

**I TIMOTHY 4:1-5**  
**THE FALLING AWAY!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to I Timothy chapter 4 as we continue our in-depth study of Paul's first letter to Timothy.

As we move into I Timothy chapter 4 I believe what Paul is going to tell us is born out of what he shared with us in I Timothy chapter 3.

Let me show you what I mean. As we look at what Paul said beginning in I Timothy 3:14, listen to what he is speaking of.

He wrote, "**These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.**" I Timothy 3:14-16.

Paul is speaking of how we are to conduct ourselves in church, that we as part of God's family are to conduct ourselves in a way that honors God and according to His standards.

It is the church, God's people that present the truths of God in this world and Paul tells us that the church is the proclaimer of God's truth, the pillar. He also tells us that the church is the ground or foundation of the truth, and the idea here is that it is a solid wall that stops the enemy from coming in.

Make no mistake about it, that is what the church is to be about. To proclaim the Gospel message and to stand strong on the Word of God.

People can agree with this or disagree with this, but it doesn't change the fact that the church is the supporting structure, it is the framework of God's truth and to negate it or move away from it will only weaken the structure. It is what we are built upon, the Word, Jesus!

And keep in mind that the early church read from the Old Testament and then they added to that the readings from the apostles' letters and the Gospels.

We see this spoken of in Colossians 4:16 where Paul wrote, "**Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.**"

And also, we see this spoken of in I Thessalonians 5:27, "**I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.**"

You see, they were to take these letters and pass them around, let others read them, other churches.

In fact, Justin Martyr wrote just after the close of the first century, "*On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has finished, the president speaks, instructing and exhorting the people to imitate these good things.*" (John Stott, Guard the Truth, p. 121)

And that is what we call expository preaching or what Nehemiah tells us, "**So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.**" Nehemiah 8:8.

In other words, the text is read.

Then they would expound on what was happening back in the day the text was written.

And lastly, they would apply that to their lives today to help them to live accordingly.

That is what we do here at Calvary Chapel, and it is what we will continue to do because this is what God has told us to do.

In fact, when we get to II Timothy, we will see Paul admonish Timothy to do this very thing, whether they want to hear it or not. He wrote, **“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”** II Timothy 4:2-5.

Let’s face it, not everyone, all the time, wants to hear what God has to say. There is that conviction of God upon their lives and they have a choice to listen to God and obey or to listen to what they want to do and disobey God!

Thus, a pastor in the church is there not only to preach the Word but also to convince them and rebuke them and exhort them. Don’t give up on them but continue to teach them the truths of God found in the Word of God that will build them up in God!

And yes, there will be those who will leave, who will look for teachers that will tell them what they want to hear and not what God has to say. But, in spite of that, he tells Timothy, **“But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”** II Timothy 4:5.

In fact, John Stott put it like this. He wrote, *“It was taken for granted from the beginning that Christian preaching would be expository preaching, that is, that all Christian instruction and exhortation would be drawn out of the passage which had been read.”* (John Stott, *Guard the Truth*, p. 122)

Why is that so important?

So they will not be tossed to and fro by the winds of doctrine that blow through the church! (Ephesians 4:14)

So they will be complete, thoroughly equipped for the work that God has called them to do. (II Timothy 3:17)

So they can be nourished as the word is like milk and solid food for our spiritual lives. (Hebrews 5:12-14)

So they can be guided by God and not by their own feelings. (Psalm 119:105)

So they can be cleansed by God through His Word. (Romans 12:2, Ephesians 5:26)

So they can be strengthened and find security in their lives. (Luke 6:47-48)

So they can be fruitful. (Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3)

So they can obtain the victory that God has for their lives. (II Corinthians 2:11, Hebrews 4:12)

And there are more, but that is just a few to show you why it is so important to preach the Word, to be in the Word of God!

And here is the thing, and we see this so often today in so many churches. Any preaching that does not guide the listener through the Scriptures is a deviation from the apostolic practice!

And yet, not many teach verse by verse through the Bible today!

