

1st Timothy

Guarding the Truth

- Warning of Apostasy [4:1-5]
 - But the Spirit clearly states that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying close attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,
 - The phrase “explicitly says” is ῥητῶς λέγει (rhētōs legei).
 - This phrase indicates that the Holy Spirit made the clear and unambiguous statement which follows.
 - The word “times” is καιροῖς (kairois) which means “times” or “time periods”.
 - This word does not describe chronological time, but time periods or ages.
 - The phrase “later times” describes the time periods that come during the latter part of the current stewardship of the Church.
 - These are the time periods (plural) which take place prior to the Rapture.
 - The phrase “fall away from” is ἀποστήσονται (apostēsontai) which means “depart from”.
 - You cannot depart from some place unless you have been in that place.
 - This means that those who fall away from the faith are people who were of the faith (believers).
 - Paul is highlighting the error and unbelief of these believers in their walk, not saying that these people lose their salvation [Rom 8:1, 35-39].
 - The phrase “paying attention to” is προσέχοντες (prosechontes) which means “giving heed to”.
 - This word describes giving very close attention to something.
 - The phrase “deceitful spirits” is πνεύμασιν πλάνοις (pneumasin planois) which means “spirits that lead away”.
 - The deception of these spirits is that they would lead someone away from following the Truth.
 - The phrase “doctrines of demons” describes the teaching that comes from the demonic realm.
 - This encompasses the “wisdom” which comes from Satan and his minions and is incorporated into the world system [Jas 3:13-17].
 - being misled by lying hypocrites (seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron)
 - The phrase “by means of the hypocrisy of liars” describes how these believers have been led away from the Truth.
 - The phrase “hypocrisy of liars” is literally “lying hypocrites”.
 - We will reword the translation accordingly.
 - The phrase “seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron” describes how callous these false teachers have become.
 - In this condition, where they no longer innately sense what is right and wrong (nor do they care), they are ready to do Satan’s bidding.

- who forbid marriage *and advocate* abstaining from foods, things which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the Truth.
 - The phrase “men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods” tells us that these men are teaching asceticism.
 - Given that they are described as lying hypocrites, they likely do not practice these things themselves.
 - The word “which” is a plural, neuter pronoun.
 - The NASB translators (and others) have tied this pronoun to the word “foods”.
 - However, this word references both marriage and food in this verse.
 - God created marriage and food, and both should be gratefully shared in by God’s children.
 - Notice that two conditions are specified here...
 - those who believe
 - those who know the truth
- For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;
 - The phrase “everything created by God is good” expands the statement in the previous verse regarding marriage and food.
 - This is in direct contrast with the pre-gnostic teaching that all matter is evil and only things in the spirit world can be considered good.
 - The phrase “nothing is to be rejected” refutes the false teaching that forbids marriage and condones abstaining from certain foods.
 - However, things that are distortions of what God has created (fornication, adultery, gluttony, etc.) should certainly be rejected.
 - The phrase “with gratitude” is the exact same Greek phrase (μετὰ εὐχαριστίας, meta eucharistas) that was translated “gratefully” in verse 3.
 - This means that we share in what God has created when we receive these things with gratitude – the exact opposite of forbidding and abstaining.
- for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.
 - The word “sanctified” is ἁγιάζεται (hagiazetai) which means “sanctify” or “consecrate”.
 - The basic meaning of this word is to set something apart for holy purposes.
 - The meaning here is that all that God has created can be received by us as holy through prayer.
 - The phrase “by means of the word of God and prayer” tells us that both God’s word and prayer are involved in this sanctification.
 - The word of God teaches us (as in this passage) that the things of God’s creation are not evil and are intended for our blessing.

- Principles of 1st Timothy 4:1-5
 - We are right to pray for a spiritual revival in our land, but we should recognize that God the Holy Spirit has made it clear that there will be a falling away from the faith in the latter times of the Church.
 - We should not be arrogant and think that we are exempt from this warning because any believer can fall away from God [Heb 3:12].
 - Falling away from the faith does not indicate either loss or lack of salvation, but rather a believer failing in the midst of a spiritual struggle.
 - Believers are continually in a battle against spirits and demons who are actively working to cause us to become casualties of spiritual warfare [Eph 6:12].
 - Believers that rely upon God and the weapons of war which He has provided will succeed in the spiritual battles we face [Eph 6:13-17; 1 John 4:1-4].
 - If, instead, believers attempt to fight against our spiritual adversaries in the power of the flesh, we will suffer defeat [2 Cor 10:3-5].
 - One of Satan's favorite tactics in spiritual warfare is to attempt to distract believers from walking down the correct spiritual path.
 - When believers are distracted by fleshly religious activities such as asceticism, they no longer walk by grace through faith as they should [Col 2:6-8].
 - We live in the stewardship of grace [Rom 6:14] and should receive, with gratitude and enjoyment, all the wonderful things which God has provided for us [1 Cor 10:30-31].
 - We should appreciate that God created the heavens and earth by His word [Heb 11:3] and His creation is to be enjoyed by us, His creatures [1 Tim 6:17].
 - As members of the stewardship of the Church we are believer-priests [1 Pet 2:4-5, 9].
 - Part of our priesthood responsibility is the spiritual sacrifice of offering prayer to God asking Him to sanctify (consecrate) our marriage, the food we eat, etc. to His glory [1 Kgs 8:22-61; 9:1-3].

