

# Growing in Godliness: A Reminder to Stand Strong in the Faith

1 Timothy 4:1-10

12/19/20

---

## WELCOME:

(1 minute)

## INTRO:

(3 minutes)

- **Illustration:** Spider-Man Quote
  - Uncle Ben says to Peter Parker (spider-man):
    - *“These are the years when a man changes into the man he’s going to become the rest of his life... Just be careful who you change into.”*
    - *“Remember, with great power, comes great responsibility.”*

## RECAP & CONTEXT:

(2 minutes)

- **Where we started:** Timothy to lead Church of Ephesus
  - Called to **PROCLAIM** the Gospel
  - Called to **GUARD** the Gospel
  - Called to **CELEBRATE** the Gospel
  - Called to **FIGHT** for the Gospel
- **Where we are going** (purpose for letter): Book Overview
  - Roles/function of men & women
  - Choosing Leadership (Qualifications)

- Reality of Spiritual Warfare
- **\*\*How Church is to point others towards Jesus\*\***
- **Where we are now: Current Situation**
  - Was just reminded who the Church is to *BE*
  - Now, we are warned of spiritual warfare to come
  - Demonic influence + False Teachers = real threat
  - Christians are to stand for & share truth w/ others
  - Called to pursue godliness & be Christ's hands/feet
  - **REMINDED** → Hope & peace come from Jesus
  - **WHY** → Because Jesus is LORD!
- **Sermon Title: "Growing in Godliness"**

**BIG IDEA:**

(1 minute)

- **Big Idea: Invest your life into becoming more like Jesus!**
  - We are made aware of the spiritual trials to come (**v.1-5**), and for this reason exhorted to grow in godliness, so we may avoid spiritual downfall, as well as help others avoid them and instead come to experience the hope found only in and through Jesus Christ (**v.6-10**).

**PRAY:**

(1 minute)

**READ:**

(1 minute)

- **Text: 1 Timothy 4:1-10**

***Now the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and the teachings of***

***demons, <sup>2</sup> through the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared.*** <sup>3</sup> They forbid marriage and demand abstinence from foods that God created to be received with gratitude by those who believe and know the truth. <sup>4</sup> For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, <sup>5</sup> since it is sanctified by the word of God and by prayer.

***<sup>6</sup> If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished by the words of the faith and the good teaching that you have followed. <sup>7</sup> But have nothing to do with pointless and silly myths. Rather, train yourself in godliness.*** <sup>8</sup> For the training of the body has limited benefit, ***but godliness is beneficial in every way***, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. <sup>9</sup> ***This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance.*** <sup>10</sup> ***For this reason we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.***

## PREVIEW:

(1 minute)

- **Main Points:**

- 1 – **Warnings to flee falsehoods (v.1-5)**
- 2 – **Exhortation to pursue godliness (v.6-8)**
- 3 – **Proclamation that Jesus is our hope (v.9-10)**

## PILLAR 1: Warnings to flee falsehoods

(10 minutes)

(v.1-5)

- Connecting past instruction to future situation
  - “Now” = a syntactical connector
    - B/c of “that” be aware of “this”
    - Past instruction impacts new understanding

- Past (instruction) = to BE the Church
  - **WHO** → God's people (Christians)
  - **WHAT** → Live as an example to the world
  - **1 Timothy 3:15** → "...as a pillar & foundation of the truth"
- Future (reality) = "In later times"
  - Some will depart faith & fall away
    - Not *situation, location, or person* specific
    - **BUT** → A general truth
  - How & Why people will depart from faith:
    - Pay attention to deceitful spirits
    - Pay attention to demon teachings
    - Through the hypocrisy of liars
    - B/c of their seared consciences

(v.1-2)

- Defining the Enemy
  - **WHO:**
    - Spirits
    - Demons
    - Liars (False Teachers)
  - **HOW:**
    - Spiritual → Deceitful teachings
    - Human → Hypocrisy, lies, & seared conscience

(v.3)

○ **WHAT:**

- Forbid marriage
- Demand abstinence from foods
  - That God created...
  - To be received w/ gratitude
  - By those who believe/know the Truth

