualifications – and there is the same general requirement of a blameless reputation. In today’s contemporary local church – there is a natural tendency to select leadership in the church just like we would select leadership in the corporate world.

For some churches - education of the candidate may be high on the list. For others - innovative thinking may be up there. Then in some churches - a youthful candidate is to be desired over an older one. And in many cases a fashionable or attractive physical appearance is in demand.

All of these may be good criteria for the corporate world – but they are wrong for the church. Not all of it for sure – but much of the scandalous and damaging errors committed by leaders in the church of our day – can be attributed to the failure of the church to select its leaders by the qualifications given in this text.

Far too often an energetic – or physically charismatic – new believer is plunged into ministry leadership roles. It is so common - as to seem natural in many local churches today – that a place of authority in the local church is given to one who a “good giver” financially – without the “testing” instructed in this passage.

1 Timothy – 15 Overseer

I have witnessed a person who gets saved – and very soon after getting saved, they are given a place on the church board – because they are successful in the corporate world – it just seems to make good sense to get a good business person to help direct the church. Then it isn't long until the church board is making almost all of its decisions by secular standards and totally ignoring God's standards.

This doesn't happen because they are bad people – they are saved people – its just that they didn't have time to grow and mature spiritually. But the results are just as damaging as if they were bad people.

When we survey the historical documents we have from the 1st century – there simply isn't enough evidence to be emphatic about exactly how structured the early church was – and what title actually had authority over other titles. The best we can do - and stay faithful to the Scriptures – is to say that those in the church who “led” were distinguished from those in the church who “did not lead”. And the “leaders” appeared to have functioned in comparable, - but not identical ways.

Timothy appears to have been an overseer of primarily ONE church – the one at Ephesus. Titus, on the other hand, appears to have been an overseer of SEVERAL churches. And both were called “overseers”.

It is important to remind ourselves, that this letter to Timothy is primarily about stopping the affects of false teachers.

Read 1 Timothy 3:1 and make notes:

This verse does not discourage someone from aspiring to be an “overseer” – it says the person who has a desire for this position - “desires a noble task”. And it would shameful if we read this text and did not emphasize “task” – or “work.”

1 Timothy – 15 Overseer

Please notice that this text says a person desiring this office is desiring a “noble TASK.” The word “task”, - or “work” in some translations, speaks of labor and activity.

This text DOES NOT say that the desiring of the authority of an overseer is a noble thing. It is the desiring of the WORK of an overseer that is a noble thing.

To desire to have the authority and power of the office of an “overseer” – but not to desire the work of the “overseer” - IS a very terrible thing. And that is most often the category the false teachers fall into.

Read 1 Timothy 3:2 and make notes:

Since “overseer” is a noble task – “Now” or “Therefore;” -the list of qualifications for the person who is to be an overseer begins. Before anything else is said about the qualities, the gifts, or the abilities an overseer should have – we are told, “the overseer must be above reproach”.

Titus 1:7 says, “it is necessary for the overseer to be beyond reproach.” Slightly different Greek words used in each text, but both speak of “blamelessness”

Then we are told, “the husband of but one wife.” Titus 1:6 says, “husband of one wife.” Both of these texts speak of the need for there to be “fidelity in marriage” for the overseer.

Yes, some churches use this to say that the “overseer” cannot have been divorced – and re-married. But to remain faithful to this Scripture - it only says they are to have “only 1 wife at this time” - it disqualifies the person who has multiple wives.

The list of qualifications begins with 2 positive requirements: “be blameless” and “have only 1 wife.” And these 2 positive qualities are followed by 5 more positive qualities: “temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.”

“Temperate” - basically refers to one who does not ingest too much of INTOXICATING substances. This person is able to maintain command of their reasoning and thinking abilities.

“Self-controlled” - basically refers to one who is sober and balanced in STRESSFUL situations - one who is not easily provoked to anger.

“Respectable” - basically refers to one who conducts their business and private life in a RESPECTFUL manner – respectful of themselves - and respectful of others.

“Hospitable” - basically refers to one who DEMONSTRATES hospitality – and this would be in all areas of life, not only when someone should come to their home.

“Able to teach” - basically refers to one who has the ability to teach. There are those in some areas of life who are good leaders – and they lead by doing - they lead by example, but they are unable to “teach” except by their example – and this is okay in many of those areas.

It may seem reasonable to ask – if it is okay to be a leader in a number of areas of life without the ability to teach – why should it be required of an “overseer” in the church to have the ability to teach?

I don’t know if I can give a practical answer that will satisfy everyone – but I will give the answer - I know is correct. The world, - and the standards of acceptance in this world, do not establish the standards for God’s Kingdom. God sets forth the standards for His Kingdom – and I personally believe the world would be a better place if the world we live in would adopt God’s standards as its standards.

1 Timothy – 15 Overseer

To be able to teach is a requirement for an “overseer” in the local church, because God set it as a standard.

An interesting thing is evident if you pay attention for just a little while – in a healthy local church – there are a number of people who have the ability to teach who are not in the position of an “overseer.” While the ability to teach is a requirement to be an overseer in the local church – the ability to teach is not limited to the “overseers” in the local church.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson - we discussed the first qualifications for being an “overseer” in the Church:

The overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, and able to teach. In this lesson, we will look at some of the other qualifications of an “overseer” in the church.

Read 1 Timothy 3:3 and make notes:

“Not given to drunkenness” – “not violent - but gentle” – “not quarrelsome”

These clearly speak about the public life of the person. These requirements don't require any commentary. We understand what “drunkenness, violent, and quarrelsome” - is talking about.

And they are not to be - “a lover of money.” This does not say - they can not have money – This does not say - they can't have a lot of money – What it does say - this person cannot be a “lover of money.” In short – an Overseer - cannot be a GREEDY person.

Read 1 Timothy 3:4-5 and make notes:

Something of a shift takes place in the list of qualifications here. Up to this point, the qualifications have been more of the personal qualities. Here the qualifications are more of the evidence of proficiency in MANAGING .

1 Timothy – 16 Overseer (2)

If the person has not been able to earn the respect of their own children – how can we expect that they would ever earn the respect of the community? And the COMMUNITY is what we are trying to reach with the Gospel Message.

What do you think - is this talking only about young children still living at home or does this speak of adult children living away from home as well?