- Paul's Second Charge to Timothy [4:6-16]
 - In continuing to teach these things to the brethren, you will be a useful servant of Christ Jesus,
 - The phrase “pointing out” is from ὑποτίθημι (hupotithēmi) which means “lay down”, “make known” or “teach”.
 - The meaning here is to continue providing instruction, so we will translate this “continuing to teach”.
 - The phrase “these things” refers to the warnings of apostasy given in verses 1-5 as well as the true gospel message and other sound doctrines.
 - The phrase “the brethren” refers to brothers and sisters in Christ – i.e. fellow believers.
 - The phrase “you will be” tells us that Paul is emphasizing to Timothy that he needs to faithfully carry on his work as a teacher into the future.
 - This does not imply in any way that Timothy has been anything less than a good servant so far.
 - The word “good” is καλός (kalos) which means “good” or “beautiful”.
 - This word is used twice in this verse with slightly different meanings.
 - This first occurrence of this word is used in the sense of “beneficial” or “useful”.
 - The word “servant” is διάκονος (diakonos) which means “servant” or “assistant”.
 - We saw this word in chapter three during the discussion about deacons.
 - Here this word is used in the general sense of accomplishing work on behalf of another.
 - being constantly trained in the words of the faith and of the sound teaching which you have been faithfully following.
 - The phrase “*constantly* nourished on” is from ἐντρέφω (entrephō) which means “train in”.
 - This word is a present participle which indicates a continuous process, so we will translate this “being *constantly* trained in”.
 - The word “sound” is καλός (kalos) which means “good” or “beautiful”.
 - This is the second occurrence of this word in this verse, but this time it is used in the sense of something that is reliable or sound.
 - The word “doctrine” is διδασκαλία (didaskalia) which means “teaching” or “instruction”.
 - This word is used here of the content of the teaching/instruction as we saw back in v. 1:10, so we will translate this “teaching” here as well.
 - The phrase “which you have been following” confirms for us that Timothy has been on the right track in his walk of faith.
 - This phrase describes paying special attention to something and faithfully following.
 - But have nothing to do with pointless old wives’ tales.
 - The phrase “have nothing to do with” means to specifically reject something by special request.

- The phrase “worldly fables fit only for old women” is literally “pointless old wives’ tales”.
- These are made up of worldly “wisdom” which is quite often untrue.
- On the other hand, train yourself for the purpose of godliness;
 - The word “discipline” is γυμνάζω (gumnazō) which means “train” or “undergo discipline”.
 - This word would typically apply to physical training for athletic competition.
 - Here, it is used figuratively of training in spiritual matters.
 - The word “godliness” is εὐσέβεια (eusebeia) which means “devoutness” or “godliness”.
 - This word describes inward holiness which is expressed outwardly.
 - Both the inward and outward components of this are important.
- for bodily training is beneficial only for a little while, but godliness is beneficial for all eternity,
 - The word “discipline” is γυμνασία (gymnasia) which means “training”.
 - This is the noun form of the verb we just saw in verse 7.
 - We will use the translation “training” here.
 - The phrase “of little” is πρὸς ὀλίγον (pros oligon) which is literally “for a few”.
 - This is the only occurrence of this phrase in the N.T. and must be understood in the context.
 - The phrase which follows speaks of time frames, so this phrase means “for a little while”.
 - The words “profit” and “profitable” are from ὠφελέω (ōphelēō) which means “of use” or “benefit”.
 - We will translate both of these as “beneficial”.
 - The phrase “for all things” is πρὸς πάντα (pros panta) which does means “for all things”.
 - This phrase is not used in a time sense anywhere else in the N.T.
 - However, in this context Paul seems to be using this phrase to refer to all of our eternal life.
- since it has a promise of benefits for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.
 - The phrase “since it holds promise” is literally “having a promise”.
 - This phrase relates to the benefits just spoken of in the first part of this verse.
 - We will translate this “since it has a promise of benefits”.
 - The phrase “the present life” is literally “the life that is now”.
 - This is talking about life on this earth.
 - For believers, this is just the first stage of the eternal life we now have in Christ.
 - The phrase “and *also* for the *life* to come” is literally “and for the one to come”.
 - This is talking about life after physical death.
 - For believers, this is just the next stage of the eternal life we now have in Christ.

