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| 1  1 Timothy 4:1-11 Sermon Outline  02/11/24  “Rejecting Error, Pursuing Godliness”  INTRO:  Rhett McLaughlin, Josh Harris, Jonathan Steingard…  Ring a bell?  Rhett = famous youtuber (Rhett and Link)  Josh = popular for writing Christian books on dating and purity  Jonathan = lead singer for “Hawk Nelson”  All three = abandoned faith/apostatized  No longer Christian  Not just three of them, but many others recent years = movement = Ex-vangelicals  Bible = apostates | 2  Sad reality/trend = should grive us  Different reasons for leaving faith… Bible = apostasy = demonic  More than just sinful choice but something more sinister is going on  Apostatizing = speciality of devil and his army  = backed full forces of hell  =enterprise that invades the air we breathe  Not only work to make people apostatize, but use false teachers as major reason for apostatizing  = Many of them in the charismatic movement like Joel Osteen, Todd White, Kenneth Copeland, Creflo Dollar, or Mike Todd, by presenting false form of Christianity to disillusion people away from faith  which…eventually = total rejection of it |
| 3  MAIN POINT:  Today Paul is going to focus on the issue of apostasy and false teachers and their doctrine. He is going to show you dangerous of a disease false doctrine is, but in doing that will show you how you can be immune to this disease  BODY:  In previous verse 3:16 = glory of gospel  = foundation for church  =foundation for godly character  But…something so glorious/sin-shattering = create opposition  We know Paul is speaking the very words of God in 2 Peter 1:21  *“no prophecy was ever made by the will of man, but men being moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”* | 4  Paul like rest of NT writes with full inspiration of God = lit. theopneupstos = God-breathed  This Holy Spirit explicitly/clearly said = people will turn away from faith, “paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons”  By saying “later times” Paul is not speaking about an unknown future time = although apostasy will get worse and worse  “Later times” = right now  Hebrews 1:1-2  *“God, having spoken long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, IN THESE LAST DAYS spoke to us in His Son…”*  Last days = not only enemies outside of church but inside of church  Paul warned of this to Ephesian Elders Acts 20:29 |
| 5  Acts 20:29  “*I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciple after them*.”  Exactly what happened in 1 Timothy  The instruments of the demons are hypocritical liars who have seared their own conscience  By falling away from the faith = never had genuine faith in the first place  For people to deconstruct their faith entirely and to never come back to Christ means = never had a constructed faith in the first place  May be doubts/serious doubts in life = God will protect those who are His own | 6  While true more and more false teachers = closer to Christ’s return = also nothing new under the sun  Ever since garden, apostasy and the war for truth has always existed  We see warning against apostasy Deut. 13 Israel not to listen to those who tried to seduce Israel to worship other gods  Instead were to execute them  2 Chron. 25:27 = King Amaziah obeyed Lord half-heartedly but eventually at end of life turned away from following the Lord  Jesus speaks in Luke 8:13 = receive word with joy at first but fall away because they never had firm root to begin with  NT = Judas Iscariot, Demas, Hymenaeus, Alexander = all abandoned faith  Jude + Hebrew = warns against apostasy |
| 7  So many abandon faith = deceived = angel of light  2 Corinthians 11:14  1 John = whole world lies in lap of evil one  2 Cor. 4:4  “*the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God*.”  Peter describes Satan 1 Pet. 5:8 as one  “*who prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour*.”  Peter personally knew from experience  -tried to stop Christ from the cross  -denied Him three times  The battle for the souls of men and women are raging in the unseen realms | 8  That’s why Paul said in Eph. 6:11  “*Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places*.”  Back to verse 1: Notice = they “seared” their consciences  “seared” = cauterized = conscience no longer functioning  Scary place to be  No restraints for moral or theological error  To successfully infect church, demons will often use people we least expect to be false: seminary professors, Christian leaders, even pastors! |
| 9  They may be some of the nicest people you know!  Just because someone is nice = not mean = biblically sound or is a true believer  If you meet a member of Satanic temple in San Francisco, you wouldn’t find them sacrificing people or doing sick rituals  They probably dress normal, talk normal and are pleasantly nice and civilized people  They will tell you all they teach in Satanism that people can do whatever they want.  There are no rules  I’m sure if you had a cup of coffee with Satan himself, you would feel he’s a pretty nice guy too!  Then Paul goes into detail = false teaching  “*forbidding marriage and advocating abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth*.” | 10  Likely = abstaining marriage/food = godly life  Possible same people 2 Timothy 2:18  “*men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some*  If false teaching Jewish in nature, then abstaining from certain foods probably = certain kinds of meat/meat sacrificed to idols  Deceptive = partial truth in both singleness and abstaining from food  Singleness = benefits for ministry over marriage  Food = weaker believers who hold to that in conscience and fasting can be beneficial for purpose of prayer  Problem = marriage/foods = tainted/sinful/evil  That’s ultimately blasphemous because… |
