

**I TIMOTHY 4:6-10**  
**GODLY TEACHERS!**

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 his son in the faith, Timothy!

What we will be looking at this morning is born out of what Paul has been warning Timothy about in I Timothy chapter 4 verses 1-5. He warned him about the false teachers who had come into the church, and they were bringing their false doctrine, doctrines of demons really, into the church and Timothy needed to deal with it.

Now Paul is going to share with Timothy about – ***GODLY TEACHERS!***

As we have seen, these false teachers were into legalism, telling the people what they can and can't eat, that they should not get married instead of teaching the truths of God found in the Word of God.

And today, in 2023, there is a lack of godly teachers in America! I know some of you may be shocked by that statement. You may not believe what I am telling you. I am not offended. If you don't believe me, listen to this report about pastors from May of 2022, just a little over a year ago and see what they believe, and I think you will see that there is this void in the pulpits of America of godly pastors who are fulfilling their roles as pastors.

This is what we are told,

A new nationwide survey of America's Christian pastors shows that a majority of pastors lack a biblical worldview.

In fact, just slightly more than a third (37%) possess a biblical worldview and the majority - 62% - hold a hybrid worldview known as Syncretism [the amalgamation or attempted amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or schools of thought.]

These shocking findings are part of the *American Worldview Inventory 2022*, conducted by the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University and administered to Christian pastors to better understand the worldviews that drive their thinking and behavior.

As veteran researcher and CRC Director of Research George Barna explains, ***"It's just further evidence that the culture is influencing the American church much more than Christian churches are influencing the culture."***

According to this latest report, the level of biblical worldview varies by the pastoral position held.

Among Senior Pastors, for instance, 41% hold a biblical worldview - the highest incidence among any of the five pastoral positions studied. Next highest was the 28% among Associate Pastors.

One of the more concerning revelations emerging from the research is the worldview of pastors who work with young people, Barna noted. The study found that only 12% of Children's and Youth Pastors hold a biblical worldview. And among Teaching Pastors, the level of biblical worldview is a mere 13%.

*“A person’s worldview primarily develops before the age of 13, then goes through a period of refinement during their teens and twenties. Therefore, from a worldview development perspective, a church’s most important ministers are the Children’s Pastor and the Youth Pastor,”* Barna said.

*“Discovering that seven out of every eight of those pastors lack a biblical worldview helps to explain why so few among the nation’s youngest generations are developing a heart and mind for biblical principles and ways of life, and why our society seems to have run wild over the last decade,”* Barna explained. . .

As Barna noted, *“It certainly seems that if America is going to experience a spiritual revival, that awakening is needed just as desperately in our pulpits as in the pews.”*

- <https://bit.ly/3PzbeLM>

I hope you are shocked by that; you need to be!

I truly believe we need to get back to the basics and teach the Word of God. And not only teach the Word of God but believe the Word of God and apply the Word of God to our lives!

That is why I am going to break the rest of this chapter into two parts. This morning, as I have said, we will look at – ***GODLY TEACHERS!***

And then next week we will finish up looking at I Timothy chapter 4 by focusing on – ***EXPOSITORY PREACHING!***

In our study this morning we will be focusing on the following points,

***INSTRUCT – I TIMOTHY 4:6***

***REJECT – I TIMOTHY 4:7***

***MANIFEST – I TIMOTHY 4:8-10***

So with that as our introduction, let's begin reading in I Timothy chapter 4 beginning in verse 6 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic –

***GODLY TEACHERS!***

**I TIMOTHY 4**

**VERSE 6**

Keep in mind that Paul just finished warning Timothy about the false teachers with their false doctrine and now he speaks about what a good pastor is all about.

And he starts out by saying that one of the aspects of a good pastor is that he will watch out for false teachers and warn his people against their false teaching.

Now, when you do that, it will not go unnoticed.

What do I mean by that?

I mean that as a pastor, when you expose false teaching, when you stand up for the things of God found in the Word of God, when you call sin “*SIN*” you will be called “*judgmental*” and “*critical*” and “*unloving*” and “*intolerant*” and the list can go on.