If the person has not demonstrated the ability to manage their family well – how can we expect that they would manage the church family well?

Read 1 Timothy 3:6 and make notes:

The overseer must not be chosen from among the new CONVERTS. The reason given is more practical than spiritual. Recent converts are more easily attacked by “conceit” - And “conceit” has been a very common trait of false teachers. We can debate whether “conceit” leads one to becoming a false teacher – or false teachers are easy targets for “conceit” – but it is sufficient for me that the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to include in these qualifications: That the “recent converts” not to be considered as an “overseer” - so that they will not become “conceited.”

When one becomes “conceited” - they fall “under the same judgment as the DEVIL.” Surely, none of us would want anyone we know to fall under the same judgment as the devil!

Read 1 Timothy 3:7 and make notes:

1 Timothy – 16 Overseer (2)

The person who is being considered for the position of “overseer” – must have a “good reputation with outsiders.” It isn’t enough that an Overseer have a good reputation ONLY with those within the church – they must have a good reputation with those who are “**OUTSIDE**” the church as well.

When we do not have a good reputation – we tend to have – or to experience – disgrace. “Disgrace” makes us an easy target for “the devil’s trap.” It is not hard to see the high failure rate of false teachers, who do not meet the qualifications in this list for an “overseer.”

If some of these were “young” – especially in the Christian walk more so than in biological years – they could have succumbed to pride – or even arrogance. Once pride or arrogance takes root in our lives – we are easily led astray by FALSE teachings – and even ungodly behavior.

The Holy Spirit – speaking through the apostle Paul – was providing guidelines and instructions on how to protect the local church from the devastating affects of false teachers. The position of “overseer” - is the Greek word “*episcopus*” {ep-is-kop-ay'} – which refers to - an INSPECTING or an overseeing.

An “*episcopus*” is not just a leader – it is not just a minister – but an “*episcopus*” - is one who oversees others. In our contemporary setting, - “*episcopus*” can be applied to Bishops, - Pastors, - Elders, and a number of other positions in the modern church - where one person oversees another person or persons.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the first seven verses of chapter 3 – we have been given “qualifications” for those who are called and gifted to be “overseers” in the church. In the next few verses – we find another word – and it's associated qualifications. It is the Greek word *diakonos* {dee-ak'-on-os} – which refers to one who carries out the commands of another – or “a servant”.

Read 1 Timothy 3:8 and make notes:

The qualifications for a “deacon” starts out sounding a lot like those for an “OVERSEER.” And even uses the word “likewise.” Basically, they must be people of good moral character and have a good reputation in the community.

Read 1 Timothy 3:9 and make notes:

This is supposed to be a list of qualifications for those who have positions of a “servant” in the local church. They “must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith” – and they must do so “with a clear conscience.” It is not enough that the servants within the local church just teach the doctrines of the church – they must do so with a “clear conscience.”

Just in case someone is missing it – this means the servants in the local church need to stay PRAYED up and CONFESSED up.

1 Timothy – 17 Deacon

Read 1 Timothy 3:10 and make notes:

Those who are to fill positions of “servant” in the local church – “must first be tested” – and only “if there is nothing against them” - then - “let them serve as deacons.” It cannot be a popularity contest - It cannot be a position - up for sale - It must be the result of an evidenced life.

Read 1 Timothy 3:11 and make notes:

And it isn't just the person – if they are married, - their spouse must be a person “worthy of respect.” Their spouse cannot be a “malicious talker” - Their spouse must also be “temperate” - and “trustworthy in everything.”

Read 1 Timothy 3:12 and make notes:

This qualification - is the same as for the overseer – and for the same reasons.

Read 1 Timothy 3:13 and make notes:

Those who serve well as deacons in the local church – stand to obtain two REWARDS. The first reward is - they will gain for themselves “an excellent standing.” This may not be limited - to just within the church – it may also include in the community as well. The second reward is – they will gain “great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus” – this is no small thing.

It is very common for Believers to experience doubts – things happen that shake our faith – we can feel our faith wobbling in certain situations. The promise is that for the person who “serves well” as a servant in the local church – they will receive “great assurance in their faith” – the reward for faithful servant-hood is an un-shakeable faith.

Consider how much easier it becomes to serve - when our faith is not wavering. When our faith WOBBLES, - we find it harder to serve. When our faith is STRONG, - we find it easier to serve. The person who serves well – is rewarded with a “great assurance in their faith”

Read 1 Timothy 3:14-15

Paul is hoping to soon come to visit with the Believers in Ephesus. But just in case it is not “real soon” - but takes some time before he can get there - the point of this letter is - “so that” - the Believers will know “how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household.”

1 Timothy – 17 Deacon

Why is it so important for the local church to be led by people of good character and good standing? Look at v15 – “God’s household” - is “the church of the living God” - “the church of the living God” - is the “pillar and foundation of the truth.”

Read 1 Timothy 3:16 and make notes:

There is no doubt left in Paul’s testimony of faith – “beyond all question” - “the mystery of godliness is great.” Jesus appeared in a body - Jesus was vindicated by the Spirit - Jesus was seen by angels - Jesus was preached among the nations - Jesus was believed on in the world - And Jesus was taken up in glory. This is historical fact for Paul. This is not religious theory.

The qualities to look for in one who is to be in a leadership position in the local church covers a wide span of character doesn’t it? From fidelity in marriage - to fiscal responsibility and integrity. From wise household management - to public reputation. And this requires maturity in every part of life.

If a person in leadership has most of these qualities – they would be able to deal patiently and constructively with people who are in conflict. And they would be able to do so in such a way as to preserve and strengthen relationships instead of destroying relationships.

If a person in leadership has most of these qualities – they would not be about selfish attainment or selfish advancement.

Having these qualities would NOT deny a person in leadership pleasurable activities, - creature comforts, - or even an abundance in material goods. It would just mean that the person in leadership has control over these things – instead of these things having control over the person in leadership.

1 Timothy – 17 Deacon

Basically, the fitness of one to lead in the local church is linked to MATURITY in the faith – not time in service, - nor mental or physical abilities.

If a person is watched and examined in these areas of qualifications – and placed into a leadership role only after these qualities are evident in their life – Then there would be fewer church splits – There would be a lot less “cruise-amatics” – people hopping from church to church – There would be so many less cases of people in leadership abusing people in the congregation. And – there would be a very few false teachers to ever get into a place of leadership in the church.