| 11  To call those evil is to call God evil because He created those things  Jesus = it is not what comes into you that makes you unclean, but what comes out of you: all the evils of the heart  Marriage/food = good Genesis  Do you see why Paul calls this false teaching = demonic?  This type of thinking where matter is evil and the spiritual is good comes in many forms  Philosophically it is called Gnosticism = gnosis = knowledge = secret knowledge, reject matter as evil and only grasping for spiritual, unseen realities  We see primitive forms of Gnostic thinking in 1 John where apostle John says,  Anyone who denies that Jesus Christ came in the flesh is not of God  2 John = deceiver and antichrist | 12  Or Asceticism = abstain from all earthly pleasures  EX:  End of 2nd Cen. = Saturninus: “marriage and generation (or sex) are from Satan.” Many of those likewise abstained from animal food, seeing it as evil  Fourth Cen.  Monks and hermits = isolate themselves from all human contact in Egyptian desert to spend rest of lives mortifying flesh  One of monks never ate cooked food  Another never allowed himself to sleep = cliff  Another become so dirty that vermin dropped from him as he walked  Another ate salt in hottest part of summer and refused to drink water to purify his soul from sin  Col. 2:23: these things are of “*no value against the flesh*” |
| 13  Only the power of Christ can set you free from slavery to sin  God created marriage/food = give him thanksgiving  But only those who believe and know the truth can truly fulfill that which false teachers did not  V. 4 “*For everything created by God is good, and nothing it to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer*.”  One of the great blessings about living the Christian life is you can really enjoy earthly things as gifts from the Lord.  Whether a delicious meal, sex, a movie, the sunset, friendships, a family, a house, a pet, the little things in life, Christians should be truly grateful for them  God set apart, through His word, which is sanctification, all things to reflect His glory | 14  And when we lift those things up in prayer before the Lord with thanksgiving, God is glorified and praised as the one from whom all blessings flow  TRANSITION:  How then do we avoid this deadly disease of false doctrine? The answer is in verse 6  BODY:  If Timothy points these things out, if you do that, you will be a  “a *good servant of Christ Jesus*, *constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following*.”  “Good” = kalos = excellent/noble  same word = 3:1 office of overseer  It takes a noble man to do the noble work |
| 15  Being faithful follower of Christ means not only encouraging others in the truth, but by refuting everything that goes against the truth  Titus 1:9  “*exhort in sound doctrine, but to refute those who contradict*”  The cure for deadly damning doctrine is to be nourished by the Word of God  You can say it is to be vaccinated from heretical diseases with the Word of God  Deut. 28:14  “*do not turn aside from any of the words which I am commanding you today, to the right or to the left, to walk after other gods to serve them*.”  Israel to follow all words of Yahweh, because if they didn’t their hearts would forget God and be lured by other gods, which are not really gods, but demons in disguise | 16  Deut. 17 = required to make copy of Law of Moses so that they too wouldn’t forget Yahweh and be seduced by world  V. 7 Paul continues (read)  “Fables” = muthos = myths  Phrase = women not allowed to have educational opportunities back then usually  So senile women who were uneducated were more suspectable to be duped by uncredible arguments or stories that one who was intelligent or educated would discern is wrong  Paul = these false teacher’s teaching = foolish, unprofitable, not intelligent  Instead, Timothy is to “*discipline for the purpose of godliness, for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come*.” |
| 17  “Discipline” = “gumnazo” = “gym” or “gymnasium”  = “train”  Every Greek city including Ephesus = gymnasium  Young men 16-18 would train themselves in those places for athletic games  Very common practice in those days  And what would be the ancient version of the Olympics, athletes = training at highest calibur = taking off clothes/naked to not impede  Same thing: Heb. 12:1-2  Laying aside every sin and “encumbrance” = laying aside of clothes for maximum performance  Timothy was to lay aside any foolish teaching that contradicts Word of God and focus on what is doctrinally sound | 18  By Paul giving this athletic analogy is not just to affirm that physical exercise is good  The main reason is to compare the end goal  If athletes train whole lives for something so temporary or “what profits a little”  How much more should we train and devote ourselves to godliness and God’s Word because v. 8  “*it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come*!”  There is a prize awaiting us!  Phil. 3:13  “*forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* |
