

Lesson 4

1 Timothy Chap. 4. The ministers of the healthy Church, the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth, must fight against apostasy, by proclaiming the truth, sustained by living in godliness and righteousness.

Outline of the text:

1-3 But the Spirit plainly says that in the later times some will forsake the faith ”—a warning against apostasy

4-5 ... nothing is to be rejected, if received with thanks - an argument against asceticism

6-16 ... persevere in these things, for if you do so, you will save yourself and those who listen to you. ”

Principles for the life and public work of church ministers

- **6-10** the practice of godliness

- **11-16** demonstration of authentic Christian character

The central idea;

In contrast to God's true revelation, false teaching will progress as time goes on. We cannot be sure whether Paul was referring to a special revelation he received from the Holy Spirit, or simply to the general revelation received from Christ and the Holy Spirit. What is certain, however, is that the foretold things will happen and they will strike at the stability of the church of Christ.

1. What are those things?

What strategy or mechanism do church enemies use to achieve their goal?

2. Paul responds to those who preached asceticism by stating that "nothing can be rejected if received with thanksgiving."

And yet believers abstain from doing certain things or consuming certain substances. Why?

What is the criteria according to which you accept or refuse to take part in certain actions or to consume certain substances?

Read also 1 Corinthians 10/23.

In verse 6, the apostle Paul goes on to give Timothy some specific instructions regarding church leadership. These include issues related to the personal lives and public works of leaders, but also those related to creating effective interpersonal relationships, and the proper treatment of widows and church elders.

3. What are the priorities that leaders should pursue in their public ministry, according to v. 6-10? Why are these important for the health of a church?

What can you do to keep these things in the attention of your church ministers?

4. One of the principles of effective church leadership is that of leading by personal example — see also 1 Pet. 5 / 1-3.

What aspects related to the personal life of a leader are covered by this principle?

To what extent are they visible in your life as well?

"Command this and teach them!" Commanding was the true meaning of the mandate given to Timothy. For this the apostle had asked him to remain in Ephesus 1/3. but he was commanded to understand that the goal of the commandment was love. This commandment had been entrusted to him by prophecy 1/18. So it was entirely up to Timothy's character to command these. However, his ministry was itself subordinate to the authority of the apostle whose delegate he was, so the latter tells him in chapter 6/13, "I command you before God... To keep the commandment."

In verses 11-16 we find the apostle's personal recommendations for Timothy. The main point of these recommendations throughout this epistle is the doctrine/teaching. The latter is mentioned three times in the few verses quoted above. Timothy was to learn the things the apostle had entrusted to him; he had to attach himself to teaching as to his public action - v. 13; he had to take care of himself - v. 16.

5. Why did Timothy have to command?
How do you react as a member of the church to the "commandments" given by its leaders?

Paul's recommendations to Timothy are more and more insistent: Command these things. Teach them. Take care of them. He persists in doing them. All this so that Timothy's advancement may be "shown to all." Truly, it is not possible for the Lord's workers to make remarkable progress in the knowledge of God's things unless they deal with them exclusively.

The gift must be accompanied by extreme diligence; to be a man of one thing, with an undivided heart. "Pay attention to yourself and to your teaching." We may be busy teaching others, while ignoring ourselves in the things we preach or teach. Timothy had to watch over himself so that his moral condition would correspond to his teaching. Therefore, Timothy's privileged position entailed immense responsibility for himself.

6. The responsibility of dedication and faithfulness in serving God does not belong only to the leaders of the church, but to each believer.

What are your actions or activities as a believer, by which you prove this dedication to the Church of Christ, respectively to the Kingdom of God?

7. According to what you learned in this lesson, what means do you have in the fight against apostasy and wrong teachings?

Final application: What are you left with after studying this lesson — what did God say to you personally?

- encouragement that encourages you;
- promises whose fulfillment you pray for;
- examples to follow;
- warnings to keep in mind;
- sins to avoid or confess.
- commands to listen to;

Bring that thing into prayer and apply it in your life.

As a result of this study, I will:

WHAT? _____

HOW? _____

WHEN? _____
