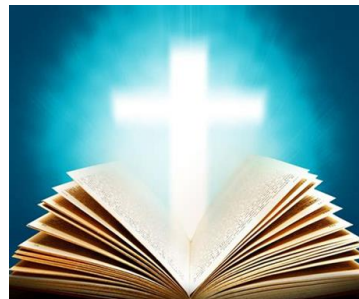


1 Timothy 4:1-6

## **Difficult Days Coming**

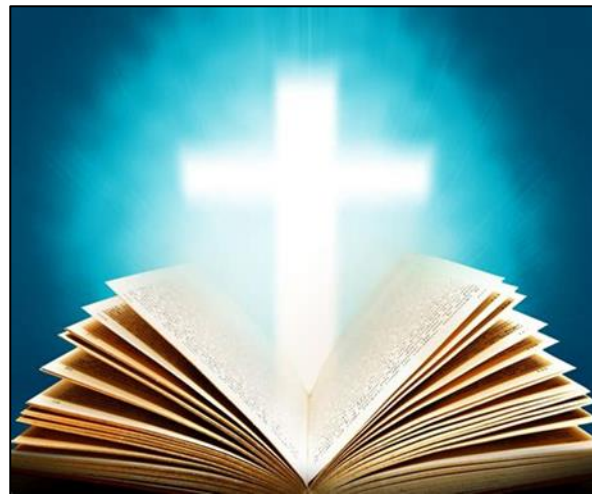
The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.



For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.

1 Timothy 4:1-6



# Keep your balance

Only 5 verses are devoted to this warning.  
We need to make sure we don't give the devil  
too much publicity.



## The Spirit clearly says

The Holy Spirit speaks NOW ! Not just in the past  
He makes it plain to understand  
There should be no uncertainty about what he says.

How he communicated this we are not told.  
Perhaps he spoke directly to Paul at this time,  
or from the Gospels, our Lord's words, prophecy  
or other letters of Paul.

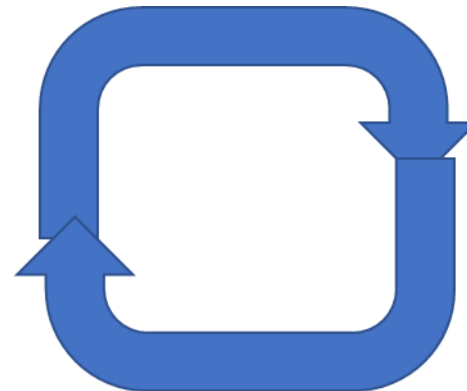
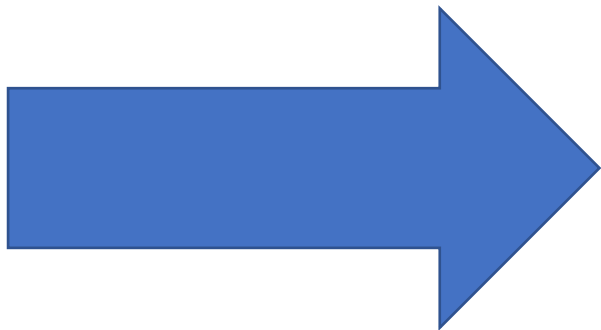
# Time is linear -not circular

The Spirit clearly says that in later times

Things are moving towards a climax according to God's plan.

But from our perspective sometimes it looks like this:-

Ecclesiastes 1:9 What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new **under the sun**.



The Spirit clearly says that in later times  
(subsequent seasons)

These times refer first to Timothy's day but "the latter days or the last days" include the times beginning in the NT up to the end of this age.

Hebrews 1:2 .. in these last days *God* has spoken to us by his Son,



The last days

Revelation 4:1 After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

# Apostacy

Warning – many who profess faith will abandon it in the hard times.