A church that is growing in number of people – is a good thing. As it grows in numbers, they will need to assign people to places of leadership.

A healthy church will not elect and APPOINT these people. A healthy church will observe and _RECOGNIZE these people. Sincere and mature Christians would not bother campaigning for a place of leadership. Mature Christians will not even try to buy a place of leadership.

Every Believer should be making efforts in getting ready. All of us should be making efforts to seek God's guidance - as we Mature – clean-up - and repent up. We should strive to demonstrate to all those around – the lifestyle and qualities listed here.

The local church needs more people in leadership - but the wise ones will be watching to see who God has prepared - Who God has Called – and gifted.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous section of this letter to Timothy, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, spoke to us regarding Elders and Deacons, - and how the “proper” selecting of these leaders will REDUCE or PREVENT false teachers from getting control of the church. That section closed with a hymn or a song – declaring God came in a physical body, lived a sinless life, defeated death and the grave, and now sits on His throne in heaven. The letter now continues addressing practical issues within the local church.

As stated in an earlier lesson – while several different specific issues are addressed in this letter – they are all addressed in the context of stopping false teachers and their affect within the church. This section we call chapter 4 – begins with a prophetic word.

Read 1 Timothy 4:1 and make notes:

The clever arguments of the false teachers are called what they really are – “things taught by demons” - and they are coming to us via “deceiving spirits”. This isn’t to say that the specific person who is teaching these things in the church - is a demon – but what they are teaching - came from demons – and it is being perpetuated within the church by “deceiving spirits”.

Deceiving spirits - promoting doctrines of devils - have only one purpose - and that is to cause believers to depart from the FAITH. The true Gospel of Jesus Christ is actually very simple, - just like the gospel given to Adam and Eve. God simply told them - they were not to eat of a certain tree lest they die. The only way they ended up doing exactly opposite - of what God told them to do - was through the seduction of the serpent.

1 Timothy – 18 Deceiving Spirits

The key word here is "seduction". Deceiving spirits - are SEDUCING spirits - and their job within the devil's kingdom - is to get believers to doubt the integrity of God's Word - and to start compromising what they know to be true. One of the most sure fired ways this happens - is through introducing division into a body of believers - which in turn yields itself to suspicion - and then to all sorts of misunderstandings and accusations.

One of the fascinating things I have watched through the years – is that people become deceived – and they don't realize they are deceived – they passionately teach and promote false teachings and false doctrines. Those who are rooted and grounded in the Word can recognize the teachings as false – but those who are deceived - don't recognize them as false. They usually are thoroughly convinced that what they are teaching - is superior knowledge - and they believe it is divinely inspired understanding.

I do accept completely that it is the Holy Spirit that is telling Paul – what to write in this letter. But I am certain that Paul understood this concept clearly. Paul had some personal experience with BEING a person who was deceived. He knew from first hand experience what kind of damage a person can cause when they are deceived.

When he was known as Saul, he sincerely believed the followers of 'the way' (the 1st Christians) - were corrupting the truths of the religion of the One and True God. But - once he had learned 'the way' was the real truth - and not a false belief as he thought, - he could no longer persecute them, - but sought instead to re-align all his knowledge of the Word - to this 'way' (Acts 9:1-19; 1 Timothy 1:12-13).

Another fascinating thing I have observed is that people who teach with PASSION and enthusiasm are believed and followed – even if what they are teaching is wrong. There must be something within us as human beings - that is drawn or attracted to enthusiasm.

Let some man or woman teach precise truth, without a even a hint of error – if they teach without enthusiasm or passion for the subject – hardly anyone will listen to what they have to say.

1 Timothy – 18 Deceiving Spirits

Let some crackpot come along - who has the craziest ideas and teachings anyone has ever heard – if they teach with passion and excitement – people will flock to hear them. People will eagerly accept and hold onto everything they say – and people will gladly pass it along to others.

There must be something within human beings that just naturally trust something - if it comes with enthusiasm or passion – in today’s culture we call it charisma.

What is really heartbreaking about this verse to me – is the part where it says people will “abandon the faith” - to follow after the “deceiving spirits” and the things “taught by demons”.

Please don't miss this:

A person CAN NOT “abandon” something - they have not “come to.” The only way believers get to the point - where they leave the one true faith - is that they start paying attention to - and then end up yielding their minds to two things; - deceiving spirits - and doctrines of devils.

Deception is the very key to the devil's success. Once a believer is deceived, - then introduction of devilish doctrines finishes the job - causing a believer to depart from the faith.

How deeply it must hurt the heart of our Heavenly Father – when people who have “come to faith” in Him and then “abandon” this faith in God to follow after the things taught by demons!

Before we move on to the next verses – please note that we are told “The Spirit clearly says.” – Paul is certain that there is no misunderstanding about what the Spirit of God has told him regarding this matter. This is not some fuzzy picture the Spirit is painting. This is distinct - and explicitly clear - that in later times some, - or certain ones, - will in one form or another leave the faith.

Whether they abandon it - or rebel against it; - the end result is an apostasy from the one true faith of Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy – 18 Deceiving Spirits

Sometimes when a person receives a Word from God – they can have some questions - regarding exactly what the Word means. Most people who receive Words from God - are aware that as fleshly beings – we can “read into” God’s message and when we do - we misunderstand and misapply it.

However, in this case, - It Is Clear! This abandoning the faith - in order to follow after the teachings of demons is what will take place in the “later times.”

This is specifically speaking of the times in which we live. The level of deception is growing stronger by the hour. Everyday - more and more believers are rebelling against the true faith - and following cleverly devised doctrines that originate in the depths of hell.

Deceiving spirits are at work in every church in the world. Deceiving spirits are at work in the homes of every minister - attempting to trick them into saying or doing something - that will lead them away from the true faith. Deceiving spirits are at work in meetings - as they attempt to twist and turn what is being said into a lie in the hearer's mind.

These deceiving spirits are not to be FEARED, - they are to be attacked - with the one thing they cannot stand up to - and that is the TRUTH.

Deception is believing something is of God with sincerity - and usually with no doubt, - while in fact - it is not wholly - or at all of God.