For us here at Calvary, over the last 28 years we have been through the Bible twice and we are on our third time through. We have also covered some 15 other books of the Bible in-depth!

But because we don't see expository preaching much anymore, we are reaping the consequences of that and we are seeing the falling away from the truths of God found in the Word of God, we are falling away from – ***THE TRUTH!***

And we will see that played out in our study this morning, how these false teachers with their false teaching had come into the church and they twisted the Scriptures to make them say what they wanted and not what God was really saying!

Let me show you how this plays out because, like I have said, I Timothy chapter 3 leads us into what Paul is saying here in I Timothy chapter 4, obviously, but look at how this fits together.

In I Timothy 3:16 Paul speaks of the mystery of godliness or God's hidden program to bring godliness into this world.

How is that done?

Paul tells us that God became flesh, He was the perfect sacrifice for our sins, angels are witnesses of His work as He brought the Good News to the Jews and also the Gentiles, and after His crucifixion and resurrection He was received up into glory. In other words, it is the Gospel message that needs to go forward!

It is the local church, as part of the body of Christ, that continues on in the work, which He began!

And, like I have said, as we move into chapter 4 Paul is going to speak of those who are weakening the pillars, they are proclaiming a false message and cracking the foundation because they have fallen away from the truths of God found in the Word of God and they are bringing their destructive heresies to the people.

One writer summed it up like this for us. He wrote, ***“Since creation, the earth has been the battleground between God and Satan. God calls mankind to respond to His Word, and Satan tries to lure them to follow lies. Some claim satanic perversions to be the truth from God. Sadly, even some who profess to follow God’s truth turn away from it.”***

- John MacArthur, I Timothy 4

I have called our study this morning – ***THE FALLING AWAY!***

And I have broken down these verses into two main points. They are,

***LAST DAYS DEPARTING – I TIMOTHY 4:1-3***

***FREEDOM IN TRUTH – I TIMOTHY 4:4-5***

With that said, let’s begin reading in I Timothy chapter 4, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this morning as we study through His Word.

**I TIMOTHY 4****VERSES 1-3**

Notice how Paul opens up here. He says, **“Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith . . .”**

In other words, we should not be surprised about this because God has warned us that this is coming upon us.

Thus, Paul’s warning to Timothy and to us is that we are to be the guardians of the truth because the Holy Spirit is telling us that there is coming a time when widespread deception will come, not might.

And notice where these deceptions are coming from!

They are coming from the demonic world, they are coming from the Devil, they are **“doctrines of demons.”** I Timothy 4:1.

That may surprise some of you, that there are doctrines of demons, but think about it. Isn’t that what false religions and cults are all about! They absolutely are. The Devil loves to spread his doctrine that seems to be genuine, seems to be true, but they are lies of the Devil, and they will send you to Hell!

And think about this. Demonic false teaching is supplied through human agents. While the source is supernatural, the agents are natural. That should just make sense.

And make no mistake about it, there are plenty of false teachers out there with their false doctrines that are spuing out these doctrines of demons.

One writer put it like this. He wrote,

They may be religious leaders and appear outwardly good and devout. They may teach in an ostensibly [supposedly] Christian college or seminary. They may pastor a church or write theological books or commentaries.

Though they wear the mask of religion (even Christianity) and wear a mask of piety, they do not serve God, but Satan. They blaspheme God.

Sitting under such teachers has no redeeming value, and it results in being exposed to spiritual gangrene (2 Tim 2:17-18).

- John MacArthur, I Timothy 4

Now please understand that there has always been deception ever since the Garden of Eden and the fall of man into sin.

Satan got Eve to doubt God's Word, doubt God's judgment for sin, and doubt God's goodness and that same doctrine of demons continues making man into god and in control of his destiny, he can do what he pleases!

Satan's words, these doctrines of demon's echo through churches today.

How do they echo through the church?

Because, as the pastor, as leaders in the church deny the Word of God, they are saying what Satan said to Eve in the Garden of Eden, ***"Has God indeed said?"***

Now we can understand that mentality outside the church, with unbelievers, but here the Holy Spirit is warning that this deception will cause some to depart from the faith, some who are in the church, who look like Christians, but are not!



