

APPLICATION

This marvelous letter from Paul continues to challenge and bless us. Although this section is written primarily to Timothy and leaders in the church like Timothy, put yourself in his place for a moment.

How are you distracted from simple devotion to Christ alone?

What areas of your life and/or leadership are hypocritical?

Where do legalism and legalistic impulses appear in your life?

Are you of the opinion that certain denials and abstinences are best and individuals who disagree are of lesser status/intelligence?

Do you gratefully enjoy the freedom Christ affords inside of a life of holiness?

Are you consistently NOURISHED in God's Word and sound doctrine?
Do you lead well out of this nourishment?

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

Good Bible Study is step-by-step bible study. In order to arrive at a desired goal, we must go through systematic steps. We've discussed two of four steps: Observation, Interpretation, Correlation and Application.

Somewhere between Interpretation and Correlation is the hard work of understanding the passage within all of Scripture. A basic skill you must develop is probing (**cross-referencing**) words, phrases, characters, quotes and allusions to other passages of Scripture. This is almost always done intentionally by the author. A good student investigates why.

A Bible with cross references is a great place to start. Learn how to use this feature of your Bible (or get a Bible that has this feature) and start flipping pages. As you discover more background, this may require you to clarify your preliminary conclusions in interpretation.

HOW TO
STUDY
THE BIBLE

Look for a brand-new resource online under the *Messages* tab. Easily download, print or reference part 1 of ***How to Study the Bible***. It highlights and expands this important application.

FIRST TIMOTHY

4:1-6

JUNE 5, 2011

FIRST TIMOTHY 4:1-6

PROTECTIVE LEADERSHIP

FOR FURTHER STUDY

We are entering the third major section of Paul's letter to Timothy.

Section 1—The Message of the Church—Chapter 1

Section 2—The Members of the Church—Chapters 2-3

Section 3—The Ministers of the Church—Chapter 4

Section 4—The Ministries of the Church—Chapters 5-6

4:1—We are immediately met with an interesting question: Where does the Spirit “explicitly say” that some will fall away in later times?

This is most likely an allusion to Jesus himself. See **Matthew 24; Mark 13**.

Notice that a reference to “doctrine” bookends this section. “Doctrine of demons” in **verse 1** and then “sound doctrine” in **verse 6**. It describes a battle of the mind in which the leader's role is crucial.

4:2-3a—Paul describes some people's blindness to the truth like a scar, a mark from a branding iron, cauterized and senseless. This is not easily removed or overcome. This leads to specific denial intended to please God called *asceticism*. Notice that Paul says asceticism and legalism can be counterproductive and harmful to a one's journey in godliness.

How does Paul describe those that “fall away” and their teaching?
Can you come up with seven or eight characteristics he gives in **v.1-3**?

4:3b-5—Paul now contrasts this errant teaching to the Truth. God has created all things to be received with gladness and thanksgiving. Marriage is joy. Eating can be worshipful. Those who are mature in God and the Scriptures are free to enjoy all good things. (The language used is careful to exclude sinful indulgence, license, or anything evil and wicked.)

How are these good things sanctified (or made holy) by the Word and prayer?

This statement is actually a summarizing declaration. These things *are* holy because God has created them. This is true objectively, by God's word. This is also true in subjective experience, by prayer and thanksgiving. God communicated this truth and our grateful and prayerful attitude receives it. This statement is really beautiful.

4:6—This is actually one of the central verses of this entire section. This is good ministry leadership. This is what a good pastor does. He nourishes his own soul on God and then protects those whom he leads. Both must be in play. Only one or the other will inevitably produce problems.

For more background and helps on First Timothy, go to our site faithbibleonline.org under the *Messages* tab for the **First Timothy Tool Kit**. Open an easy PDF and you are on your way.