The end goal of deceiving spirits is to divide and conquer. If they can divide the unity of the body - they can conquer that part of the body and render it crippled. Whether it is an individual household - or a church - or a ministry - or denomination; if deceiving spirits can gain entrance - they can within a short amount of time - usually succeed in causing people to fight each other - and constantly be suspicious of ulterior motives - and start reacting to - “over sensitivity” - and to hearsay.

1 Timothy – 18 Deceiving Spirits

Deceiving spirits work to disrupt and to destroy relationships - by inserting doubt, - anger, - suspicion, - conflict - or bitterness. Deceiving spirits make mountains out of molehills - and they turn minor disagreements into world wars. Deceiving spirits are the root cause of petty spats - turning into knock down drag out battles - where someone always gets hurt. Deceiving spirits set people against each other - with the result being separation and ultimately rejection.

We must be ever vigilant - and aware of the presence of deceiving spirits. They were in the Garden of Eden seducing Adam and Eve. They were in the place where Jesus and his disciples had their last meal - deceiving spirits - convinced Judas is was alright to betray his Master. They were in the courtyard of the temple - where they influenced Peter to flat out deny - he even knew Jesus.

We can't afford to let our guard down - when deceiving spirits are actively at work in a situation. We must take decisive steps to spot them, - isolate them, - stop them - and rebuke them in the name of Jesus Christ.

God felt this was important enough - that He had it written down and preserved - so that we could read it – study it - and be aware of it!

So, what will we do - with this message that God has kept for us?

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson – chapter 4 opened up with an instruction to be “on guard” for “Deceiving Spirits”. Deceiving spirits work to disrupt and to destroy relationships. Deceiving spirits make mountains out of molehills. Deceiving spirits are the root cause of petty spats. Deceiving spirits set people against each other.

We must be ever vigilant - and aware of the presence - of deceiving spirits. We can't afford to let our guard down - when deceiving spirits are actively at work in a situation. We must take decisive steps to spot them, - isolate them, - stop them - and rebuke them in the name of Jesus Christ.

Verse 2 continues with some straight talk – calling things what they are without trying to make them sound politically correct.

Read 1 Timothy 4:2 and make notes:
(may be helpful to read several translations)

Let's recap how different translations say it:

hypocritical liars -

liars who pretend to be what they are not -

false ways of men whose words are untrue -

will also be fooled by the false claims of liars -

people who tell lies and trick others

spread by deceitful liars -

consciences have been seared as with a hot iron -

sense of what is right and wrong has been burned as if with a hot iron -

hearts are burned as with a heated iron -

consciences have lost all feeling -

conscience has been destroyed with a hot iron -

consciences are dead, as if burnt with a hot iron.

“Such teachings” – the teachings that are the things taught by demons. These kinds of teachings “come through” people who are “hypocritical liars” – this is what we call “straight talk” and some might even call it “tough”.

There are people who are liars – but the people who perpetuate the things taught by demons are “hypocritical liars”. The things that originated with demons – are not be perpetuated THROUGH or by human beings. This kind of collusion between demons and humans makes these teachings both appalling and perilous.

The extent to which these false teachers are “hypocritical” is unclear. Perhaps the best understanding of this is to see these teachers as “hypocritical” in the sense that they know they are not Christians, but they are claiming to be. This fits well with the phrase that follows – where it says their “consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.”

When a person goes for surgery – the medical personnel make an effort to anesthetize at least that part of the body, if not the whole body. The idea is to make it so the person does not “feel” pain. If a person “feels” the pain – they are not going to be still - the pain is going to make them wiggle, - squirm, - jump, jerk, - spasm, - and a whole lot of other things – depending upon the level of pain. But, if a person does not feel pain – they may remain still. A person who does not feel pain – Is Not MOVED !

I have had a part of my physical body numbed while it has been cut and sewn back together. I was awake during this – I knew I was being cut – I knew that certain things were being done – even talked with the medical personnel involved while it was happening. I was able to lie still while this was happening because I did not feel pain.

A person who has their “conscience seared as with a hot iron” – speaks of a person whose conscience is not going to feel any pain when they do something wrong. The average person feels a certain level of emotional pain when we do something wrong. We may call it “guilt” or “shame” or “disgrace” – or a number of other feelings, but we feel pain - or at least emotional discomfort.

1 Timothy – 19 Hypocritical Liars

The person who has their conscience numbed – will do the very same wrong things, but will feel no pain or discomfort. This is the person whose conscience has been seared as with a hot iron – they do wrong – they know it is wrong – but it does not hurt them to do wrong – it doesn't even make them uncomfortable. With their consciences numbed – a person can continue to CLAIM to be one thing when they know full well that they are not what they claim.

Read 1 Timothy 4:3 and make notes:

These “hypocritical liars” who have “consciences that are numb” go about teaching a number of _LEGALISTIC things. One thing that is fairly common is the “forbidding people to marry” – they usually teach this in the light that they are keeping people sexually pure – but it always sets the people up for a different perversion.

Some of the false teachers in that day did what some of the false teachers today are doing – they are using the fact that Jesus did not marry and Paul did not marry - to say that the “best” way to live a Godly life is to live that life as a single person. So those who are single are pressured to remain single while those who are married are actually encouraged to get a divorce – especially if the spouse is an unbeliever. For those who do not divorce – they are encouraged to practice sexual abstinence within marriage. And that is quite the opposite of what Paul taught on the matter. There are many variations of this type of teaching.

There are some really basic problems with these kinds of teachings. The first is that God instituted marriage – now listen closely: God did that BEFORE the fall into sin that Adam and Eve experienced in the Garden of Eden. The second is: Both Jesus and Paul SUPPORTED_ marriage.

Jesus, in teaching on marriage, said that no man should separate those who are married in the eyes of God. Paul, in teaching on marriage, said it was better for a person to marry than it was to burn with lust. Later in this very letter, Paul will even told young widows to re-marry.

So - God's Word teaches us that it is an HONORABLE thing to live our life as a married person. And we are also told that it is just as honorable to live our life UN-MARRIED .

Another thing that is fairly common among the teachings from demons is the “abstaining from certain foods” – they usually teach this in the light – of the body is a temple and they are keeping the temple pure – but this sets the people up for control and manipulation.