One writer put it like this. He wrote, *“A man may hold all the truths of Christianity, and yet render them of none effect by holding other doctrines which counteract their influence; or he may apostatize by denying some essential doctrine, though he bring in nothing heterodox [heretical].”* (Clarke)

And look at the church today and see all the garbage, all the doctrines of demons that they are embracing, and you may wonder how this can happen?

Listen carefully,

*Imagine yourself in a room with walls that are papered bright green. You walk to an adjoining room where the walls are green, but the shade is imperceptibly bluer. You enter a third room, bluer than the second. Again, the difference is too small to be noticeable.*

*After passing through fifty rooms, each slightly bluer than the last, someone hands you a sample of the wallpaper in the room where you started. You are astonished by how green it is. Suddenly you realize that the room you are now in is not green at all! It is blue.*

*Something like this often happens when people move away from Christ. Subtle influences gradually edge one away from pure belief to that which is ultimately not belief at all.*

*This happened to thousands who have succumbed to siren songs of legalism, mysticism, or asceticism. The tragedy is that their departure was so imperceptible that they did not know their belief had changed.*

- R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, 1-2 Timothy and Titus – To guard the Deposit, p. 105

Yes, these changes started out small, but over time, look at how far some churches have gone by embracing all kinds of sin, by embracing all kinds of unbiblical teaching or I should say they are embracing doctrines of demons.

The nineteenth-century pastor Charles Spurgeon said, *“The devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them.”*

What a powerful warning, but again, the church has closed their ears to the warning, and they are embracing entertainment over doctrine, over teaching the Word of God.

In other words, they have departed from the faith (the truth of God) and are giving heed to deceiving spirits and in the process, they would embrace doctrines of demons which they would *“Christianize”* and pass off as biblical Christianity. And we’re seeing this being fulfilled right before our eyes.

Look at what has come into the church today. We have Christian Yoga, Visualization, Contemplative Prayer, Labyrinths, Christian Tara Cards, Christian Witches, Grave Sucking, and the list, I am sad to say, can go on and on!

This is exactly what Paul was warning Timothy about, the dangerous days he was living in and the dangerous days we are living in.

Look at how this is played out for us:

- *The danger of apostasy. (Some will depart)*
- *The danger of deception. (Deceiving spirits)*
- *The danger of false teaching. (Doctrines of demons)*

And notice once again, something we covered in Jude, that we see a *departure* from *“the faith”* and in Jude we were called to **“earnestly contend for the faith.”** Jude 1:3.

Now when it speaks of them departing from *the faith*, does that mean that they have lost their salvation or that they have walked away from it?

I don't believe you can lose your salvation, walk away from it after you have been saved? I don't believe you can. I don't believe that the Scriptures support that!

John tells us in I John 2:19, "**They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.**"

You see, they never were saved, they called themselves Christians, they professed it, but they never possessed Christ in their lives. They were professors of Christ but not possessors of Christ!

Yes, they many times look like Christians. Many times the words they speak sound like they are Christians, but they are pretenders. They have never made that commitment to their lives and the evidence is seen when they depart from the faith.

Even Jesus said, in Matthew chapter 7, of those who looked like they were Christians but there was no relationship there, and Jesus said of them, "***I never knew you!***" (Matthew 7:23)

It was not that He knew them for a time and then they walked away. No, He **NEVER** knew them, they never had a relationship with Jesus! That is important for us to understand.

Why is that so important?

Because if we have to attain a certain righteousness, do certain things to maintain our salvation, we can never be assured of our salvation until we die and we see where we stand.

And yet, the Bible is very clear on this, that we can know we are saved. Jesus said in John 5:24, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”**

You see, if our salvation is based on the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary, and it is, then we can be assured of our salvation because it is based upon what Jesus has done.