And I am not talking about the world or the unsaved, I am speaking about those in the church itself, leadership in various churches will rise up and they may even say things like this, “*Touch not the Lord's anointed!*”

Please understand that when David said that in I Samuel 24:6 he was speaking of King Saul, and he is speaking of not doing him harm. David did not agree with the sin of King Saul, he stood against it, but he was not going to kill Saul because the Lord had placed Saul as King of Israel!

Also, in the song of David in I Chronicles 16:22 that is the same thought. Not harming the prophets of God, but if they spoke against the things of God, of course you were to speak up against it!

Now what makes a good pastor? That is a great question and there are many different answers based upon what we feel is right, but it usually isn't right!

Think about it. Some would say that a good pastor is . . .

*One who is very charismatic!*

*One who has a large church!*

*One that has many, many different programs!*

*One that has a worship team with its fog show and light show!*

*One that is a good storyteller!*

And the list can go on, but that is not what Paul is saying here.

Paul says, **“If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ.”**

And like I have said, the things that Paul is speaking of are what he just finished talking about, the false teachers with their false teaching, expose their lies, warn the people!

And this is interesting to me because there are so many out there that don't want to do this, they avoid any confrontation with false teachers and their false teaching, but please understand that the word **“instruct”** is a word that means **“to remind”** or to **“lay before”** but in the Greek it's in the present tense which means constantly.

A good pastor is to constantly be looking out for the people that God has entrusted to them and to warn them about the false teachers and false doctrines, really doctrines of demons that they are promoting!

One writer put it like this, *“There’s a lot of weak preaching going on in the church today but God hasn’t called us to ‘pet’ the sheep, He’s called us to feed and protect the sheep and some of that means by warning them against the wolves and their teachings.”*

That is exactly what Paul warned the Ephesian elders back in Acts 20:29-32, **“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”**

But not only warning them but teaching them the truths of God so as false doctrine comes in, they will see it for what it is, doctrines of demons!

Do you know how bank tellers are able to identify counterfeit money?

There are so many good counterfeit bills around today. It is impossible to keep up with the ways crooks operate.

It would not be productive, nor would it be efficient to study all the ways people counterfeit bills.

Then what do they do?

The best way, and the only way to train tellers to identify counterfeits is to make them familiar with the real thing. The more they handle real money, the less likely a counterfeit will be accepted.

Remember how Coca Cola use to advertise themselves?

They were called – ***THE REAL THING!***

Then, for whatever reason, they changed the whole formula for their product and came up with New Coke and Coca Cola Classic!

In other words, they were no longer – *THE REAL THING!*

How could the people tell?

Because they tasted the real thing and now it was different! It looked like Coke, but it did not taste like Coke!

Think about that with counterfeit bills. A good counterfeit bill will look like a genuine note, and it will feel like a genuine note to *MOST PEOPLE*.

But to those who are familiar with real currency, they can *SEE* the difference and they can *FEEL* the difference.

That means a good pastor will teach the Word of God but before he can teach, he must be a student of God's Word.

You see, not only are we to protect the sheep that God has entrusted to us, but a good pastor will immerse his life in God's Word!

That is what Paul said in the last part of this verse, “**. . . nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.**”

Also, that is what Paul said in II Timothy 2:15, “**Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**”

You see, by studying God's Word correctly, you are able to understand it and then you can teach it to others because “**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**” II Timothy 3:16-17.

You can't give to the people God has entrusted to you what you don't already possess, and thus, a pastor needs to be a man of the Word!

You see, as you are teaching the truth of God the sheep will grow and mature and they will go out and do the work of the ministry.

Paul, in II Timothy 2:2 speaks of this as he says, “**And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.**”

Remember that God gave the church leaders, “**for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.**” Ephesians 4:12.

Thus, in teaching, preaching and warning the sheep, you are a good minister of Jesus Christ!

And let me say this. If you teach the Word of God and you don't have any passion for what you are doing, stop!