Those Jews who were coming to faith in Jesus as the Messiah, certainly brought with them the dietary teachings from the Jewish culture. In those days there were some Greek philosophies that taught certain dietary restrictions. As they people came to faith in Jesus as Savior, they brought with them their dietary teachings. This mixed background of dietary teachings made many of these new believers easy targets for the false teachers who were presenting dietary restrictions as the pathway to holy living.

And there was the very real issue of meats being sold in the market place that had been sacrificed to an idol in one of the temples of false gods. These new believers were concerned about somehow offending God if they should eat meat that had been earlier sacrificed to some idol. So, - it just seemed like a reasonable solution to this concern – don't eat any meat - and then you don't have to worry about what practice this meat may have been involved in earlier.

There is something within us as human beings that just wants to find a way to “work” and “earn” our salvation. If we are told that we can become acceptable to God – and become a holy person by only eating certain things then we want to do that – so we can earn our place with God.

1 Timothy – 19 Hypocritical Liars

We are given the most basic summary response to teachings on dietary restrictions in the last part of V3 – these foods which we are being told to refrain from eating - these are foods were created by God - to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth!

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson, we looked at a couple of “false teachings” that were being promoted in the First Century. One was regarding “what you could eat” - and the other was that it was more righteous to be “not married.”

Read 1 Timothy 4:4 and make notes:

God is The Creator! Everything God created is good! Nothing God created is to be REJECTED. Everything God created is to be received with thanksgiving.

I am aware that many scholars feel this is speaking only in regards to the food - But this view will short change the full message from this text. When we are speaking of what God created – we must remember that God created the marriage relationship as well as having created “food”.

Everything God created for food - is good. But more specifically – “everything” God created – was created “good”. This also makes marriage good.

Please remember, - this letter is to stop the false teachers. Whether it is the false teaching that marriage is to be avoided - Or the false teaching that certain foods are to be avoided. The response is that God created them – and they are not to be rejected.

The problem does not come in the eating - or in the marrying. The problem comes in the way in which these things are RECEIVED. If they are received with “thanksgiving” – they are going to be right.

Jesus taught that it isn't what goes into the mouth that makes a person unclean, but it is what comes out of the heart. If “thanksgiving” or “thankfulness” is what is coming out of our heart as we receive - then the “thing” itself - is much less the issue.

Read 1 Timothy 4:5 and make notes:

The “thing” – whether it be food or marriage – or any other thing - when we take it to the Word of God and we bathe it in prayer – this is what makes the “thing” consecrated! The “thing” within itself - is not consecrated. It is the RECEPTION of it.

Before we say it’s okay to eat - or it’s okay to marry - or it’s okay to do - Let us hold “it” - whatever “it” is - up to the light of God’s Word. And let us bathe the decision in prayer. For the consecration of any thing or any activity comes from God’s WORD and PRAYER.

When I was younger, I followed the teaching of that day – on a number of issues - and shared those teachings with some others. Today, I no longer share many of those teachings – in fact I go in the opposite direction on some.

Consider a man and a woman sins – and people around them say, “in order to make what you did right – you have to get married” – so the couple gets married. Did the participation in a marriage ceremony make the sin - not to be a sin? Did the participation in a marriage ceremony make what they did - “alright”?

What they did - will not be changed by them getting married - or by them remaining unmarried. What they did - and the decision to marry - or not to marry – needs to be taken to God’s Word - and the decision needs to be bathed in prayer. They most certainly can be forgiven - for the wrong thing they did – hallelujah!

Getting married for the wrong reason - can just be one more wrong thing - they have done wrong. And it can become - another thing they will have take to God for forgiveness.

Even having done a wrong thing – taking the whole issue - and issues surrounding it to God’s Word – and bathing the issues in Prayer - can consecrate the persons involved – can consecrate the decision – whatever - the decision is – And can lead to a peaceful and joyous life.

Leaving out the Word of God and / or leaving out the Prayer - not only can – but does lead to a continuing struggle with much joy being struck down - before it has a time to bloom. Taking the decision to marry to God’s Word - and bathing it in prayer – will lead some people to marry – and it will lead others to refrain from marrying. And both decisions and both lifestyles are consecrated when they are done in this manner.

I trust everyone understands this analogy applies equally well to the decision to eat - or not to eat certain foods. But to make sure someone fails to grasp this, let me share a little more in this area from a slightly different angle.

There are certain foods that taste good – and are good nutrition - And yet - some people have an allergy to that food. While a great number of people can eat that food – and get nutrition from it - other people can become very sick, - can experience a great deal of pain or discomfort – and even die – if they eat that very same food.

Spending time in God’s Word and praying about a food item, can leave a person with the consecrated conclusion that they are not to eat this food – and still allow others to eat it in peace. Just because some people are allergic to a food does Not mean – No One Should Eat It!

There are two sides to this coin : On the one side – we should refrain from eating certain foods – and accept no condemnation for not eating - what others are eating. The other side - we are free to eat that very same food that others feel compelled to refrain from eating and we are to accept no condemnation for eating.

The short version is just because others can eat this thing – or drink this thing – Does Not Mean I should eat this thing or drink this thing. Just because others cannot eat this thing – or drink this thing - Does not mean that I cannot eat this thing or drink this thing.

Please apply the same logic - to the marriage issue. Some should refrain from being married – and accept no condemnation for remaining single. And others should marry – and accept no condemnation for being married. And this can be applied to the teachings that we must wear certain clothes - or that we must refrain from wearing certain clothes.

Please apply this same logic to every issue that arises - Apply the same procedure to every issue that arises. We need to hold the issue up to God’s Word - AND bathe it in Prayer.

The word is “clear” – it is unambiguous – it is unmistakable. The things taught by demons will in the later times cause many people to abandon the faith to follow after these false teachings.

If you recall – in an earlier lesson from this letter – we were told that the “first thing” to do – in an effort to stop false teachers – is to “pray.” Now we are told that along with our “praying” - we are to compare everything to the Word of God.

Without the proper standard, we can be fooled – we can be led astray by the enthusiasm, the passion, - or the charisma of a false teacher. We won’t be able to see the little signs in their facial expressions or body language that might indicate they are being dishonest – Because their consciences have been seared and made numb.

Without checking every teaching against the Word of God we can be – and likely will be – LED ASTRAY. And many will abandon the faith because of these false teachers.