If our salvation is based upon what Jesus has done and what we have done, we will never make it in, because all our righteousness, all the good we can do is like filthy rags before a holy and righteous God!

So these people are pretenders, they are not Christians and thus, they are just departing from the truths of God found in the Word of God, but they were never saved!

Also, look at Judas and Demas, they were not saved. And listen to what we are told of the false disciples in John 6:66, **“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.”**

And look at Judas. Not one of the disciples of Jesus thought that he was a traitor, that he would turn on Jesus. They thought he was a believer, but he was not. That is how good he was at in deceiving them, but obviously He did not deceive Jesus!

Let me share this with you and you will see how people can have the knowledge of God without a relationship with God or without being saved.

We are told,

At the request of his father, Karl Marx was baptized at 6 years old into the Evangelical Established Church. Marx's adolescent writings exhibited a spirit of Christian devotion and longing for self-sacrifice on behalf of humanity.

Later at the University of Berlin, he fell under the influence of a young lecturer in theology named Bruno Bauer who was developing the idea that the Christian gospels were a record not of history but of human fantasies arising from men's emotional needs and that Jesus had not been an historical person.

Marx also enrolled in a course of lectures given by Bauer on the prophet Isaiah. Bauer taught that a new social catastrophe "more tremendous" than that of the advent of Christianity was in the making.

Marx would eventually call religion the opiate of the masses.

When Marx wrote his book *Das Kapital*, he wanted to dedicate it to Charles Darwin.

Darwin also was once a theology student and eventually repudiated the Bible and became an agnostic.

- sermonindex.net

They had all the information, it was head knowledge, but it never sank deep into their hearts and became part of their lives, they were never saved!

And the result of that is the millions of people destroyed by what Marx not only taught but brought upon the people and the millions of people that Darwin destroyed by taking God out of creation and making it into a random chance happening, just good luck!

Now, here in I Timothy 4:1, we need to keep in mind that the Greek word for “**depart from**” means “*to remove oneself from the position originally occupied to another place.*”

These people came close to being saved but then moved away from saving faith to hold onto these doctrines of demons!

They are not struggling to believe but willfully abandoned the faith!

Another important point to make is that this is a spiritual battle, and it will only intensify more and more as we get closer to the Tribulation Period.

You see, we are living in the “**last days**” as we are told in Hebrews 1:1-2, “**God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.**”

The “**last days**” is a broad term that began with the first coming of Jesus Christ and will continue on through His second coming!

Paul warns us of seducing spirits in II Corinthians 11:13-15, as he says, “**For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.**”

Be on guard, be in the Word because a lie can travel at the speed of light and the truth seems to go on foot!

And what is making so many Christians so susceptible to these deceptions?

It is because they are letting their experiences be self-authenticating.

What do I mean by that?

Think of it like this. If the experience is positive and the results are good and beneficial then the experience must be from God because, they reason, the devil doesn't want to do good for us so if the experience is positive and the results good it must be from God.

That is one of the quickest ways I know of to get into trouble spiritually speaking.

If sin or false teaching only brought about bad things, then no one would buy into it. But it is deceptive, and it seems good just like a worm on a hook and as that fish looks at that worm, he does not see the evil that is awaiting him.

And that is what happens with these false teachers with their false doctrine, people get hooked on them!

Make no mistake about it, we are seeing these lies come into the church today and the only way to expose them and remove them is by the truth that is found in God's Word – ***THE FAITH!***

It is as we are told in John 8:31-32, **“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’”**

And in John 17:17 Jesus said, **“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”**

It is time for us to earnestly contend for the faith that has been entrusted to us, as Jude warned us!

And look at how this is played out in the lives of these false teachers.

We read in I Timothy 4:2-3, **“speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.”**

Paul, in describing these false teachers, says that they are “**speaking lies in hypocrisy**” who willingly embrace falsehood to justify their sin or their pride.

And for those who teach the Bible, they use the Bible by twisting the Scriptures to support their own ideas and agendas! Be careful, be warned!

And they are saying that if you deny yourself, you will draw closer to God! That idea of asceticism or denying your physical body to draw close to God has been around for thousands of years.

