

Message #25

I Timothy 4:1-5

Most people who are demonic don't wear black robes and sacrifice humans and drink blood. Most people who are demonic go to church and are religious. As we near the end, this demonic invasion of the church will intensify and Paul wanted Timothy and all leaders of the church to realize this point.

AS THE CHURCH AGE REACHES ITS LATTER STAGES, SOME PEOPLE OF THE CHURCH WILL DEMONICALLY DEGENERATE AND DEFECT AND DEPART FROM THE TRUE REVELATION OF GOD.

As we near the end, there will be people who will not want to hear the whole counsel of God. They will want bits and pieces, but not the whole truth. These people will be led by demons and God's Spirit.

PART #1 – The Spirit's inspiration. 4:1a

Let us observe that this verse begins with the conjunction “But.” This is a sharp, contrasting conjunction which grammatically signals to us that in contrast to the church becoming a pillar and support of the truth with a total focus on the finished work of Jesus Christ, demons are going to fight against the church becoming all God wants it to become.

The words “explicitly says” are words that indicate the Holy Spirit is specifically stating, in expressed language, just exactly what will happen in the church. The “later times” refers to the later times of the Church Age. In other words, God's Spirit is specifically revealing that as we get later in the Church Age, we will see some people in the church fall away from the faith.

The idea behind “falling away from the faith” is the idea of making a purposeful and deliberate choice to withdraw oneself from the church, which is focused on the truth of the faith system. Let me state it another way. As we get into the later stages of the Church Age, more and more people will be drawn away from the truth of the faith system and will be demonically drawn into works systems.

PART #2 – The demonic invasion. 4:1b

Demons will invade the church through people, who will be led by deceitful spirits into believing demonic doctrines.

We must learn a very important lesson here—people who are led into false doctrine and false religion are led by demons. Dr. Duane Litfin made an interesting observation when he said, “spiritual error is seldom due to an innocent mistake, but due to demons” (p. 739). In other words, people who are lured into believing false things are influenced by demons.

PART #3 – The demonic identification. 4:2-5

We may recall that the Apostle John says we are to “test the spirits” (I John 4:1). What this means is we are to test people to see whether or not what they are saying squares with the Word of God. Now what do we look for as we get into the later times? What are some keys to determining whether or not we are facing Satan?

There are certain marks that identify one who is being seduced by Satan—three are given here:

Mark #1 - A person being swayed by demons will be a hypocritical liar whose conscience doesn't convict him. **4:2**

The word “hypocrisy” is a Greek word for a play actor or stage actor (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 461). What Paul is saying is one who is being controlled by demons is one who will play act that they are right with God, but it will really be a lie—they aren't. This type of person has a conscience that is so seared it no longer feels remorse or guilt like most people who stretch the truth (Rom. 2:14-15). One who is being influenced by demons can pretend to be the most spiritual person in the world and lie to your face and never have it faze them. Their conscience is shut down and they are under the influence of demons.

Mark #2 - A person being swayed by demons will be a legalist who believes things based on partial truth. **4:3a**

Paul used two issues that were surfacing during his day and have surfaced even during our day to illustrate demonically based legalism. This kind of legalism is that which suggest, by implication, that Jesus Christ is not really enough to make you right with God and completely righteous, so His work needs to be helped out by your work. Specifically, marriage and food were two illustrations in Paul's day.

Now there is nothing wrong with remaining single. In fact, Paul says that it is a real ideal for serving God (I Cor. 7:25-35). Also there is nothing wrong with fasting—abstaining from foods for a time. There are certain times and occasions when it is right and biblical (Matt. 6:16-17; 9:14-15). But a legalist tries to convince people that a greater level of righteousness or spirituality can be attained by such acts. The implication being Jesus Christ is not really enough to give you a complete standing so you need your own legalistic works system. Such thinking is demonic. Jesus Christ is enough and in Him we are complete. Dietary codes are gone and we are complete in Christ (Col. 2:10; 16-17).

There is a key to spotting the demonic legalist—the end of verse 3—“know the truth.” Know the truth of God and believe the truth of God and we can withstand any satanic assault.

Notice how a legalist does have partial truth, but not all the truth. Demonic people know about the Bible, at least certain concepts from the Bible; but they do not accept the full counsel of God. They are not sound or stable.

Mark #3 - A person being swayed by demons will be one who will reject the truth of God.

4:3-5

Continuing in the illustration of food, Paul makes a very important point: God has created everything to be gratefully shared by those who believe and know the truth, and everything God created is good and is sanctified by the Word of God and by prayer.

Those who are demonic reject the Word of God. They may know the truth, but deep in their hearts they do not believe the truth.

People being controlled by demons are people in the church who know some truth but do not accept or know all truth. In fact, the word “know” is knowledge-upon-knowledge, a deep, full knowledge. They have their own religious way of thinking and nothing, not even the truth of God is going to change them.

As we near the later times, more and more people will fall away from a church that is focused on the truth of God and on sound doctrine, because of demons. This should not shock or surprise us.