It is imperative that we do not let our guard down. No one here should ever accept anything I teach - Or anything anyone teaches - Until they are sure it lines up with the Word of God. Food is made clean for us by our “prayer of thanksgiving” - and so it is with everything else.

Legalism seems attractive to our flesh - it appeals to our sense of self-righteousness - but legalism is unable to restrain the inner corrupt person. Only the Holy Spirit can create a truly godly person.

1 Timothy – 20 Legalism

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

Let's continue feasting on the 1st Letter to Timothy - where the Holy Spirit, through Paul, is giving us instructions on how to stop the affect of false teachers in the church. And how to prevent them from taking control of the church.

Read 1 Timothy 4:6 and make notes:

“These things” - refers to - what was in the preceding verses – The path to righteousness – or the path to acceptance with God – is not going to be found in following a set of do's and don'ts – especially do's and don'ts regarding eating and drinking – or even marrying. For the most part, the “rightness” or the “wrongness” of a particular dietary item or in a particular activity is going to be found in the attitude with which we receive these things.

“Point these things out to the brothers” – the grammar of the original language would literally translate to “fellow believers” rather than technically just to “brothers.” So these things ARE_TO BE be pointed out to the “brothers and sisters” – or - to all “fellow believers.” And “IF” we do this, then we will be considered a “good minister of Christ Jesus.”

“Brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.” This is reminding Timothy – to consider – he became the good minister he is today – as a result of being “brought up in the truths of the faith” and by “following the good teaching”

Timothy did not arrive at the place of being considered a “good minister” by telling the people in the church – or the community - what was the popular teaching of the day. Timothy did not come to be considered a “good minister” by teaching the current fad – or by teaching what everyone wants to hear.

Read 1 Timothy 4:7 and make notes:

Again, we see in this verse - there is no hint of trying to be politically correct – things are simply called what they are. The FALSE teachings that were discussed in the preceding section - are called “godless myths” – “and old wives’ tales” - “old wives’ tales” – is a very derogatory phrase.

In that culture – being a male dominated society – the woman was looked upon as being a lower state than a man. To say that a man was acting like a woman – was a derogatory statement. To say that a man was acting like an “old woman” – was even worse.

Many of the men of that society – simply did not take women serious – when it came to serious issues of state – or issues of life. In many of the Greek philosophies of that day, the words and thoughts of the elder woman was considered to be just silly. If the elderly women of that day were anything like my grandmother – they would have done well to listen to her. But the point here is that these false teachings are not only called “godless myths” – they are called “old wives tales” – which was about the most demeaning way they could be referred to in that society.

What Timothy was being told - says these false teachings aren’t worthy to be debated – they aren’t worthy of the time - to be weighed or considered – just toss these false teachings aside – as the useless garbage that they are.

Instead of giving time and place within the church to consider these false teachings - “rather, TRAIN yourself to be godly.” Timothy, it is a better use of our time to “train” ourselves “to be godly”- than it is to debate and consider these false teachings.

Read 1 Timothy 4:8 and make notes:

At the time this letter was written – the Greek influence was high – the culture looked up to those who achieved or exceeded at physical endeavors. The Greek Olympics were a big deal – those who were Olympic champions – were elevated to a position just short of being worshiped. The culture looked upon persons who had exercised and developed their physical body as worthy of great honor and respect.

This passage does not say physical exercise is worthless – as was said about the false teachings – It acknowledges that physical training has “some value” – the fleshly body does in fact benefit from appropriate exercise. There does appear to be a direct connection between appropriate physical exercise and good health and I really hate to have to admit that.

Contrary to the popular views of that day – physical training does not have value in all areas of life. Being physically fit simply won't get us forgiven from our sins – being physically fit won't get us into a good standing with God – let alone get us into heaven.

So, while physical training has “some value” – it is limited. HOWEVER - “godliness has value for ALL things.” In fact, godliness holds “promise for both this PRESENT life and the life to COME.”

In v7 Timothy was told to “train yourself” and to specifically train yourself in “godliness.” And the reason for this instruction is given in v8 – being trained in godliness brings benefits in this life and in the life to come.

We just can't help but see that Paul wanted the very best for Timothy. Do we want the very best for the people around us?

1 Timothy – 21 Good Minister

Timothy, it is okay to pursue physical exercise and to attain physical fitness. But it is clearly more important to pursue spiritual exercise and to attain godliness. It is okay to work on both at the same time – but Timothy, if there is ever a conflict – Timothy, if there just isn't time or resources for both, be sure you go for the most important – and go for the training that leads to godliness.

Let's summarize these verses:

We don't become a good minister by being flamboyant. We don't become a good minister by being able to attract a crowd quickly. We don't become a good minister by being able to raise a lot of money. We don't become a good minister by being able to move people emotionally.

While a good minister may in fact be able to do one or more of these things - none of these things will make us a good minister. We become a Good Minister by being brought up in the truths of faith - AND - by following good teaching. If we want to help others to become Good Ministers – we will bring others up in the truths of the faith and we will help them follow good teaching.

In our contemporary society, we are in desperate need of ministers - who are more interested in being considered a “good minister” in the eyes of God - than they are in the eyes of man. When ministers become too concerned about being seen as a “good minister” in the eyes of man – it causes us to back away from faithfully “pointing these things out to the believers.” The “eyes of man” can be those who are family – those who are coworkers – those who are of the “denomination” – etc. Ministers need to be faithful to point these things out to the fellow believers – even if it is not what is the popular teaching of the day.

It is somewhat natural for us to think of “ministers” as those who “pastors” - “evangelist” - “missionaries” - and those who are in these positions are “ministers.”

But in reality – who are “ministers”?

1 Timothy – 21 Good Minister

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson – the Scriptures referred to the things previously discussed in this letter to Timothy and then it said quite clearly - “We Are To Tell These Things To Other Believers.” And - if we do this – along with sticking to the teaching the Truth and continuing to Train ourselves to be Godly. Then – we will become a “Good Minister.”

We concluded the previous lesson by discussing the simple truth that it isn't “just the full time clergy” - but in fact – every Believer Is A Minister.