Let me share this with you and you will see what I mean. We are told, *“In the early centuries of the church, there were monks who went out to desolate desert places to show how spiritual they were by torturing themselves. One never ate cooked food. Another stood all night leaning on a sharp rock so that it was impossible for him to sleep. Another neglected his own body and allowed it to become so dirty that bugs dropped dead from his body. They did this because they thought it would win favor with God and show everyone how spiritual they were.”*

If you stink so much that bugs are dying, that is not a good thing. No wonder they lived lives of isolation, no one wanted to be around them.

And here’s the thing. Does this cause God to love us more? Does this make us more spiritual?

The answer to those two questions is – ***NO!***



Now if you are struggling in this area, let me share these words from Paul as he wrote in Romans 8:35-39 regarding God's love for us. This is what he wrote, **“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

In other words, God's love for us is not based upon our goodness, our denying ourselves, His love is unconditional. He loved us when we were still sinners and died for us and now that we have come to the faith, we are children of God as we have been adopted into the family of God, do you think He is going to forsake us? Absolutely not!

Look at cults, like the Jehovah Witnesses or Mormons who think they are Christians, and obviously they are teaching doctrines of demons!

And what is interesting with cults is what they teach about Jesus. They will tell you that He was a great teacher, that He was the brother of Lucifer, that He is a lesser God, but they will deny that He is Almighty God who came to save us from our sins!

And we see that, and we understand that.

But what about those who call themselves Christians and yet, speak against what the Bible is teaching?

And then you show them in the Scriptures their error, and they ignore it, they don't see it, they say it doesn't mean that, why?

Because it goes against what they want to believe.

I mean, it seems so obvious to us but keep in mind that they are not saved and thus, these false teachers are insensitive to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. They do not have the Spirit of God in them if they are not saved!

Also, it is because their heart has been hardened, it is cold; it is insensitive to the things of God because they willfully have chosen to move in that direction.

And that is a big problem. They have decided to go down that path and they refuse to listen to the truths of God found in the Word of God!

The Greek word for “**seared**” is *KAUSTERIAZO*, (kows-tay-ree-ad’-zo) and it speaks of cauterizing, and thus, there is no feeling, the tissue is dead.

There is no guilt, no remorse as they teach these false doctrines. Because their consciences have been destroyed, they can carry out their hypocrisy!

The false teachers’ consciences have been so ignored and misinformed that they have become like scar tissue, burned senseless, which cease to function.

And you read what abominations are being taught in the church today, what they are promoting, and they are proud of their doctrines of demons they are promoting, although they will never see it that way, and it is very dangerous.

But if what you are saying, if what you are teaching goes against the Word of God, then it is a doctrine of demons, and their language is nothing but lies or I should say truth mixed with enough lies to kill you!

Let me give you this example and you will see the boldness some have in speaking out against the Word of God.

In an interview, Brian McLaren questioned the idea of God sending His Son to a violent death, calling it *“false advertising for God.”*

This is what he said,

*[O]ne of the huge problems is the traditional understanding of hell. Because if the cross is in line with Jesus’ teaching then - I won’t say, the only, and I certainly won’t say even the primary - but a primary meaning of the cross is that the kingdom of God doesn’t come like the kingdoms of this world, by inflicting violence and coercing people.*

*But that the kingdom of God comes through suffering and willing, voluntary sacrifice. But in an ironic way, the doctrine of hell basically says, no, that’s not really true. That in the end, God gets His way through coercion and violence and intimidation and domination, just like every other kingdom does. The cross isn’t the center then. The cross is almost a distraction and false advertising for God. . . .*

Marcus Borg is a key force in the emerging *“new paradigm”* of Christian faith.