(v.4-5)

○ **WHY** (this is an issue):

- **CONTEXT:** Pre-Gnosticism
  - Some believed creation was disassociated from the Creator God → created/ruled by a lesser divinity
  - Some believed creation was inherently bad
- (v.4) → God is good & so is His creation
  - Total opposite of **Genesis 1**
  - **Genesis 1:31** → *“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed. Evening came and then morning: the sixth day.”*
  - The word “Good” used x7 in Gen. 1
- (v.5) → God’s creation not to be rejected
  - Rather, respond w/ “thanksgiving”

- It is sanctified by Word of God + prayer
- Importance of recognizing spiritual warfare
  - **ILLUSTRATION:** Dealing w/ an addiction
    - You can't fix what you don't acknowledge
    - To get better requires first acknowledging the issue
    - Only after can you take steps to combat problem
    - **\*\*Paul makes clear, ignorance is NOT bliss**
  - Notice the order Paul gives in explaining the enemy
    - (1) Spiritual → Spirits & demons
    - (2) Human → Liars & False Teachers
    - Stems from the spiritual realm & humans perpetuate the problem
  - Hope + Warning → **Ephesians 6:10-12**

***<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens.***
  - Christians called to acknowledge the war taking place

- Christians are to fight the “schemes of the devil” by turning to the Lord
  - **REMEMBER** → Hate the sin, *BUT* love the sinner
- **APPLICATION:**
  - **Q:** Are you living as a hypocrite, liar, & one w/ a “seared conscience”?
  - **Q:** Or, are you putting on the armor of God & “**BE-ing**” His ambassador to the world?

## **PILLAR 2: Exhortation to pursue godliness**

(10 minutes)

(v.6-8)

- Connecting the warning to exhortation
  - Warning = A spiritual war is waging!
    - The war is real & involves people’s souls
    - **REMEMBER** → Paul warned Ephesian Elders for this purpose
    - **Acts 20:28-31** (*below*)

<sup>28</sup> **Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.** <sup>29</sup> *I know that after my departure **savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.*** <sup>30</sup> **Men will rise up even from your own number and distort**

*the truth to lure the disciples into following them. <sup>31</sup> Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for three years I never stopped warning each one of you with tears.*

- Exhortation (v.7) = Train yourself in godliness
  - Importance of knowing **the truth**
  - Importance of knowing **the Bible**
  - Importance of training yourself **in godliness**
  
- **CONTEXT:** Paul knew his audience & was direct
  - Paul wrote as a pastor to a pastor (Timothy)
  - Paul warned Ephesian Elders (pastors) as a pastor
  - **THEREFORE** → We must consider role of the pastor
    - **REMEMBER** → “Overseer” = pastor /elder
  - **BE-ing** a pastor requires pastoring
    - To LEAD
    - To TEACH
    - To GUIDE
    - To PROTECT
  - Paul does **NOT** water-down life/death warning!
  
- **ILLUSTRATION:** Scared Beyond Straight

- Bring troubled kids into jail
  - Kids are shown how bad situation is
  - Talk to prisoners who've been there/done it
  - Help open their eyes to seriousness & reality
  - Given help to stay on straight & narrow
- Preparing for new instruction
  - **\*\*Context matters b/c it explains why Paul warns of potential dangers & outlines signs/symptoms**
  - (v.1-5): Problem, Reason, Outcome, Explanation
    - **Problem** = People will depart from the faith
    - **Reason** = Good vs. Evil (spiritual war)
    - **Outcome** = Perverting of God's design/plan
    - **Explanation** = Who God is & what He says
  - (v.6-8): How to combat warnings & realities (v.1-3)
    - **Point Out** = make people aware of God's way & spiritual reality
      - Equates to BE-ing a "good servant"
      - **HOW:** 1. God's Word; 2. Teaching
    - **Avoid** = Nothing to do w/ myths
      - Same language in **1 Tim. 1:3-7**
    - **Train** = in Godliness
      - Invest yourself
      - Intentionally pursue
      - **WHAT** → Christlikeness
      - **\*\*This is the PURPOSE of passage**
- Why Instruction is Given