Read 1 Timothy 4:9 and make notes:

One of the many things I appreciate about Paul, is his being real. As we examine the writings of Paul, we find places where he doesn't remember the chapter and the verse and simply says “somewhere it is written.” And Paul doesn't always try to make everything he says to sound like it is the voice of God coming through him. Paul doesn't tell Timothy “thus sayeth the Lord” – Paul doesn't say “now in an apostolic word of authority” - Paul just plainly says “this is a trustworthy saying” - And as such it “deserves full acceptance.”

Read 1 Timothy 4:10 and make notes:

In this closing statement of this section of the letter – Paul links his mission efforts and the mission efforts of Timothy together. Paul's ministry purpose and Timothy's ministry purpose are both for the purpose - of SALVATION of all mankind.

Please don't overlook the words Paul used here in v10 - "for this we labor and strive." Paul did not see the ministry as some "cushy" or "easy" way to make a living. Paul said "we labor and strive". The word "labor" speaks of toil and hard WORK. The word "strive" speaks of STRUGGLE.

Train For Godliness. Most of us understand what it means to "train" for something. To train for something means more than just studying, or reading, or listening to lectures. To train for something - means "PRACTICING" and making an effort to become STRONGER - or more precise.

When it comes to a dentist or a surgeon – most of us wouldn't even consider allowing them to perform some procedure on us if we knew they had only read about it or listened to others talk about it. We want to know that they have practiced under the watchful eye of one who is knowledgeable – we want to know that they have trained – before they start on us.

I fear - the reason we have so many in the ministry who are falling into sin in our society – is that we have so few who are busy "training" to become GODLY. No one goes into the army and is a great soldier on the day they join. They train and train – and sharpen their skills – they push themselves and strengthen - not only physically, - but also strategically, and in matters of discipline. No one finishes medical school and is a great physician on the day of graduation. They train and train – they hone skills – they strengthen their observation abilities – they strengthen their diagnostic abilities – they strengthen their ability to prescribe the right course of treatment.

And while I am willing to say "it is possible" – it has been my observation that Christians don't become completely godly on the day they are saved. As Christians, we need to train ourselves to be godly. This means putting forth some effort – much like the soldier or the physician. Perhaps for a season - under the watchful eye of a master.

Let me point out that the really good soldier and the really good physician – never stops TRAINING. In much the same way – a really good Christian never stops training in godliness either.

1 Timothy – 22 Training For Godliness

The getting our “ticket punched” mentality and then just waiting for the “good ole gospel ship” to take us home – just doesn’t line up with the New Testament gospel.

Do we want to keep false teachers out of the church? Do we want godly leaders in our Church? Then let us be busy training ourselves - to be godly.

Let’s ask ourselves, “Am I making an effort to make sure I am coming up in the truths of faith and staying in good teaching? “Am I training myself for godliness?”

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In a previous lesson from the First Letter to Timothy, Paul pointed out Timothy played a role in the salvation plan of God. The overall purpose of this letter was clearly stated from the beginning – this letter is full of instructions and pointers on how to keep false teachers out of the church – and what to do concerning the false teachers who do become part of the church.

Now, in this short section of the letter, The Holy Spirit – speaking through Paul gives Timothy some imperatives that are to - set the tone for Timothy’s own personal behavior and activities.

There is also another mention of the “gift” - that Timothy has been given. This links the power of the Holy Spirit to the life Timothy is to lead.

Read 1 Timothy 4:11 and make notes:

This is another reflection back - to what has already been said in the letter. The term that is translated “command” describes AUTHORITATIVE activities – ordering and exhorting a person to do - or not to do certain things.

The term that is translated “teach” refers to INSTRUCTIONS that are given in what we would recognize - as a congregational - or classroom setting. This is teaching - where both theology and ethics are expounded and explained.

These two terms do somewhat overlap, and they summarize the actions Timothy is to take in his place of leadership in the church.

From the earliest days of the church, the instruction for the believers that make up the church - also included the refuting of and the correction of heretical notions – or false teachings.

Read 1 Timothy 4:12 and make notes:

The Holy Spirit, and Paul, - knew and understood the cultural attitudes of that day. They may not be as strong - or pronounced today, but there is still today - a basic attitude that the older person - does not want to take instructions from a younger person.

Perhaps you have seen it in business situation where a new manager is brought into the business. This new manager, may have more education, than those who have been working there for a while. Many of the workers may have a problem - taking instruction or guidance from this young whipper-snapper. It happens in the military – it happens in the church – it happens wherever there are people.

There is something in our basic nature – we just don't want someone younger than we are – telling us what to do – or how to do it. In a measure to cut across this cultural boundary line of youthfulness – Timothy is told to become an “EXAMPLE for believers”.

In that culture, “modeling” or demonstrating the “how to” – was an intrinsic part of teaching – it was found in all the formal education environments of that day. But, being a model, - or setting an example, meant more than just presenting a pattern that others were to mimic.

The more a life is molded - by the Word of God – the more that life - becomes a mold, by which the life would be shaped. The more we live a life of faith – the more our life becomes SHAPED by that faith.

We are to be an example for believers – in speech. Not only what we say, - but the “way” we say it. Do we talk for the sake of hearing our own voice? Is there a purpose to our talking? Do we talk for the purpose - of strengthening or building up the Body of Christ?

We are instructed to be an example for believers – in life. It is one thing to talk the talk – but we need to live the life of the talk - or we might say “WALK the talk”. It has never been good enough to say - “do what I say” – It has always been a fact that people will do what they see us do. The “talk” - without the corresponding living – is not just useless – it is despised.

Let me share with you - 3 areas where we should be “walking the talk”- or setting the example:

We are to be an example for believers – in love.

Who do we love?

Is there anyone from whom we withhold love?

Do we love - only the lovable?

Do we love - the unlovable as well?

Do we show love - to those who have offended us?

How do we demonstrate our love?

We are to be an example for believers – in faith.

In what situations and circumstances - do we show faith?

In what situations or circumstances - do we not show faith?

Does our faith - stand strong no matter what?

Or does our faith waiver in one direction - and then in another as things happen?

We are to be an example for believers – in purity.

This is the word that was typically used in reference to “sexual purity”. In being an example, whether it is in our speech, - our conduct of life, - in our loving others, - or in showing our faith – we need to be sure to keep ourselves sexually pure.

