

# 1 Timothy 4

5-29-05

## “Practice & Progress!”

### 1. Intro:

- 1.1. **Memorial Day weekend:** in honor of the nation's armed services personnel killed in wartime.
  - 1.1.1. Also, would like to **honor** all those have served, or are serving in the armed service,...by **having you stand** so we might **pray** for you.
- 1.2. This would be a great chapter to have someone read before they choose the church for their family.
  - 1.2.1. **Q:** What do you look for in a **church?** - Look for in a **pastor?**
  - 1.2.2. **Q:** How should the pastor **teach?** - Deal with **false teachers** or **bad doctrine?** – How should he **live?**
- 1.3. **Outline:** Word & Prayer; Nourishment & Exercise; Practice & Progress.

### 2. WORD & PRAYER! (1-5)

- 2.1. **Q:** Where do we run for all questions to life & godliness?
  - 2.1.1. The Word of God & Prayer settle the matter!
- 2.2. Wherever the **light** of the gospel shines, the **shadow** of false doctrine lurks closely behind.
  - 2.2.1. The Christian faith was **preached, accepted, & lived out** in a world where many ideas threatened it.
  - 2.2.2. There's always a danger of people **adding** or **subtracting** from the gospel message.
    - 2.2.2.1. Which is John's final warning at the end of the Rev.
  - 2.2.3. **Note** this comes right after Paul gave us that beautiful hymn of 6 solid points of Christology! (3:16)
- 2.3. (1) **Some will depart**(apostacize, fall away, abandon the truth)
  - 2.3.1. Not only possible, but **inevitable!**
- 2.4. Satan & his ministers are at work spreading false doctrine.
  - 2.4.1. 2 Cor. 11:13-15 “**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.**”

- 2.4.1.1. As **God** speaks truth & uses people to share it; so **Satan** speaks lies & uses people to share it!
- 2.4.2. “Declaring war may not be **popular**, but it will keep us **faithful**.”<sup>1</sup>
- 2.4.3. Never does material read, “**Danger: Satanic Doctrine Enclosed. Open at your own risk!**”
  - 2.4.3.1. No, false teaching is often accompanied by people well dressed, well manicured, attractive, friendly, & convincing.
  - 2.4.3.2. That’s why we need to know the Scriptures so we can discern truth from error.
- 2.4.4. I wrote in my notes Friday “*get a watch Tower magazine*”.
  - 2.4.4.1. **Story** - Yesterday at B of A parking lot.
  - 2.4.4.2. **Show magazine** – Old one’s. Jn.2:18-22.
- 2.4.5. **What about inside the church though?** Even “*good things*” out of balance are a problem for a church.
  - 2.4.5.1. e.g. Prayer only emphasis; Missions only; Health & Wealth; etc.
- 2.5. (2) **Seared** – may mean:
  - 2.5.1. [1] Their conscience was *stamped* w/the brand mark of Satan’s ownership.
  - 2.5.2. [2] Or, their conscience was “*cauterized*” i.e. made insensible to the distinction between right & wrong.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.6. (3) **How to spot them?**—They might teeter towards Asceticism[self-denying]
  - 2.6.1. Bodily disciplines do not automatically advance spiritual life.
  - 2.6.2. Col.2:23 “*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.*”
  - 2.6.3. **Forbidding Marriage** –
  - 2.6.4. It’s my opinion that the R.C. church made a big mistake here in requiring priests to take a vow of celibacy (note: they do not “forbid”, they allow them to take a vow of celibacy).
  - 2.6.5. Not even the OT priests had this requirement on them!
    - 2.6.5.1. Ezek.44:21,22 “*No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. They shall not take as wife a widow or a divorced woman, but take virgins of the descendants of the house of Israel, or widows of priests.*”
    - 2.6.5.2. Starting w/Aaron the very 1<sup>st</sup> priest...was married!
  - 2.6.6. This past year we saw many priests that took this vow but that didn’t have the gift of celibacy.
    - 2.6.6.1. 1 Cor.7:7 “*each one has his own gift*”(i.e. marriage or celibacy)

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<sup>1</sup> Warren Wiersbe; pg.799

