



Faith Baptist Church of Cabot, Arkansas
Pastor's Mid-Week Bible Study
December 9, 2009

Lesson Twelve - The Departure from the Faith
1 Timothy 4:1-5

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 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. For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

Introduction

In the first three chapters of 1 Timothy, the Apostle Paul has dealt with the law, grace and salvation as well as conduct within the church and the necessity of proper overseers and servants of the church. As the fourth chapter opens we see that the Ephesian church needed to be settled in what she believed and how she would function because of the dangers of apostasy. The best defense against doing wrong is proactive involvement in doing right.

Exegesis

- ❖ Departing from the faith
 - The prophecy of latter times

Jesus Himself warned that many false prophets would rise up and deceive many. (Matthew 24:11) The Holy Spirit has clearly confirmed that truth in the Apostle. As time passes from the days of Christ's earthly ministry to the day of His triumphant return, true believers should expect to see some who claimed the truth to defect from the truth.

- The prophecy of apostasy

"Depart from" means to stand away from something. These false teachers may have had the appearance that they stood with and in the truth, but now they distance themselves from it through their teaching and their conduct.

- ❖ Dealing in evil
 - The nature of their apostasy

They give credence to imposter spirits and take hold of demonic doctrine. Demonic doctrine is any departure from the truth of God. It may appear enlightened and may sound logical to the humanistic mind. And therein is its inherent danger. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

They are speaking lies in hypocrisy. Their misinformation is couched in an appearance of rectitude. They claim to represent the God whom they do not know and to maintain a code of conduct they have no intention of keeping themselves.

They are having their own conscience seared with a hot iron. Their departure from the faith was not in ignorance. They knew and chose. They dull their spiritual sensitivity through their pursuit of evil.

➤ The nature of their teaching

They pursue asceticism, the belief that abstinence from physical things is essential for one's spirituality, e.g. the avoidance of certain foods and sex. It is a form of self righteousness, basing one's spiritual goodness on what one avoids.

❖ Denying the good

➤ The goodness of God's creation

Everything God made was made for man's benefit if man will use it righteously. Man's sinful abuse and misuse of God's creation, e.g. gluttony and fornication, does not negate its essential goodness. And that essential goodness is free to believers to enjoy in the context of God's creative design.

➤ The gratitude for God's creation

The context of God's creative design is one of gratitude and fellowship. When every gift of God is received with thanksgiving to God, it is righteously employed to the glory of God. And that gift is made holy in our lives as we fellowship with God in His Word and prayer. The Greek word for "prayer" here is not descriptive so much a formal recitation as of a lifestyle of conversation with God.

Application

1. Avoiding the danger of demonic doctrine

- Know the truth of God and His Gospel
- Understand that Satan is subtle, religious and logical in his reasoning to the fallen mind
- Compare everything against the truth revealed by God in His Word – you don't have to know all the lies, you just have to know the truth

2. Enjoying the goodness of God

- Be wary of self righteousness – a formal recitation before a meal does not necessarily sanctify the food
- Live a grateful life of thanksgiving in fellowship with God
- Embrace everything in life to God's glory (1 Corinthians 10:31) – which, incidentally, will cause us to rightly use God's gifts without the need for asceticism or legalism