



## *Women's R&R Bible Study 2024-2025*

"YOUR WORDS WERE FOUND, AND I ATE THEM, AND YOUR WORD WAS TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART."

JEREMIAH 15:16

### **LIVING IN HOPE LESSON 12**

In our lesson last week, Paul told Timothy that he was writing "so that he would know how to conduct himself in the house of God" (1 Timothy 3:15). Here in chapter 4, Paul begins to get even more specific on ways that Timothy can minister to the needs of the church. In this chapter we learn more about false teachers, the minister himself, and the ministry. As you read, remember to ask the Holy Spirit how these lessons apply to you. Look for specific challenges and exhortations, as well as encouragement. You may not be a pastor, but you are a minister of Jesus Christ! Let's find out how we can be more faithful in our calling.

**Memory Verse of the Week:** "For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." 1 Timothy 4:8

1. Read 1 Timothy 4:1-16. Observe the text and list the facts you find.
2. What is your first impression of this chapter?
3. What do you think is the key verse of this chapter? Why?
4. How does Paul's focus change in chapter 4? (Can you read it again as if he is writing specifically to you?)

5. There are three sections in this chapter. What is the main point of each section?

**Section 1:** Verses 1-5

**Section 2:** Verses 6-11

**Section 3:** Verses 12-16

6. What do we learn about Timothy in this chapter?
7. What immediate application do you see for yourself after reading this chapter?
8. In verses 1-5, what does Paul say is going to happen? How did he know?

Paul began this letter to Timothy in chapter 1 with a warning to watch out for false teachings. He now gets more specific, letting us know some specific things to watch out for, as well as revealing the source of the error. This will result in a willing turning away from the truth of faith in Christ. This falling away is called “apostasy.”

9. What is the source of the false teaching?
10. What are some of the false teachings?

- 11.** What does it mean to “speak lies in hypocrisy”?
- 12.** How are the hypocrites described?
- 13.** The word “seared” means cauterized or deadened. How does one’s conscience become “deadened”?
- 14.** Read Matthew 23:13-28, Luke 12:1-2, and Titus 1:16 for help. Why did Jesus call the Pharisees hypocrites?
- 15.** Why is the sin of hypocrisy so serious? How can hypocrisy in the life of a believer be a stumbling block in spreading the Gospel?
- 16.** Time for self-examination. Do you practice what you preach? Do you claim to be a Christian, yet live a life contrary to God’s Word? Ask the Lord to reveal any areas of hypocrisy in your life.
- 17.** Is your conscience in danger of being “seared” in any way? Have you been struggling with a certain sin for so long that now it’s just part of who you are, and you no longer even feel guilty about it? Have you been ignoring the warnings of the Holy Spirit? Has your conscience become “deadened” in any area?

In the first and second century, Asceticism became very popular. This teaching believed in renouncing the comforts of life, which would lead to happiness and perfection. They equated holiness with self-denial. The “harder” you were on your body, the holier you were. To forbid marriage, which is a holy institution ordained by God, and to demand eating certain foods that God had deemed “clean” was behavior resulting from false doctrine.

Gnosticism also was becoming widespread in the second century. This false teaching elevated knowledge over faith. According to this cult, a good God could not have created the world, for the world is matter, and matter is the seat of evil. Since the human body is matter, it is our enemy and must be conquered. Abusing their flesh was one way to accomplish that. They would either indulge it, or shun it, both being considered “spiritual.”

- 18.** Why do you think abstaining from things would make people think they were being more “holy”? Have you ever fallen into this trap?
  
- 19.** The false teachers were obviously saying that it was more “spiritual” to be single. Is that true? Read Genesis 2:18, Matthew 19:1-12, and 1 Corinthians 7:1-24.
  
- 20.** Is it more “spiritual” to eat certain foods? Read Mark 7:14-23, Acts 10:9-15, and 1 Corinthians 10:23-33. Does that mean it’s wrong to be a vegetarian, for instance?
  
- 21.** How is it possible, as a Christian, to either stumble someone by what you eat, or what you don’t eat?

- 22.** In our lesson last week, we saw that false doctrine has a definite effect on behavior. How can these two false teachings affect our behavior negatively?

In reference to verses 4-5, Warren Wiersbe said this: “The food we eat is sanctified (set apart, devoted to God) when we pray and give thanks; so the Word of God and prayer turn even an ordinary meal into a spiritual service for God’s glory” (1 Cor. 10:31). William Hendriksen points out that, “Every creature of God is excellent (Genesis 1:31). Nothing is fit to be thrown away, as if it were evil or the seat of evil. Every creature of God is excellent for the very reason that God created it, and because He also consecrated it. With God’s blessings upon it, and by means of our confident prayer, it has been consecrated, that is, set apart for holy use, lifted into the spiritual realm. For the Christian, eating and drinking are not secular activities” (1 Cor. 10:31).