Borg explains in his book *The God We Never Knew* that his views on God, the Bible, and Christianity were transformed while he was in seminary:

*I let go of the notion that the Bible is a divine product. I learned that it is a human cultural product, the product of two ancient communities, biblical Israel and early Christianity. As such, it contained their understandings and affirmations, not statements coming directly or somewhat directly from God. . . . I realized that whatever “divine revelation” and the “inspiration of the Bible” meant (if they meant anything), they did not mean that the Bible was a divine product with divine authority*

This attitude would certainly explain how Borg could say:

*Jesus almost certainly was not born of a virgin, did not think of himself as the Son of God, and did not see his purpose as dying for the sins of the world.*

- <http://bit.ly/2SYwQ7l>

As I read that all I can think of is what Paul said in Galatians 1:8-9, **“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”**

There is the warning not to follow those who are bringing another Gospel, another Jesus, denying the Scriptures because they are not of God!

Now that is just a small sampling of the dangerous teaching that is out there. And do you see the danger of these doctrines of demons?

I hope so and I pray that you do not embrace these false teachers, and there are many. But if they deny the Scriptures, if they move you away from the Bible, flee their teaching!

How can they do this?

We talked about it, but Paul, in Ephesians 4:18-19 tells us, **“having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”**

That is the point, they are beyond feeling!

And we see here in our text in I Timothy chapter 4 that some of the false teaching related to the practice of forbidding marrying and abstaining from certain foods, as I have talked about.

Now please understand that there is nothing wrong with being single or abstaining from certain foods.

Then what is the point?

Like I have said. The reason they were doing this was to win favor with God, be more spiritual by having their rules followed, and the idea is a salvation by the Law through Works, which will never save you!

Do you really think that eating a salad will make you more spiritual than if you have a Big Mac? And I eat salads. They are just processed by the cow first and I eat the cow!

Or maybe you are not into fast foods. So let me put it so you will understand it. Do you really think by eating a salad you are more spiritual than eating pulled pork or a brisket?

Of course not and yet, I have seen some do this, even in our church, abstaining from certain foods to get closer to God!

Not going to happen!

Paul, in Colossians 2:20-23 tells us, **“Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations – ‘Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,’ which all concern things which perish with the using - according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.”**

Again, the reason that they don’t see this is that they have their conscience seared with a hot iron and they miss all that God has for them, they miss what the Holy Spirit wants to show them through the Word, and they are embracing doctrines of demons!

And even Christians can fall prey to these things and be deceived. They should not be deceived because they have the Word of God opened up to them by the Spirit of God to guide them in the truth. But they end up rejecting the truth and they listen to a man instead!

I like the way Calvin put it as he said, *“the controversy is not about flesh or fish, or about black or ashen colors, or about Wednesday or Friday, but about the mad superstitions of men who wish to obtain God’s favor by such trifles and by contriving a carnal worship, invent for themselves an idol in God’s place.”*

If Grace through faith in Christ saves us, and we are sustained by Grace through faith in Christ, and we will be received up into glory by God’s Grace through faith in Christ, why would we have to practice some physical self-denial for our salvation?

We don’t!

It is as Hebrews 13:9 says, **“Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.”**

Make no mistake about it, there is a – ***LAST DAYS DEPARTING!***

As we move on, we are going to look at the – ***FREEDOM IN TRUTH!***

#### VERSES 4-5

What we see here in I Timothy 4:4-5 is ***FREEDOM IN TRUTH!***

And the point that Paul is making here is that we can partake of different things and as we do we need to give thanks to God!

Let me ask you this. Why do we take what God says is good and make it evil?

That is foolish!

God has given us a hunger for food; there is nothing wrong with that until we move away from the good and we eat in excess, where the food is now in control of us.

Clarke put it like this, *“Both among the pagans, Jews, and Romanists, certain meats were prohibited; some always, others at particular times. This the apostle informs us was directly contrary to the original design of God; and says that those who know the truth, know this.”*

Remember what the Lord said in Genesis 9:3, **“Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.”**

If that is true, and it is, then why did God tell Moses what they can eat and what they can't eat?

Keep in mind that God was speaking specifically to the Jewish people, and He was giving them laws to protect them from harm, to keep them from practicing what the pagan world was practicing. They were His special people!