- It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance.
 - This is now the third time Paul has used this phrase in this letter (vv. 1:15; 3:1).
 - This refers back to the statements on godliness in verses 7-8.
 - All of God’s word is trustworthy, but Paul is drawing attention to those verses in particular.
- For it is for this we toil and struggle, because we have fixed our hope on the living God,
 - The phrase “For it is for this we labor and strive” refers back to training for the purpose of godliness.
 - The word “labor” is from κοπιάω (kopiaō) which means “toil to the point of exhaustion”.
 - The word “strive” is from ἀγωνίζομαι (agōnizomai) which means “fight” or “struggle”.
 - The phrase “because we have fixed our hope on the living God” explains why Paul (and others) would toil to the point of exhaustion and struggle against the spiritual forces of darkness in order to live a life of godliness.
 - Paul used the phrase “living God” back in verse 3:15.
- who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.
 - The phrase “who is the Savior of all men” is a powerful affirmation of unlimited atonement.
 - This, in conjunction with 1 John 2:2 and Titus 2:11, rules out the idea that Christ died only for those who would eventually believe in Him.
 - This also correlates well with 1 Tim 2:4.
 - While there is only one Savior provided for all men, He is the Savior of those who choose to believe in Him in a very special way.
 - The salvific work of Jesus Christ on the Cross and the Father’s desire that men be saved have come to fruition in those that believe in the Savior.
- Stipulate and teach these things.
 - The word “Prescribe” is from παραγγέλλω (parangellō) which means “give orders”, “command” or “instruct”.
 - Given the word “teach” which follows, the idea of dishing out commands makes more sense here.
 - We will translate this “Stipulate” to capture the meaning here.
 - The phrase “these things” is used three times in this passage (see vv. 15-16).
 - Paul uses this term to refer to the concepts he has delineated in the immediate context as well as all instruction he has given in this epistle.
- Let no one look down on your youthfulness,
 - Paul instructs Timothy to “Let no one look down on your youthfulness”.
 - We do not know exactly how old Timothy is at this point, but he was still young enough that some might not give him the respect he deserves.
 - The rest of this verse explains how Paul believed Timothy could counteract this issue.

- but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith *and* purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.
 - Paul solution for Timothy’s youthfulness was to “show yourself an example of those who believe”.
 - Timothy could not force people to respect him, but he could potentially gain their respect through his godly behavior.
 - Paul outlined five areas of behavior Timothy could use to demonstrate his spiritual maturity...
 - Speech – a person’s words reveal what is in his heart [Luke 6:45].
 - Conduct – what a person does demonstrates his faith [Heb 13:7].
 - Love – giftedness and various acts of faith are meaningless without ἀγάπη love [1 Cor 13:1-8].
 - Faith – faith working through love demonstrates spiritual maturity [Gal 5:6].
 - Purity – keeping oneself unstained by the world facilitates undefiled, godly behavior [Jas 1:27].
- Until I come, devote yourself to the *public* reading of *Scripture*, to exhortation and teaching.
 - The phrase “give attention to” is from προσέχω (prosechō) which means “occupy oneself with” or “devote oneself to”.
 - This is Paul directing Timothy to attend to his public ministry, so we will translate this “devote yourself to” here.
 - Paul outlined three areas of public ministry that Timothy should be devoted to...
 - The public reading of Scripture – the word of God should be read aloud in the assembly [Acts 15:21].
 - Exhortation – Taking the Scripture which is read and making application in exhorting the congregation.
 - Teaching – as we saw in v. 11 and will see in v. 16, teaching is one of the most important functions of an effective public ministry [Col 1:28].
- Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was granted to you *and confirmed* through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the elders.
 - After urging Timothy to attend to his public ministry (including exhortation), Paul exhorts Timothy.
 - He is trying to encourage Timothy by pointing out that God had provided him with the giftedness necessary to carry out his ministry.
 - The phrase “bestowed on” is from δίδωμι (didōmi) which means “give” or “grant”.
 - This word describes something being given which is undeserved (as a function of grace).
 - The phrase “through prophetic utterance” does not describe the means through which Timothy had received his spiritual gift.
 - This phrase is used here to describe the declaration and confirmation of that gift granted by God.

