



SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie Riley

1 TIMOTHY WEEK 4

OPENING & PRAYER:

Paul sets the anchor with that tight confession at the end of chapter 3: "great is the mystery of godliness." God is manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. That core is nonnegotiable, and the text uses it to tee up the contrast in chapter 4. The Spirit says plainly that in the latter times some depart from that faith, not because the gospel gets fuzzy but because people start listening, believing, and then speaking lies, doctrines of demons, and deceiving spirits. The end of that road is a seared conscience that can't tell right from wrong, calling evil good and good evil. This is not mostly an information problem. It is spiritual at the root, demonic in origin, and it scrambles moral common sense.

"Father, please continue to bless our study as we jump into your Word. Guide our study time and lead us as we continue in 1 Timothy. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

SCRIPTURE:

These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. **1 Timothy 3:14-15**

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in Glory. **1 Timothy 3:16**

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, **1 Timothy 4:1-2**

forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing it to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. **1 Timothy 4:3-5**

If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. **1 Timothy 4:6-7**

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. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. **1 Timothy 4:8-9**

For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. These things command and teach. **1 Timothy 4:10-11**

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. **1 Timothy 4:12-13**

Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. **1 Timothy 4:14-15**

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. **1 Timothy 4:16**

Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity. **1 Timothy 5:1-2**

Honor widows who are really widows. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. **1 Timothy 5:3-4**

Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. **1 Timothy 5:5**

And these things command, that they may be blameless. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. **1 Timothy 5:7-8**

Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work. **1 Timothy 5:9-10**

But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith. And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not. **1 Timothy 5:11-13**

Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some have already turned aside after Satan. If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows. **1 Timothy 5:14-16**

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. **1 Timothy 5:17**

Let the elders (Overseers) who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages." **1 Timothy 5:17-18**

Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear. **1 Timothy 5:19-20**

I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure. **1 Timothy 5:21-22**

Blind A Leader From Doing What Is Right Without Partiality No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities. **1 Timothy 5:23**

Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later. Likewise, the good works of some are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden. **1 Timothy 5:24-25**

GO DEEPER:

Paul then names two loud sirens: forbidding marriage and commanding abstinence from foods God created to be received with thanksgiving. In Ephesus, meats were being offered to idols and the Judaizers were pushing dietary rules. But God had already called all foods clean. Personal diets are fine, but no diet saves. Salvation by menu or by restraint is just works with a religious shine. The blood of Jesus makes a person right with God, period.

Bodily exercise profits a little. Godliness profits for everything, and not just now but in the age to come. The living God is the Savior of all in provision, especially of those who believe in application, so Timothy is told to command and teach this without compromise. Let no one despise his youth. The young overseer is to be an example in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity, while giving attention to reading, exhortation, and doctrine. The gift in him, confirmed by prophecy and the laying on of hands, is to be stirred, not shelved. Take heed to himself and to the doctrine of 3:16, continue in it, and it will save both him and his hearers.

Chapter 5 brings the house in order. An older man gets exhortation like a father, younger men like brothers, older women like mothers, younger women like sisters with all purity. True widows, especially those over sixty with a godly track record, are honored and supported by the church. But children and grandchildren are to learn piety at home and repay their parents, so the house of God can focus on those truly alone. Younger widows should marry, bear children, manage a home, and give the enemy no handle for reproach. Elders who rule well, especially in word and doctrine,

are worthy of double honor, with accusations received only on the testimony of two or three witnesses, corrections handled without partiality, and leadership appointments not done in a hurry. Even the “little wine” counsel lands as practical wisdom in a place with bad water and pagan baggage, the kind of balanced, context-aware godliness Paul is after. In the end, sins and good works both come to light; better to make sure the fruit is the kind that can’t stay hidden.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Guard the gospel core convictions. The 3:16 confession is the plumb line that keeps everything else straight. When that center holds, drift in doctrine and practice gets exposed for what it is. Hold it, teach it, and let it set the boundaries for what counts as Christian faith and life. **[02:56]**

2. Deception is spiritual before rational. The pattern is “listening, believing, speaking” what deceiving spirits feed, which then burns the conscience numb. Arguments alone cannot cure what is spiritual at the root; discernment, repentance, and truth must confront the spirit behind the lie. Calibrate the conscience to Scripture so common sense isn’t sacrificed. **[07:55]**

3. Legalism on food and celibacy is demonic. Forbidding marriage and commanding diets as if they make a person holy is not holiness at all. In Ephesus that pressure mixed old law, idol feasts, and pride, but Christ already declared foods clean and made righteousness a gift. Diets and disciplines may be wise, but they cannot be a ladder to God. **[11:21]**

4. Godliness profits now and forever. Workouts help a little; training in godliness helps in everything, in this life and in the next. That long horizon keeps short-term pain and reproach in perspective. Trust the Savior of all, especially believers, by practicing what He commands rather than chasing what culture applauds. **[16:15]**

5. Family must honor parents and widows. Children and grandchildren repay their parents and lighten the church's load so true widows can be cared for deeply. Younger widows honor God by marrying and managing a house rather than drifting into idleness or reproach. Love looks like responsibility, not just sentiment. **[27:59]**

LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. In 1 Timothy 3:16, Paul lists six key truths about Jesus. What contrasts does he draw in 4:1-3 to warn against abandoning these truths?

According to the sermon, why is a leader's ability to manage their household emphasized as a qualification for church leadership?

2. The sermon mentions that deception starts with "listening, believing, and speaking lies" ([07:55]). How does this progression align with the warning in 1 Timothy 4:1 about "devoting themselves to deceitful spirits"?

3. The sermon warns against replacing grace with rules (e.g., diets or celibacy as holiness markers) ([11:21]). What habits or traditions in your life might unintentionally become a "ladder to God" instead of relying on Christ's sacrifice?

4. A "seared conscience" dulls moral clarity ([07:55]). What practices (e.g., Scripture, prayer, accountability) could help you keep your conscience sensitive to God's truth?

5. Timothy was told to lead by example in "word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity" (1 Tim 4:12). Which of these areas feels most challenging to model right now, and what step could you take to grow?

CLOSING PRAYER:

"Father, thank you for leading us through 1 Timothy. Be with us as we begin to show more grace to those around us. The same grace that Christ shows us, we will show to those around us. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."