For me, it is the most exciting thing to be able to do, share God's Word with you. And for me, even though I have put these studies together, I still look forward to what the Lord is going to show me as I share His Word because God's Word is living, and it is powerful, and it is able to change all of our lives!

And that brings me to this last thought in regard to – ***INSTRUCT!***

Paul says that it is important to be nourished in the faith and in good doctrine, but why?

He goes on to say that we “**have carefully followed.**”

What do I mean by that?

I mean that our lives should be an example to others of what we believe. We should not preach a sermon on love and forgiveness and then go and blast someone, beat up on them, be mad at them.

Our lives should reflect what we are teaching and that is humbling to me because I have so far to go.

But that should be the desire of pastors, leaders, that they walk in holiness!

Look at the example of Jesus. He not only instructed His disciples, but He taught them by the way He lived out His life and so should we!

Let me share this example for you or really the importance of being an example to others.

We are told,

For many years Monterey, a California coast town, was a pelican's paradise. As the fishermen cleaned their fish, they flung the offal to the pelicans. The birds grew fat, lazy, and contented.

Eventually, however the offal was utilized, and there were no longer snacks for the pelicans.

When the change came the pelicans made no effort to fish for themselves. They waited around and grew gaunt and thin. Many starved to death. They had forgotten how to fish for themselves.

The problem was solved by importing new pelicans from the south, birds accustomed to foraging for themselves.

They were placed among their starving cousins, and the newcomers immediately started catching fish. Before long, the hungry pelicans followed suit, and the famine was ended.

As we have seen in our study in Jude, false teachers, apostates will live after the flesh and that is their example to the people they are teaching.

For the man of God, and really for all of us, but especially for leaders, we should be an example for others to follow. People should want what we have.

And if they look at us and say, “***Boy, I don’t want to be like him!***” Then we need to do a heart check and change our attitude, change the way we are living and represent the Lord correctly.

It blessed my heart when someone said to me, “***I want a marriage like you and Julie have. You are such an example of what a godly marriage is all about!***”

Now, I would like to say, “***Yes, I am such a great guy!***” But the reality is, I am not. But my God is so great and wonderful, and it is He that gets all the glory. My marriage would be nothing if it wasn’t for my relationship with Jesus.

You see, what He is doing on the inside of me, is then manifested in my outward actions, in the things that I do and the things that I say!

We need to manifest these things in our life, the nature of God and that is only going to happen as we surrender to His will and put to death our will!

So this first point is that Timothy was to – ***INSTRUCT!***

And the reality is, that should be seen in all of our lives, but especially with pastors!

As we read on, we will see what Timothy is to – ***REJECT!***

VERSE 7

What was Paul admonishing Timothy to - *REJECT?*

He tells us here in I Timothy 4:7, **“But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself rather to godliness.”**

I realize that some may feel that this is unloving. Let me say this, it is not unloving, and it needs to be done.

Listen to what Paul said as he wrote to Titus, another pastor. He said to him as well, **“But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.”** Titus 3:9-11.

And in Titus 1:13-14 Paul said, **“This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth.”**

Remember, a pastor is to love the sheep that have been entrusted to him.

A pastor is to teach or feed the sheep that have been entrusted to him with the Word of God.

A pastor is to warn and protect the sheep from the false teaching that comes into the church and if it is not stopped, it will hurt the sheep, it will make them spiritually sick!

Sound teaching, sound doctrine, healthy doctrine is profitable while false teaching, unhealthy doctrine is damaging, it can hurt people, as I have said.

The key for me is this. Don’t waste your time arguing over it.

Notice these verses that we covered several weeks back in our second study of this book. We are told in I Timothy 1:3-4, **“As I urged you when I went into Macedonia - remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.”**

Also, in I Timothy 6:3-5 we are told, **“If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.”**

Then, in II Timothy 2:23 we are told, **“But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.”**

What I want you to see is that this was a problem in the early church, and it needed to be dealt with.

Thank God we don't have to deal with that today!

Okay, a little sarcasm there.

Paul is saying here in I Timothy to **“reject”** or **“put away”** these false teachers. In other words, separate from them. Take that which is unholy, these men and their teaching and separate them from that which is holy, the Word of God.