- 23.** Is Paul saying that all food is created equal in the sense of nutritional value? Is he saying that it doesn’t matter what we eat? How do we balance that with the fact that we are to take care of our bodies because God is living in us? (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

- 24.** To sum it up, what should be the Christian’s opinion of food and eating? Are you balanced, or do you tend to lean in one particular direction?

- 25.** Briefly state how Timothy is told to respond to the false teachings.

26. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10 again. What are the marks of a “good minister”?
27. According to verse 6, what should the minister “feed” on? What are the dangers of a minister who neglects to study the Word?
28. Are you diligently studying the Word, and following it carefully? Have you immersed yourself in sound doctrine, or is studying the Bible simply a “pastime”?

The word “fable” comes from the word “muthos,” from which we get our English word “myth.” Paul says that they are “fit only for old women,” because at that time, women did not have the same educational opportunities as men did. This phrase was often used to infer that only uneducated and unsophisticated people would listen to such a thing. These myths lacked any type of credibility.

Paul wanted Timothy to be nourished by sound doctrine, and not allow any type of myths to pollute his mind. A minister must keep himself pure, unspotted from the world, free from all other garbage.

Paul says that we are to “exercise” or “discipline” ourselves to godliness. This word translated as “exercise” comes from the Greek word “gumnazo,” from which the English words gymnasium and gymnastics were derived. It implies the rigorous, strenuous, disciplined form of training that an athlete engages in. (I love the word “exercise,” don’t you?)

Athletics and physical training were very important to the Greek culture. There was a gymnasium in every Greek city, and youth spent most of their time training their physical bodies and perfecting their athletic skills. Paul wisely chooses this analogy, knowing that it would be easy for them to understand his point. Paul says that the Christian should be as devoted to pursuing godliness as an athlete is to his sport.

- 29.** What do you think it means to “exercise yourself in godliness”?
- 30.** Is Paul teaching that it’s wrong to exercise? What point is he making?
- 31.** Compare the benefits of physical training and spiritual training. How long do the benefits of each last? What are each profitable for?

“Godliness is from the Greek word ‘Eusebeia’ which means good, revere, and adore. Godliness is a right attitude and response toward the true creator God, a preoccupation from the heart with holy and sacred realities. It is the heart and soul of Christian character and the aim of Christian living.” (1 Timothy 2:2; 2 Peter 3:11)

- 32.** Look up the following Scriptures. What do they say regarding godliness?
- a. Psalm 32:6
  - b. Titus 2:11-14
  - c. 2 Peter 3:11-14
  - d. 1 Timothy 6:6-8
  - e. 1 Timothy 6:11-12
  - f. 2 Peter 1:2-8

- 33.** From verse 10, what does Paul say that we are to labor and strive after?

The word “labor” means “to work to the point of exhaustion.” The word “suffer” or “strive” comes from the word “agonizomai” which means to engage in a struggle. It is from this word that we get our word “agony.”

- 34.** What does it mean to “labor and strive” in our ministry for Christ?
- 35.** In what ways can ministry, and our pursuit of godliness, be regarded as a struggle?

36. Do you take your call seriously? Are you willing to train hard, exerting your greatest possible effort? Is your eye on the goal? Have you laid aside anything that is keeping you from progressing?
37. Henry Martyn, a missionary to India said this: **“Now let me burn out for God.”** What are your thoughts on this?

The Bible cannot contradict itself. This verse can't be teaching a universal salvation, because the rest of the Word contradicts that. Warren E. Purdy gives us this interpretation of this verse:

“God is the Savior of all men in that on a temporal basis He gives them life and strength, awakens within them high ideals, provides for their pleasure and sustenance, and graciously allows them to live for a time in the light of His countenance.”

“God is especially the Savior of believers in that He has a special call for them, answers their prayers, and provides for their well-being, not only in this life, but also in the life which is to come.”

38. List at least five practical lessons that you have learned so far in this chapter.

I pray that this week we make a fresh and new commitment to the Lord to pursue a life of godliness. Let's do **“sit-ups”** for the Savior. **“Leg-lifts”** for the Lord. Let's **“press”** toward the goal. Let's **“run”** after these things with all our might. Let's get spiritually **“FIT”** for the Lord! See you next week. Work on exercising those muscles of faith!