For us today, we can eat whatever we want. The key is that what we are partaking of, is it beneficial to us or is it harmful. I am not saying we can't have ice cream or a pizza or whatever. But we need to be careful that food, like I have said, is not controlling our lives and causing us harm.

Also, there is nothing wrong with sexual desires; God has given that desire to us, and I thank God for that.

In fact, Paul tells us in Hebrews 13:4a, **“Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled . . .”**

You see, sex within the marriage relationship is good but Satan has come in and perverted sex and says that sex outside of marriage is good, sexual relations with the same sex partner is good, but God says just the opposite.

Paul continues on in Hebrews 13:4b and says, “**... but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.**”

And let me say this, if you are unsure of a situation that you are in, in something that you are doing, bring what you do before God, He will show you what is good and what is not. Read His Word, and may you thank God for the goodness He gives to us!

Please understand that there is a departing from the faith that began early in the church, and it is growing today more and more. It is hard to believe what we see happening. We did not heed the warnings that God has given to us in His Word, and we have not heeded the warnings that pastors gave from long ago have given to us.

I have shared these verses with you already, but I think they are so important for us to understand.

Remember what Jesus said in John 8:31-32, “**Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’**”

A relationship with Jesus is not just about information. It is a relationship with Him and that love for Jesus is seen in our obedience to Him. Once you know the truth it sets you free from all the lies that are out there. We should not be deceived!

I will give you this example.



Before I was saved, I was an evolutionist. I believed everything came from nothing and just evolved over billions of years. Just saying that makes me cringe now because it sounds so foolish, and it is. But I believed it!

And when I came to Christ, when I asked Jesus to be my Lord and Savior, everything changed, including my views on evolution.

And when you think about it, it is so easy to disprove evolution.

How can everything come from nothing? It can't!

How can no information keep gaining information that it never had before? It can't!

How can asexual reproduction evolve into reproduction between a male and a female? It can't?

Think about that one. Both the man and the women had to develop sexual reproduction organs at the same time. If man got them first and the women a million years later, that would not work, and man would have died out.

And how does evolution explain that a foreign body, a child, can grow in her womb and not be destroyed because it is a foreign body? It can't!

And how does the universe have order to it and the scientific principles apply to everything? It can't!

And we can spend several hours looking at the foolishness of evolution, but that is not my point. The bigger issue here is that once I had the truth – **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”** everything else fell into place. In other words – ***THE TRUTH HAS SET ME FREE!***

And in John 17:17 Jesus said, “**Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.**”

That is pretty simple. Jesus is saying that the Word of God is truth, and we can trust it and we can grow as we apply it to our lives – ***THE SANCTIFICATION PROCESS!***

As I bring this study to a close this morning, we have seen the dangers of these deceiving spirits and these doctrines of demons coming into the church and into our lives.

It is a warning to us that there will be, and I believe that there is a – ***LAST DAYS***

***DEPARTING!***

A departing from the truths of God found in the Word of God!

But, as we have seen, there is – ***FREEDOM IN CHRIST!***

We don't have to be deceived.

But don't take this lightly because apostasy is an ever-present danger to the church!

Thus, take heed to God's Word, pay attention to what is going on around you, what you are reading, what you are listening to. Remember what Paul wrote in Hebrews 13:9, “**Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.**”

And today, it seems like various and strange doctrines are blowing through the church at a rate I have never seen before, and people are setting their sails and they are being carried away by them! In fact, the stranger the doctrine the more people seem to gravitate to it!

Today, there is this greatest book, this book is such an inspired book, this teaching and that teaching and when you try to show them that it is not biblical, they get mad and go away. If you don't agree with their book or teaching you have a problem, and there is no concern for what the Bible says or how that book contradicts the Bible!

The reality is, and I will be honest with you on this, the only book I hold dear to my heart, the only book that I treasure, and I know is inspired, is the Word of God, the Bible.

So I hold onto that. Not that I don't read books, but they are not inspired, only the Bible is!

Don't be taken in by these apostates, draw close to God and He will draw close to you!