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will  
(apostatise) abandon the faith

Matthew 24:10-14 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

## Putting the 2 sides together

Since Jesus spoke of the world-wide proclamation of the gospel, there will also be people coming to a real faith



Acts 2:17-21 "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'



# The coming signs

2 Thessalonians 2:2-3 Do not become easily unsettled or alarmed by the teaching allegedly from us--whether by a prophecy or by word of mouth or by letter--asserting that the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion (Greek-apostacy) occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

The apostacy and the coming of the antichrist have to come before Jesus' return.



## The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith

The Bible uses the phrase “the faith” in this way in many places to define the basic fundamentals of Christian belief.

Act 6:7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to **the faith**.

Jude 1:3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for **the faith** that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.

# Destructive demonic activity

some will abandon the faith  
and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.



1 John 4:1-2 Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

Demonic activity is real and most dangerous  
in the lies the demons promote.

# People can be used as the devil's agents

Such teachings come through hypocritical liars,

Acts 20:29-31 I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

Paul was warning of the great outbreak of the Gentile pseudo-Christianity which is spoken of as Gnosticism. Many other heresies have arisen since those early days.

And their kind has been seen throughout the ages

# Conscience –a precious gift

Such teachings come through hypocritical liars,  
whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

Their consciences have been de-sensitised

How did it get to this stage?

Sin not dealt with hardens our hearts



# Examples of the demonic influence and teaching

They forbid .....

A domineering mindset.

This describes the legalistic teaching of those who have departed from the faith, with a religion defined by what you don't do.

**No!**

Contrast this with Titus 2:11-13

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope--the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ,

# Examples of the demonic influence and teaching

They forbid people to marry

‘There have always been those in the church who regard themselves as more spiritual than God Himself, and have a stricter set of rules for living than God does.’

This is a demonic lie. Marriage has God’s blessing.

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure,





# Examples of the demonic influence and teaching

and order them to abstain from certain foods,

Interference in daily life.

We are not limited by any kind of diet; Contrary to what they teach, what we eat does not make us more righteous before God (though what we eat may affect our health).



We often think that if we sacrifice something for God (such as the right to marry or to eat certain foods), then He owes us something. This is legalism at its worst; trying to manipulate God into giving us something.



# All good gifts around us ....

foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.



Do we appreciate God's blessings of our 'daily bread'?

# It was very good

For everything God created is good,

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.



# And humans spoiled it

For everything God created is good,

Genesis 3:17-19 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."



# But there is hope for a better world

Genesis 9:16-17 Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth." So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."



Romans 8:19-22 For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

# Receive with thanksgiving

For everything God created is good,  
and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving,

God spoke to Peter in Joppa on a roof at lunchtime.

Acts 10:11-16 He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean." The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

# You don't have to have it

A person may occasionally abstain from certain foods etc. for the good of his own spiritual life or the good of the kingdom of God.

Matthew 6:16 When you fast, do not look sombre as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

But it is not that one way is spiritually superior to the other.

These are meant to be personal choices before the Lord.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,

# What is on the menu?

because it is consecrated by  
**the word of God** and prayer.



## Vegetables

And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.” (Genesis 1:29)

## Meat and vegetables

Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. (Genesis 9:3)



because it is consecrated by the word of God and **prayer**.

Set apart for holy purposes through prayer

Saying 'grace' – it is not blessing the food but blessing God for giving it.

I think the following translation is not accurate. The word "them" comes at the end of the sentence in the Greek.



Mark 8:7 And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them.

We bless people and give thanks to God for things.



# An encouraging incentive

If you point these things out to the brothers,  
you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus,

These are important things to pass on

Timothy as a minister = deacon/servant

What service!  
For such a master!



# Proper 'education' – a healthy diet!

a good minister of Christ Jesus,  
brought up in the truths of the faith

The truths are good food for growth.  
They nurtured Timothy and they will nurture the people too.



# Teaching by example

brought up in the truths of the faith  
and of the good teaching that you have followed.

The teaching is not just head-learning.  
It is to be put into practice and then passed on.



# What's



## For Christian living

**Be aware of the dangers of deception**

**Be prepared for challenges**

**Walk by faith**

**Be thankful**