And anything that contradicts the Word of God is unholy. It is moving you away from the truths of God and that is a dangerous place to travel because where will it end!

These are nothing more than “**fables**” or “*myths*.” This is not a sound or healthy doctrine for you to take in. In fact, Paul links these fables that they are teaching as being nothing more than for old women!

Before you get mad at me, let me explain what Paul meant. Because women were not offered educational opportunities, they were looked upon as being simple. Which, of course was not true but it was often used as a phrase that spoke of rejecting a viewpoint that lacked credibility.

In other words, what that person said was only appealing to those who were not educated, not intelligent. The Ephesians understood what Paul was saying even though it is not something we would say today.

In Proverbs 26:4-5 we are told, “**Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him. Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.**”

Now you read that, and you may be thinking, “*What in the world is he talking about. First he says don’t answer a fool. Then he says that we are to answer a fool. What in the world are we to do?*”

So which is it?

I believe in Proverbs 26:4 Solomon is saying that we are not to respond like the fool with the way we talk, that we lose our temper, that we behave rudely. In other words, don’t go down to their level. I think that makes sense.

Then, in Proverbs 26:5, in regard to answering a fool, we are not to let them off the hook you might say with their foolish talk. We are to reprove them; we are to rebuke them according to the Word of God and not according to our emotions, which will bring us down to their level!

Let me share with you what we are not to do and then I will share with you what we are to do.

In Numbers chapter 20 we see the children of Israel complaining again about not having water and Moses brings this request to the Lord and the Lord told Moses to speak to the rock and it will bring forth water.

And we are told of the response of Moses to the people. He told them, “**... ‘Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?’ Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.**” Numbers 20:10-11.

Moses answered the people “**according to their folly**” and God was not happy with Moses. That is what we are not to do!

On the positive side we see this in the book of Job.

By the time we get to Job chapter 2 we see that Job has lost his wealth, his children, his health, he is in a mess. And his wife tells him, “**... ‘Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!’**” Job 2:9. Now that was a foolish statement made by Job’s wife.

Here’s the thing. Job could have responded back by coming down to her level, you know what I mean.

After his wife said that he could have responded back by saying, “***Oh yea! You mother wears army boots!***”

That would be foolish and maybe some of you have said something along those lines before. That is not how we are to answer.

Job spoke wisely and he put her foolish counsel to shame. He told her, “... **‘You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?’ In all this Job did not sin with his lips.**” Job 2:10.

Thus, may we not answer a fool the way he is speaking to us, but we may answer the fool in a way that corrects his error in accordance with the Word of God and not our emotions!

And in regard to these false teachers, if they don’t want to hear or they don’t want to stop with their false teaching, they need to be removed.

Now here’s the thing. I have learned over the years, and sometimes the hard way, that when people pick up on false teaching, false doctrine, you can try to correct them but most of the time they are unwilling to listen.

In fact, you can show them Scripture after Scripture and it won’t matter, they have their mind made up. And what ends up happening is that they listen to the words of a man, a teacher rather than the Word of God.

Thus, don’t waste your time with unhealthy doctrine, it doesn’t pay to argue over it, let them go if they refuse to listen. And I have done that.

And Paul’s point is very simple, and it is not unloving because if you let them remain in the fellowship, their false teaching, their false doctrine will spread like a cancer, and you will hurt the believers who are listening to this garbage.

And notice how Paul tells Titus that this is to be carried out. Paul says that if this person doesn’t listen to what you are saying after you confront him twice, reject him, have nothing to do with him.

Paul said in Titus 3:10-11, “**Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.**”

And this division that Paul is speaking of is that this man is dividing the body by his false teaching and thus, this “**warped and sinning**” man, not my words, Paul’s, must be removed if he refuses to change from the road he is traveling on!

Listen to what one pastor had to say about this. He wrote,

False teachers in the church invariable distort and contradict Scripture, replacing it with novel insights, ideas, and notions that confuse and mislead God’s people and undercut their trust in God’s revealed truth.