<sup>2</sup> LKGNT; pg.625

- 2.6.7. They've missed out on many men who had the gift of marriage.
- 2.6.8. **Forbidding Foods** –
- 2.6.9. Paul rejects that food falls into 2 categories(good/bad).
- 2.6.10. The Ephesian church believers could relax when it came to food because there was no “food laws”.
  - 2.6.10.1. God told Peter, “kill & eat!”
  - 2.6.10.2. Here Paul tells Timothy, “Pray & eat!”
- 2.6.11. 2 reasons why this shouldn't occur:
- 2.6.12. [1] God's creation is good! All that God made is good. [Gen.1, 7x's]
  - 2.6.12.1. James 1:17 “Every **good gift** and every **perfect gift** is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”
  - 2.6.12.2. Eccl.3:13 “every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor—it is the gift of God.”
- 2.6.13. [2] We must eat **with thanksgiving** what God has created.

### 3. **NOURISHMENT & EXERCISE! (6-11)**

- 3.1. **Q: Want to be physically fit? What are the 2 most important things?**
  - 3.1.1. Eat right & Exercise! {Spiritually also!}
- 3.2. **Instruct** – Point these things out.
  - 3.2.1. A good pastor or teacher won't run from false teaching but will expose it. {point it out, help others to see it}
  - 3.2.2. We often shy from this so we don't come across as **negative**, or as **know-it-alls**, or just afraid of **offending** someone.
  - 3.2.3. Don't be afraid to say, “*that's wrong & here's why.*”
    - 3.2.3.1. **Conversation w/my J.W. friend** – I distinguished between a Christian vs. J.W. (explain)
    - 3.2.3.2. **Conversation w/Romanian Greek Orthodox man on plane** – Art in America – Then, Jesus taking away your sin(He said on judgment day you will learn what you did wrong & learn from it).
- 3.3. **A good minister** – This should be the **goal** of all ministers.
  - 3.3.1. Often times a pastor is evaluated by his eloquent speech, level of education, air of professionalism, or his busyness. But God wants to know, “*Are you my servant?*”
  - 3.3.2. **But, all Christians are ministers**(or servants).
  - 3.3.3. **There is no higher goal in ministry than this!**
- 3.4. **Nourish** – feeding with the idea of reading & inwardly digesting.
  - 3.4.1. **Pres. part.** suggests a continual process. (it's a lifetime endeavor)
  - 3.4.2. **You can't point out false doctrine** if you aren't maintaining a steady diet of **truth** yourself!

- 3.4.3. **PS: Please don't find your "truth" in novels!**  
 3.4.3.1. *i.e. don't build your eschatology from the Left Behind series! Nor, your understanding of angels on cheesy TV shows!*
- 3.5. **Reject** – expose the errors we oppose, & develop personal holiness.  
 3.5.1. Exposing error & practicing truth is a powerful antidote to heresy.
- 3.6. **Old wives tales** –  
 3.6.1. Not just legends or Aesop's fables. He is warning against stories & beliefs manufactured to promote & defend an immoral lifestyle.<sup>3</sup>
- 3.7. **Exercise** – *gumnazo* "to train". Our word gymnasium.  
 3.7.1. Paul's athletic imagery reminds us that **spiritual growth** doesn't happen by accident. It takes sweat, determination, perseverance, & total submission to the trainer.  
 3.7.2. You can't just **avoid wrong**; you must **embrace right**.  
 3.7.3. **Just like a tri-athlete must do more than stop smoking, drinking, & stop eating donuts.**  
 3.7.4. He/she must also put in the miles running, swimming, & riding.  
 3.7.5. But isn't spiritual discipline an oxymoron? Doesn't "discipline take us right down the road again to legalism?"  
 3.7.5.1. **Nope, the difference is the motivation!**  
 3.7.5.2. Kent Hughes, in *Disciplines of a Godly Man* says, "**Legalism** is self-centered; **discipline** is God-centered. The legalistic heart says, "I will do this thing to **gain merit** w/God." The disciplined heart says, "I will do this thing because **I love God & want to please Him.**" 😊
- 3.8. **Godliness** – "*This is Paul's term in the pastoral epistles for **genuine Christianity**; it brings together knowledge of & faith in God & the observable response of lifestyle.*"<sup>4</sup>  
 3.8.1. **Godliness is taking God seriously.**  
 3.8.2. **We must be Christians in training!**<sup>5</sup>  
 3.8.3. **And this training will make us fit for eternity!** (8b)  
 3.8.4. Is Paul against physical exercise? **No!!!** He's just comparing the temporal from the eternal!  
 3.8.4.1. **Ps: This has nothing to do w/Salvation; but everything to do w/Sanctification.**