- (v.8): “Godliness is beneficial in every way”
  - **WHY #1:** “Since it holds promise **in *this* life**”
    - Godliness impacts our witness
    - Godliness impacts what we do
    - Godliness impacts how we do it
  - **WHY #2:** “It holds promise **in life to come**”
    - God looks at our actions on earth
    - **Matthew 16:27** → “*For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will reward each according to what he has done.*”
    - **2 Cor. 5:10** → “*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.*”
- Growing in godliness is more beneficial than growing in physical strength
  - Spiritual strength > physical strength
  - Physical strength has “*limited benefit*”
  - **ILLUSTRATION:** Navy SEALs
    - Explain who SEALs are/do
    - Retell my experience in San Diego

- SEALs ran in Coronado while I ate ice cream
- SEALs train physically to prepare for any/all fights
- **THEREFORE:** How much more value/effort should we invest in growing in godliness b/c reality of spiritual war?!
- **APPLICATION:**

### **PILLAR 3: Proclamation that Jesus is our hope**

(10 minutes)

(v.9-10)

- Explaining “why” Christians pursue godliness:
  - (v.10): “B/c we put our hope in the living God”
  - Defining where our hope is placed...
    - In the LIVING God
    - In the SAVIOR of *all* people
      - “Especially those who believe” = the Church
      - Reality of Heaven & Hell
      - Jesus is Lord regardless of one’s beliefs
      - **BUT** → Heaven awaits those who place hope in Him
  - It all points to Jesus!!!

- John 1:1,14,16-18

*1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, **the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.** <sup>16</sup> Indeed, we have all received grace upon grace from his fullness, <sup>17</sup> for the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.** <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. **The one and only Son, who is himself God and is at the Father's side—he has revealed him.***

- (v.9): “This saying is trustworthy & deserves full acceptance”
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> time Paul uses this phrase in 1 Timothy
  - Emphasizes importance of what's being said
  - **\*\*Gives *motivation* to pursue godliness**
  - **WHY** → Godliness does NOT just happen
  - **B/C** → Godliness requires intentionality
  - **ILLUSTRATION:** Weight Loss

- You can't wish weight off
- Must decide & act to lose it
- Called to "labor & strive"
  - **CONTEXT:** Zoom out for 30,000 ft view of letter
    - Paul wrote to pastors & called them to lead and care for God's people as PASTORS!
  - We learn shepherding people is hard work
    - The call to "oversee" God's people is a blessing...
    - **BUT** → Blessings can still include hardships
  - Paul uses phrase "*LABOR*" & "*STRIVE*" for a reason
    - **LABOR** = "*physical or mental work, especially of a hard or fatiguing kind*"
    - **STRIVE** = "*(1) make great efforts to achieve or obtain something; (2) struggle or fight vigorously*"
    - **\*\*Reminds Timothy to remain rooted to the faith, even when the going gets tough**
    - **ILLUSTRATION:** Dad as pastor
      - People think pastors only work Sundays
      - Dad was/is on call 24/7
      - I always wondered why he pastored
      - **BUT** → This text tells us "WHY"

- **B/C** → He put his hope in Jesus & was obedient to live for Him
- **Phil. 1:21** → *“For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”*

- **APPLICATION:**

- You may not be a pastor, BUT you are called as a Christian to be Christ’s ambassador to the world.
- **Q:** Therefore, are you “laboring and striving” to grow in godliness, as a Christ-like witness to the world?
- **Q:** Are you claiming Christ w/ your lips, but not truly living for Him with your actions?
- **Q:** Are you “trusting” and “fully accepting” of who Jesus is, and pursuing Him as a result?

**RESTATE MAIN POINTS & BIG IDEA:**

(3 minute)

- **Main Points:**

- 1 – **Warnings to flee falsehoods** (v.1-5)
- 2 – **Exhortation to pursue godliness** (v.6-8)
- 3 – **Proclamation that Jesus is our hope** (v.9-10)

- **Big Idea:**

- **\*\*Invest your life into becoming more like Jesus!\*\***

**CLOSE / PRAY:**

(1 minutes)