The danger of false doctrine is made all the worse because, appealing to the natural man, it finds ready acceptance among unbelievers and even among worldly, self-centered Christians who are poorly grounded in the Word.

It is for that reason that Paul instructs Timothy to “be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, . . . [and will] spread like gangrene” (2 Tim 2:15-17).

Once a false teacher is exposed, he is to be rejected by the church and given no platform to spread his spiritually cancerous and destructive falsehoods. He is not to be debated but denounced and expelled (cf. 2 Cor 6:14-18).

One wonders how many hours and years and lifetimes of Christians have been lost to genuine teaching of God’s Word and to effective evangelism and discipling because of time wasted with foolish controversies.

Although false doctrines themselves certainly are foolish, Paul’s point here is that wasting time discussing them is a seriously foolish behavior for God’s people to be involved in.

The fourth-century church historian Eusebius reported that when the apostles died, a conspiracy of godless error arose through deceptive false teachers, who arrogantly propagated their insidious lies in opposition to God's Word.

It is obvious from Paul's counsel to Timothy and Titus that those godless errors were a serious threat to the church even before all of the apostles were gone.

- John MacArthur

Make no mistake about it, in the days we are living in, where many say that all roads lead to God, we are all on the same journey, where false doctrine is flooding into the church and causing many to be tossed to and fro by these winds of doctrine, we need to stand strong in the faith that has been entrusted to us!

The priority must be on God's Word, not on the words of man. Paul cautioned Timothy to keep focused on the Word, not on things that come from man. The greatest effort must be put into God's Word, not man's word.

Warren Wiersbe tells us,

These are, of course, the false teachings and traditions of the apostates.

These doctrines have no basis in Scripture; in fact, they contradict the Word of God. They are the kind of teachings that silly people would discuss, not dedicated men and women of the Word!

A believer cannot rediscover new doctrines.

Paul admonished Timothy to remain true to "the good doctrine which you have closely followed up to now" (1 Tim 4:6 b, literal translation).

He warned him not to “give heed to fables and endless genealogies” (1 Tim 1:4).

While a pastor must know what the enemy is teaching, he must not be influenced by it.

A chemist may handle and study poisons, but he does not permit them to get into his system.

- Warren Wiersbe, The Wiersbe Bible Commentary – NT, p. 760

How true that is and yet, as some listen to these false teachers they are taken in by them, they embrace their teaching and they become hooked on this false doctrine.

Remember what Paul said, “**But reject profane and old wives fables, and exercise yourself rather to godliness.**” I Timothy 4:7.

And yes, this is the pastor’s responsibility to reject false teaching. But also keep in mind that it is the responsibility of every Christian to be on guard, to reject false teaching!

As we finish up this morning, we are going to be looking at this last point, and that is – ***MANIFEST!***

#### VERSES 8-10

What I want to focus on here is what is manifested in our lives. Not just pastors or leaders, but these things should be manifested in all of our lives!

And Paul does not want us to become distracted from the truth. We need to speak it forth. We need to teach it. And as we speak it and teach it and then apply it to our lives, we will grow in our walk with the Lord!

Paul tells us that “**. . . bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things . . .**” I Timothy 4:8.

The Word that Paul uses for “**exercise**” in the Greek is *GUMNASIA*, (goom-nas-ee’-ah) and from it we get our English word “*gymnasium*” and “*gymnastics*.”

The Greeks were big into physical training and each Greek city had its own gymnasium, Gold’s Gym you might say or if that is too old, not sure if they are even around anymore, how about Planet Fitness, and Ephesus was no exception.

Thus, Paul picks up on this because it was familiar to them and he tells them that physical exercise isn’t wrong, it helps some, but that which is more important, more beneficial is the exercising of our faith, to train up the inner man.

Look at health clubs today and what do you tend to find in them?

Yes, weights and treadmills and bikes and so on.

But what else do you tend to find in them?

You find many mirrors; I have even seen them in front of treadmills!

Why?

So you can look at yourself and see how well you are doing, flexing those muscles.