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Swindoll; pg.89,90

<sup>4</sup> Philip Towner; pg.45

<sup>5</sup> Swindoll; pg.90

- 3.9. (10) **Labor & strive** for godliness!  
 3.9.1. **Suffer reproach**/strive = *agonizomai* / agonize  
 3.9.2. **Becoming godly takes work. It's a struggle.**  
 3.9.2.1. **Yet**, different from our earthly struggles, for we draw from the strength of our living Lord.(10b)
- 3.10. Both **Discipline & Devotion** are needed to make a winning athlete, & an effective Christian.  
 3.10.1. **Note the balance all the way through this.**  
 3.10.2. Devotion & discipline; public service & private integrity; teaching others & learning & growing personally; exhorting others but 1<sup>st</sup> examining yourself; avoiding untruth while actively pursuing truth.<sup>6</sup>

#### 4. **PRACTICE & PROGRESS! (12-16)**

- 4.1. **Q: What 2 things assure you, you are on the right road of salvation?**  
 4.1.1. Practice & Progress!
- 4.2. (12) There seemed to have been some timidity to Timothy("Timidothy").
- 4.3. **Let no one despise your youth! - Do our foreign ambassadors go to other countries w/apologies for carrying messages from their sovereign? No!** - Then always remember, every true minister of the gospel is an **ambassador for Christ!**
- 4.4. Phillips translation – **"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young; see that they look up to you because you are an example to believers in your speech & behavior, in your love & faith & sincerity."**  
 4.4.1. If people see Christ in you, they will notice Him instead of your age.
- 4.5. (13) **Listen How to teach God's Word!** [Biblical Exposition at its finest!]  
 4.5.1. **Reading** = Public Reading.  
 4.5.2. **Exhorting** = Preaching. Warn, advise, & urge.  
 4.5.3. **Doctrine** = Teaching.  
 4.5.4. This is how they did it in the **OT times**. [Neh.8:8 **"So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading."**]  
 4.5.5. A practice they continued in the **Synagogue**. [Jesus in Naz. Syn.]  
 4.5.6. And should be practiced **today!** {Look at how many faithful men died to get that book into your hands}  
 4.5.7. You don't absorb God's truth by **gliding** over it. You must **immerse** yourself in it, **explore** its depths, **take in** its wonder!<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid; pg.94 (slightly adapted)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid; pg.92

- 4.6. (14) **The Gift** – teaching. At his ordination.  
 4.6.1. Giftedness must be accompanied by godliness!
- 4.7. “It takes real effort to grow in the Christian life & to be successful in Christian service.”<sup>8</sup>
- 4.7.1. **Entirely** = *absorption in anything*. The mind is to be as immersed in these pursuits **as** the body in the air it breathes.<sup>9</sup>
- 4.7.1.1. **Have you given yourself entirely to them?** – The Christian who is listless about spiritual matters will never make progress.
- 4.7.2. **Progress** = pioneer advance.
- 4.7.3. We must move into new territory & not stay the same spiritually.
- 4.7.4. There are new **truths** to learn, new **battles** to fight, & new **victories** to win!
- 4.7.5. Thomas Edison said, “**Restlessness is discontent, & discontent is the 1<sup>st</sup> necessity of progress.** Show me a thoroughly satisfied man & I will show you a failure.”
- 4.8. (16) Note the **Clergy Combo** here!
- 4.9. **Take heed to yourself** – Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living”.
- 4.10. **And to the doctrine** – It is easy to correct the doctrine, but much more challenging to live the doctrine.
- 4.11. **Save?** – Like Phil.2:12 “**work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.**”
- 4.12. **Preach it, teach it, practice it!**

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<sup>8</sup> Warren Wiersbe; pg.799

<sup>9</sup> LKGNT; pg.628