| 19  1 Cor. 9:24-27  “*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Now everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.**Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;**but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”*  V. 9 “Trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance”  Self-evident truth = doesn’t need further explanation because it is so obvious  What is this trustworthy statement?  Pursuit of godliness which is truth that we labor and strive | 20  “Labor” = kopiao = exhaustive wearing work  “Strive” = “agonizomai” = agony = painful  It will require your whole being to fight for godliness because this world is relentless  What happens if you just stop swimming in a river that is going downstream?  You will just go down with it  You must actively swim upstream to not be dragged down  Similar thing for the Christian life  It’s going to take hard work and effort  Gal. 5:17  “*For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you do not do the things that you want*.” |
| 21  Although pursuing godliness is hard work, you have a godly motivation for it  “*we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the savior of all men, especially of believers*.”  It is hope of Romans “*does not disappoint*”  “Hope against all hopes”  Hope not based on false theology of dead gods  It is based on the truth of the living God  This living God is “savior of all men” = no one excluded from salvation on the basis of ethnicity, gender, status, position, culture, background or past  The word for “especially” can be translated “that is” That is He is the savior of all believers  There is only one mediator  There is only one God  And there is only one Savior | 22  V. 11  Paul says to “*prescribe and teach these things*”  “prescribe” = command  Timothy not to be ashamed  Not to give suggestions or be timid but to boldly proclaim truth  CONCLUSION:  3RD Cen. Athanasius of Alexandria = pastor  crucial battle to guard full deity of Christ against heretic Arius  “It’s not the world against me, it is me against the world.”  The truth is on the side of the church  Is the world against you, or are you against the world? |
| 23  Romans 8: If God is for us, who can be against us?  Yes malicious forces out there seeking to devour believer  But if true follower of Christ = God will never allow you to abandon your faith  You are eternally sealed by the Holy Spirit  And evidence that you belong to Him is that you will desire to continually be exposed to God’s Word and sound doctrine  As you continue to build your immunity to false teaching through the Word of God, you will know what is false from true  Like: knowing what counterfeit bill by knowing what a true one looks like  Church not only called to defend against Satan’s assaults but to go on the offensive | 24  We are commanded to shine the light of the glory of the gospel into this sin darkened world  Forces of hell = demonic agenda against church  They will stop at nothing to undermine truth and seduce people away from faith  Weapons = formidable and masters of deception  Many have abandoned love of God to their own demise  But for those who know the truth, as author of Hebrews says  “we are convinced beloved of better things concerning you”  “We are not of those who shrink back to destruction”  Take heart  Living God = I will build my church and gates of hell will not prevail against it |
| 25  Weapons of devil no match for the weapons of a believer  As you march forward with the battering ram of truth, gates of hell will not be able to defend against it  And these weapons are not physical but spiritual  2 Cor. 10:4-6  *“for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the tearing down of strongholds, as we tear down speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ*.”  Greater is He that is in you, than He that is in the world  But there are some of you who may be held captive in behind hell’s gates | 26  The question you need to ask yourself today is  “have I fixed my hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men?”  Acts 4:12 says  “*there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved*.”  No middle ground  Bible says “You either belong to devil to do his will or to God to do His will”  Jesus says, “if anyone is not for me, he is against me”  One day Jesus will come with a rod of iron to dash all those who are against Him to pieces  At that point it will be too late to repent |
| 27  Jesus calls you to repent of your sins, and trust in Him as the Savior of your life before that happens  When you do that, you won’t be the one being dashed to pieces like a potter’s vessel  You will be with Him celebrating the victory of the King  You must choose this day whom you will serve.  Are you in the kingdom of darkness or are you in the kingdom of light?  Will you serve the devil or will you serve Christ?  Let’s pray | 28 |