For us, the world is a mirror from where we came from, and the Word of God is a mirror to show us how well we are doing as we encounter different situations and how we respond. It will help us to see if we are growing, if the inner man is being built up!

Now I realize that can be disheartening when we see how much more we have to go, how many times we fail.

And for some, it prevents them from moving forward and because of that, they don’t grow!

Paul had a past that was antagonistic towards Christianity. He consented to the death of Stephen and arrested many others to bring them before the Jewish religious council and have charges brought up against them!

And then he gets saved on the road to Damascus to arrest more Christians and bring them back to Jerusalem.

Not too good.

Not only that, but after Paul got saved, he struggled with his faith. Listen to what he said in Romans 7:19, **“For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.”**

C. S. Lewis got it right when he said, *“No man knows how bad he is until he has tried to be good.”*

And here in Romans chapter 7 Paul is speaking of the war going on between the spirit and the flesh. This was after he was saved for those who think once we are saved, we sin no more. This was truly a battle for Paul, and it is a battle for us as well.

Remember what we read in Galatians 5:16-18, **“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”**

When you look at all that Paul was dealing with, he might as well just throw up his hands and give up because he was a failure!

No, he was not a failure. He was examining his life and understood this tremendous battle. We are not perfect in the practical sense, we sin.

But for Paul, and for us, we should never give up. Remember what Paul said in Philippians 3:12-14, **“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”**

We too must press on and keep our eyes focused upon Jesus. He does not give up on us and we must not give up as well. We must – ***PRESS ON!***

The problem is that many times we focus on those things that will not help us to grow spiritual speaking.

Think about it. Look at what people spend their time doing and how much money, lots of effort on preserving these bodies that God has given to us, it is a multi-billion-dollar industry, from plastic surgery to exercise programs, to diets, to pills and-so-on.

I am not saying we should not take care of ourselves. Our bodies are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God indwells us.

But we focus so much attention on the outward man that is perishing than the inward man which is eternal!

And think about this. I will let you in on a little secret. The moment you are born your body is moving towards disorder, decay, and death! These bodies will go back to the dust of the earth unless the Lord comes for us before that happens!

I am not trying to be a downer, but the reality is, we are all going to die and how are we preparing ourselves?

One pastor put it this way, *“There is, indeed, a little profit in bodily exercise. It’s a good thing - but not nearly as important as exercising oneself in godliness. If you have to choose between working out and worshipping, opt for worship every time. If you have to choose between Bible study and bodybuilding, always go with Bible study. It’s good to jog and to do deep knee bends, presses, and curls. But I wish people would put the same emphasis on jogging their memory of Scripture, bending their knees in prayer, pressing on in the faith, and curling up with a good Book – the Word of God.”*

Paul put it this way in II Corinthians 4:16-18, **“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”**

You see, like I have said, the outward man is perishing, wearing down but that is not who we are.

We are soul and spirit and when these bodies, these tents, go back to the dust of the earth we will be with the Lord and He is preparing for us new bodies, mansions for our soul and spirit to dwell in.

And thus, our focus should be on the building up of the inner man as Paul did in his own life.

And notice the focus – ***GODLINESS!***

That is what should be manifested in our lives, the things of God and not the things of the flesh!

I have said this before but a good way to see how you are doing with the Lord is by looking at how you are treating people, how you are talking to them, what you are saying, and it will give you a good indication of how your walk is going.

Now that may offend some, but it is true.

How can we say that we are praising God, worshiping Him, walking with Him when we are cursing or speaking harshly towards others?

James tells us about that very thing in James 3:8-9, **“But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.”**

And the point James is making is that we praise the Lord one minute with our mouth and the next minute we are cursing man who was created in the image of God, and that should not be found in our lives!

That is inconsistent with who we are, who is in control of our life!

Our speech should be filled with praise unto God, not just on Sunday or Thursday but as we leave the church and go out into the world. We should not sound vulgar, be obnoxious, sound like sailors with our speech.

You see, as we have been redeemed by God, He has given to us the capacity of speaking things that are holy, that not only bless God but man who was created in the image of God!

The key is, who are you surrendering your tongue to, the Lord or the flesh?

And if your focus is on this world, you will be struggling, and that struggle will be seen in the things that are manifested in your life.

I am not saying we ignore this world, but your focus first and foremost must be the Lord. You can't be any earthly good until you are first heavenly minded!

That is what Paul said here in I Timothy 4:8, “**... having a promise of life that now is and of that which is to come.**”

In other words, don't let the temporal distract you from the eternal. We need to stay focused on that which is really important, as Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:2-4, “**Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.**”

Also, listen to what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 9:24-27, “**Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.**”

Just as our human body grows by eating and exercise, so too does our spiritual lives, the inner man. That is done as we feed on God's Word, as we exercise our faith, we will grow, we will mature and this is truly profitable for our lives, more so than physical exercise even though it does help some!

And what God is doing on the inside of our lives will then be manifested outwardly, in our words and our deeds!

Now, in saying that, don't think that it will be a walk in the park, not at all. It will be a battle!

Listen to what Paul said once again in I Timothy 4:10, **“For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.”**

We have to be committed to the work that God has given to us. Not just pastors, but all of us have been entrusted with gifts to be used to bless the body of Christ, to minister to the lost, and to bring glory to God! But it is hard work!

In other words, don't get into this race half-heartedly! Don't be a lazy pastor or a lazy Christian because it is not honoring to God.

For the pastor, he is actively involved in the spiritual growth of those whom God has entrusted to him. And it does take work.

But for all of us, we have family, we have friends, we have co-workers that don't know the Lord and we are actively involved in sharing with them.

For our families, we are actively involved in helping them to grow in the Lord. It is work!

Let me show you what I mean.

First of all, Paul speaks of **“labor”** or *KOPIAO*, ((kop-ee-ah'-o) in the Greek and it means, ***“to work to the point of weariness and exhaustion.”***

Next, Paul says that we are to **“suffer”** or *AGONIZOMAI*, (ag-o-nid-zom-ahee) in the Greek, from which we get our English word ***“agony”*** from, and it means, ***“to engage in a struggle.”***

J. Oswald Sanders wrote, ***“If he is unwilling to pay the price of fatigue for his leadership, it will always be mediocre . . . True leadership always exacts a heavy toll on the whole of man, and the more effective the leadership is, the higher the price to be paid.”***

Make no mistake about it, a good pastor works hard and suffers-long to serve the Lord and to take care of His people.

Next, when Paul speaks of the living God and says, “**. . . who is the Savior of all men, especially of them who believe,**” is he speaking of a universal salvation where all men are saved in the end?

Not at all!

God’s desire is that all are saved, but it is man’s free will to choose that also plays a role.

You see, the work of Christ on Calvary is more than adequate to save all men, but it is only effective in saving those who come to Him by faith.

That is what Clarke tells us, “*What God intends for ALL, he actually gives to them that believe in Christ, who died for the sins of the world [1 John 2:2], and tasted death for every man [Hebrews 2:9]. As all have been purchased by his blood so all may believe; and consequently all may be saved. Those that perish, perish through their own fault.*”

Thus, the warning we are to give as watchmen, in Ezekiel 3:17-21, “**Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at**

**your hand. Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul.**

May we do that, may we warn people in the love of Christ of the coming judgment and the everlasting life that Jesus has for them.

Look at what we have seen here this morning.

We looked at the fact that we are to – ***INSTRUCT!***

We are to instruct people, remind them, lay before them the things of God.

We looked at the fact that we are to – ***REJECT!***

We are to reject those things that are not found in the Bible, to reject these false teachers with their false doctrine. Don't embrace them, remove them from your lives.

And we looked at the fact that we are to – ***MANIFEST!***

We are to manifest godliness in our lives and the only way that is going to happen is when we read and study and apply God's Word to our lives and surrender to the Holy Spirit's guiding. If you are not manifesting godliness in your life, in your speech, in your actions, than what are you manifesting?

I will close with this, and we will look at this next time.

Listen to what Paul said in I Timothy 4:11, "**These things command and teach.**" May we do that!