- At the time of the prophetic utterance confirming Timothy’s gift, the elders had laid hands on him.
- The laying on of hands is a way of identifying with someone and acknowledging readiness [Acts 6:1-6].
- Take care to practice these things; be *absorbed* in them, so that your progress will be evident to all.
 - The phrase “Take pains with” is from μελετάω (meletaō) which means “meditate on”, “carefully practice” or “take pains with”.
 - This word is the exact opposite of “neglect” (ἀμελέω, ameleō) from the previous verse.
 - The phrase “these things” again refers to the concepts delineated in the immediate context as well as all instruction given in this epistle.
 - The phrase “be absorbed in them” describes having an intense dedication to the practice of these biblical principles.
 - In being dedicated to following biblical principles, Timothy’s spiritual growth (progress, advancement) would be evident to everyone.
 - This would help overcome any hesitancy based on Timothy’s biological age.
- Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things,
 - The phrase “Pay close attention to” is from ἐπέχω (epechō) which means “hold fast”, “aim at” or “be mindful of”.
 - This word describes being especially observant and once again describes the diligence required of those who are engaged in ministry.
 - Paul is exhorting Timothy to be especially observant of himself as well as the things he teaches.
 - Paul understood that it is important to practice what you teach in order to provide a biblical example for others to follow [2 Thess 3:7-9].
 - Paul’s final exhortation to Timothy was for him to persevere in (continue following) all that he had been taught.
 - A consistent, long-term walk of faith produces fruit for the one who perseveres as well as the ones to whom he ministers.
- for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.
 - Timothy was saved (born-again) when he was a very young man.
 - This “salvation” which is ensured through godly living is salvation from the power of sin (phase 2).
 - Providing a biblical example of godly living would encourage others to walk in righteousness as well.
 - Understanding the three phases of salvation is necessary to rightly divide the word of God...
 - Phase 1 – salvation from the (eternal) penalty of sin.
 - Phase 2 – salvation from the (temporal) power of sin.
 - Phase 3 – salvation from the presence of sin.

- Principles of 1st Timothy 4:6-16
 - A pastor should warn the congregation about the deceptive doctrines of demons on a regular basis.
 - In addition to sounding such alarms, the pastor should live his life as a demonstration of a soul being nourished by sound teaching.
 - Worldly wisdom (blasphemous proverbs, old wives' tales) should be avoided.
 - While not as dangerous as deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, this "wisdom" can draw one's thoughts away from the truth taught in God's word.
 - As believers, we should be continually training ourselves for the purpose of godliness [1 Tim 6:11].
 - There is nothing unrighteous about training the body, but such training has only a temporal benefit.
 - Spiritual training for godliness has a benefit for this life and the life to come...
 - For this life [Psalm 34:9-10; 37:3-6; Matt 6:25-33].
 - For the life to come [Matt 19:27-29; 2 Tim 4:7-8; Jas 1:12; 1 Pet 5:1-4; Rev 2:10].
 - In this life believers who desire to live a godly life will face difficulty [2 Tim 3:10-12; 1 Pet 4:12-16].
 - Such believers are willing to suffer through toil and struggle in this life because they have confident expectation in the living God [2 Cor 1:8-10].
 - Through the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross, God has provided the Savior of the world [1 John 4:14], but only those who place their faith in Him will be saved [John 3:16; 6:40; 11:25-26].
 - All believers, as they mature in the faith, should be able to teach the word of God [Heb 5:12-14].
 - For those who serve as overseers, it is necessary to teach the things of the word [2 Tim 4:2].
 - In order to pass down the Christian faith, it is also important for overseers to teach those who would be able to teach others also [2 Tim 2:2].
 - A pastor's age may cause believers to lose objectivity regarding his ability to lead and teach.
 - The only factors that should matter are his spiritual maturity, his qualifications for office, and his level of preparedness.
 - Older and younger pastors must do everything to ensure that doctrinal objectivity is maintained.
 - A pastor must lead by example in 5 key areas...
 - Speech [Titus 2:1].
 - Conduct [1 Pet 1:14-16].
 - Love [1 Cor 16:14].
 - Faith [Rom 1:17].
 - Purity [2 Tim 2:22].

- An effective teaching ministry includes three key aspects...
 - The public reading of the word of God [Neh 8:1-12].
 - The teaching of the word of God [2 Tim 4:1-2].
 - The exhortation of the flock [Titus 1:7-9].
- Every believer receives at least one spiritual gift from God [1 Pet 4:10].
- Since God has a purpose in giving these gifts, they should be cultivated, not neglected.
- As believers cultivate and employ their spiritual gifts, their spiritual growth will be evident to everyone, especially those in the congregation.
- It is imperative for spiritual leaders to pay very close attention to their teaching as well as their behavior.
- All believers, no matter how mature, struggle against the old sin nature [Rom 7:18-25].
- In diligently following the teachings of the word of God, spiritual leaders set an example for the flock as to how to live victoriously over sin [1 Cor 15:56-58].
- There are three phases of salvation...
 - At the moment of our faith in Jesus Christ, we were saved from the penalty of sin [John 3:16; Rom 8:1].
 - Day-by-day, as believers we can be saved from the power of sin [Rom 6:11-18; 1 John 1:6-10].
 - When our life on this earth is over, we will be saved from the very presence of sin [1 Pet 1:3-5].