When a minister fails to keep themselves pure in this area it doesn’t just hurt the minister and the other party involved. It doesn’t just hurt the friends and family of the minister - and the other person – It hurts the entire local church – it hurts churches in other locations – because the lost people associate all churches – and in short - it hurts the ability to share the life giving gospel message to the lost.

1 Timothy – 23 Be An Example

In this letter - Timothy is instructed and by extension – we are instructed - to live the authentic Christian lifestyle of balance. A life that not only has the traditional marks of speech and conduct – but a life that also has the clear spiritual coherence of faith and love. And this means no sexually impure speech – no sexually impure conduct – no sexually impure faith – no sexually impure love.

This sets the example for other men who were believers. This sets the example for women who were believers. And for Timothy – the young minister - to set this kind of example – just think what a powerful testimony it would be!

If someone who was much older in years - were setting the example on how to live and conduct ourselves as a Christian – the devil would certainly be telling the younger people “sure he, or she - can be that way, but you are young – they are old, - they don’t have these feelings anymore – they don’t have these needs anymore.”

If someone who is young, such as Timothy, can live the example – that makes the lies of the devil to be less able to impact the young believers.

But it isn't only “sexual purity” - is it? Our daily life – is to be one of purity in every area of our career – home life – social life - to put it simply – ALL AREAS of our life.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson - we were told to live a life that sets an example for other believers to follow. We were instructed to live a life of “purity” as well as a life of faith.

Read 1 Timothy 4:13 and make notes:

It was never enough for the minister to sequester themselves away and just read God’s Word. It was never enough for the minister to quietly gather with a few other believers and share the Word of God. It has always been the plan and purpose for ministers to PUBLICLY read the Scriptures – to Publicly Preach – and to Publicly Teach.

“Until I come” - This verse is another of those in this letter that indicates that Timothy is in something of a role as a delegate of the Apostle Paul. Knowing that the Apostle Paul is coming – served as a motivation for Timothy as the minister – and as a motivation for the local church of believers.

Timothy, as the minister over this local church, is doing what Paul would be doing, if he were here in person. So Timothy is clearly representing Paul the Apostle.

This declaration that Paul is coming – at some yet undetermined time – and the understanding that Timothy is representing him in this ministry work – establishes continuity for the apostolic authority over the church - and for the work of preaching and teaching - and for correction that is being done by Timothy.

“Devote yourself” – is a single imperative. Timothy is to refuse to allow anything else to take PRIORITY over the public reading of Scripture, - the public preaching and teaching of the Word.

The “public reading of Scripture” is frequently accepted by a majority of people as referring to a reading of the Scripture as part of a worship service. This certainly is one of the “public reading of Scriptures” – but the Bible gives us other examples of when the Scriptures should be read publicly.

The Old Testament tells us of a time when the Scriptures were read and the people in Nehemiah’s day were inspired to do the work. We are also told of a time in Josiah’s life when a public reading of the Scripture inspired the people to put God’s law back into the forefront of everyday life. There are times throughout our history when a public reading of Scriptures has brought calm to a troubled people – and times when it has brought hope to a discouraged people.

The public reading of God’s Word has so much more purpose than just being a part of a religious worship service. Within the Word of God, - we find instruction, - we find hope, - we find strength, - we find correction, - we find life.

Read 1 Timothy 4:14 and make notes:

Almost all Bible Scholars agree this is referring to a Charismatic type of spiritual gift that has been given to Timothy. It is unfortunate, but there is a lot of disagreement about what the Charismatic gift is – and exactly how it was given to Timothy.

There are those who teach the gift given to Timothy was simply that he received the Holy Spirit. Others teach the gift given to Timothy was a specific ministry gift – such as prophecy, - or teaching, or words of knowledge, - or something along these lines. Then among all these groups is the disagreement about how this gift was conveyed or given to Timothy. Was it the prophetic message – was it the laying on of hands – and so on.

1 Timothy – 24 Protect The Gift

I am convinced by the wording of the text that this is referring to a specific gift of ministry and not just the general gift of the having the Holy Spirit. The important thing here is that Timothy is instructed to be careful that he does not “neglect” his gift.

The unfortunate truth of the matter is that many ministers become guilty of neglecting their gift – due to the demands of all the other things associated with ministry in a local church. There may indeed be a lot of people who need to be visited – but ministers must not allow the demand for visitation to cause us to neglect our gift. There may indeed be a lot of activities that call for the minister to be present – but the fact that all of these activities are good things must not cause us to neglect our gift.

When we have been given a gift from God – a gift for the purpose of ministry – we must PROTECT that gift – and make use of that gift regularly – and appropriately. And we must never become so busy – so exhausted – so distracted – that we do not have the strength or time to use our gift.

Read 1 Timothy 4:15 and make notes:

Earlier Timothy was told to “devote” himself to these things – here Timothy is told to “be diligent” in these matters. Timothy is also told here to “give yourself wholly to them” – just in case he failed to understand what it meant earlier when he was told to “devote” himself.

This word of exhortation is not superfluous as some have suggested. It is something of a repeat of V14 – but here, more than just saying “do this” – it tells Timothy a reason for doing these things – “so that everyone may see your progress.”

1 Timothy – 24 Protect The Gift

Timothy, - just like believers today – even those of us who are called to ministry – we are not all that we are going to be when we first get saved – or when we are first called to ministry. We grow – we mature – we develop – we progress – as we are to TRANSFORM into the image of Christ Jesus.

Here is something worth noting – especially in our society where we so often hear someone say that “my religion” is a private matter. Our “progress” - in our Christian development and growth bears visible outward signs and indications – because if they didn’t – if it was all internal – then it would be meaningless to say “so that everyone may see your progress.”

Read 1 Timothy 4:16 and make notes:

Timothy was told to “watch your life AND your doctrine closely.” “Closely” watch your life – your lifestyle – the way you live your life in the community. “Closely” watch your doctrine – don’t allow the things you teach to become contaminated with new age doctrines – don’t allow the doctrines of demons to work their way into the things you teach.

“Persevere in them” – implies holding fast during difficult times – during trying times – testing times. And what is at stake for Timothy to live the life purity and faith and to teach doctrine that is pure. What is at stake – is not only the MINISTER'S own welfare – but the welfare of all those in the church.

1 Timothy – 24 Protect The Gift

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group: