

1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; 4:3-4

Hymns: #43 In The Garden (BGCS)

- 1) **1 TIMOTHY 4:1-3** *“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”*
- a) The first thing we notice is that Paul is emphatic about the source of what he is about to say. It is not his idea or opinion or prognosticating. It is the Holy Spirit who is about to speak and what He says, he says so “clearly”; lit. ῥητῶς- rhétós, meaning explicitly, expressly.
- i) Paul may have been referring to the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 13 where the trajectory of Christendom is “clearly” downward; or in Mark 13:22-23 where Jesus said “For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect--if that were possible. So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.”
- ii) But Paul may also have been referring to a specific revelation given to him by the Spirit.
- iii) Either way, it is the Holy Spirit who has here explicitly and expressly spoken in Scripture to the fact.
- b) **“in latter times”** is synonymous with Paul’s words in 2 Tim 3:1 where he speaks about “the last days”
- i) Though there were hypocritical liars in his days and some had abandoned “the faith”, he has a distant future time frame in mind.
- ii) Though many generations of people must surely have felt they were in the “last days”; we have the “super prophetic sign” which they did not. We have seen Israel return to the Land.
- iii) This, coupled with the very events and characteristics Paul and Peter describe, I think we can safely conclude that we are living in the “latter times”.
- c) **“some will abandon the faith”**...that is they will apostatise; and depart from the faith. This is not a reference to the personal faith of salvation, but to “the faith”; that is the true “Christian faith”, the “body of truth” about Jesus and His salvific work.
- d) **“follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.”** Here we see two sources or voices of doctrinal error that some people will follow, giving their heed and attention to.
- i) First, “deceitful spirits” - lit πλάνοις πνεύμασιν; planois means wandering, roving; misleading, leading into error; a deceiver, trying to get others to also veer off God's course. These are the cohort of Satan’s “fallen angels” actively engaged to deceive.
- ii) Second, “things taught by demons”; lit the “doctrines of demons”. These teachings come from demons. These are distinct from angels, and probably refer to the disembodied spirits and the dead offspring of the illicit union between the “sons of God and the daughters of Adam” in Genesis 6.
- (1) Theses doctrines of demons “are again referred to in Rev. 2:24 as the “deep things of Satan”, and this is Satan’s counterfeit to the “deep things of God” which the Spirit reveals to them that love Him” 1 Cor. 2:10¹
- iii) These people do not give heed to the “Apostolic Voice, the Divine Voice or The Prophetic Voice”.

¹ Lewis Sperry Chafer; *Systematic Theology- Vol. II Angelology, Anthropology; DSP; 1947; p. 106*

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- e) **“Such teachings come through hypocritical liars,”** –spirits and demons largely conduct the spread of their deceit and doctrine through men who are “hypocritical liars”.
- i) Hypocritical- literally refers to "someone acting under a mask," and implies a specific application or type of hypocrisy. What you see is not what you get.
 - ii) Liars- ψευδολόγων is a person passing on false conclusions because they're working with false premises (used only in 1 Tim 4:2); ie: they have turned away from the truth and no longer “will put up with sound doctrine” and are listening to deceiving spirits and demons instead.
 - iii) “A lie covered by hypocrisy means, evidently, that they are still attempting to be counted among the faithful”.² They still want to be seen as orthodox Christians and in the fold.
- f) **“whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron”**- seared here is καυτηριάζω- from which we get the English word “cauterize”; it means branding a person like cattle, with a red-hot iron which sears the flesh and deadens the nerves endings so they no longer feel conviction of their sin.
- i) “This is Satan’s standard operating procedure. He selects representatives and renders their consciences beyond feeling. In this condition they are ready to do Satan’s bidding.”³ “...and the conscience seared would indicate that they can distort the testimony of God and blindly point other souls to perdition, without present remorse or regret.”⁴
 - ii) Let us not forget, “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, **masquerading as apostles of Christ**. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. **IT IS NOT SURPRISING, THEN, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness**. Their end will be what their actions deserve. (2 Cor. 11:13-15).
- g) **“They forbid people to marry”**. The yanking of things to ungodly extremes is right out of the play book of the doctrines of demons. In Paul’s day, the extreme was the dualism of Gnosticism which said everything spirit is good and everything of matter is evil. Subsequently, they taught that all bodily appetites were evil, including the right and normal desires for sex and food.
- i) Today, it appears as if their strategy is to yank things all the way back to the opposite extreme where everything Spirit is evil and everything bodily is good. The cultural moment with SSM and LGBTI agendas perfectly illustrate the same doctrine of demons.
- 2) **2 TIMOTHY. 3:1-7** *“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them. They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth--men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected.”*

² Lewis Sperry Chafer; *Systematic Theology- Vol. II Angelology, Anthropology; DSP; 1947; p. 106*

³ A. Duane Litfin; *The Bible Knowledge Commentary; Dallas Theological Seminary; Victor Books, 1983; p. 739*

⁴ Lewis Sperry Chafer; *Systematic Theology- Vol. II Angelology, Anthropology; DSP; 1947; p. 106*

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- a) **“There will be terrible times in the last days”** lit. χαλεποί- chalepoi times, meaning (just think of each of these words) grievous; savage; perilous; dangerous times in the last days.
- i) This word is only used two times in the NT and its other use gives us insight into the kind of days Paul has in mind here:
- (1) “When he (Jesus) arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two **demon-possessed men** coming from the tombs met him. They were so **violent (lit. χαλεποί- chalepoi)** that no one could pass that way.” What do you want with us, Son of God?” they shouted. “Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?” Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. The **demons** begged Jesus, “If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.” He said to them, “Go!” So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water.” (Matt. 8:28-32)
- (a) To paraphrase Paul here, we could say: “But mark this, there are going to be **ragingly insane and demon possessed times in the last days”**
- b) In this passage we see 19 degenerate societal characteristics that will mark the last days:
- i) We see that **people will be lovers**. But lovers of what?
- (1) **Self**- rather than God. Selfies and selfie sticks says it all; self-centred and narcissistic.
- (2) **Money**-rather than God. Lit. lovers of silver
- (3) **Pleasure**- rather than God. This is love of hedonistic sensual pleasure.
- ii) **“boastful”** meaning “a wandering vagrant (vagabond), boasting to anyone who is foolish enough to take him seriously. This kind of person claims many things he can't really do, so he must always keep moving on to new, naive listeners.”⁵
- iii) **“proud”** - hyperéphanos -hypér, “beyond, over” and phainō, “shine forth”) – properly, over-shine⁵
- iv) **“abusive”**- lit. bláspḗmos – what is blasphemous reverses spiritual and moral realities⁵
- v) **“disobedient to their parents”**- lit. ἀπειθής- meaning unpersuadable, uncompliant⁶. Just stop and think about how the gender fluidity, gay marriage and other unbiblical agendas associated with the Safe Schools Program are going to make this element even more pronounced. Kids will no longer be persuaded by or compliant to parents who oppose this because everything around them, in the world and in their schools, tells them their parents are wrong.
- vi) **“ungrateful”**- thankless; “axáristos”- derived from A “not” and xarízomai, “experiencing grace” – properly, without God's grace (favor) which results in unthankfulness (literally, “ungraceful”).⁵
- vii) **“unholy”** - “without” and hósios,- “reverence for what should be hallowed” – properly, utter disregard of what is sacred, i.e. wilful (arrogant) disrespect of the things of God; “impious; wicked”.⁵
- viii) **“without love”**- “astorgoi is translated “heartless” in Rom.1:31 and the only other place its used in the NT.”⁷
- ix) **“unforgiving”**- “áspondos - unable to please (placate) someone; implacable.”⁵
- x) **“slanderous”**- diábolos is the same word we translate as devil; one is never closer to the devil in name than when he is a slanderer; diabállō, “to slander, accuse, defame” – properly, a slanderer; a false accuser; unjustly criticizing to hurt (malign) and condemn to sever a relationship⁵

⁵ HELPS Word Studies; copyright © 1987, 2011 by Helps Ministries, Inc

⁶ THAYER'S GREEK LEXICON, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2002, 2003, 2006, 2011 by BibleSoft, Inc

⁷ A. Duane Litfin; The Bible Knowledge Commentary; Dallas Theological Seminary; Victor Books, 1983; p. 756

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- xi) “**without self-control**”- intemperate
 - xii) “**brutal**” lit. not tame⁸; savage
 - xiii) “**not lovers of the good**”- a hater of good describing someone who is hostile to the things of God – i.e. an active opponent (enemy) of God's kingdom (good).⁵
 - xiv) “**treacherous**”- aggressively disposed towards betrayal⁷
 - xv) “**rash**”- aggressively impulsive, rash, reckless⁹
 - xvi) “**conceited**”- lit. puffed up¹⁰
- c) “**having a form of godliness but denying its power.**”
- i) The most shocking and difficult thing to come to grips with in this passage is that all these ragingly insane characteristics Paul has just described exist in a form. The point of Paul's warning is that these traits are NOT “amorphous” or without a form or structure. To the contrary, they will exist in a form or structure of godliness!
 - ii) These traits at both the individual and the corporate level can and will have a form of godly piety; an outward demonstration of respect and devotion to God, under the surface of which all these 19 traits exist.
 - iii) But in reality, they deny the “power” of godliness. Two passages give us some clarity about exactly what it is they deny.
 - (1) Rom. 1:16 “I am not ashamed of **the gospel**, because it is **the power** of God for the salvation of everyone who believes”
 - (2) 1 Cor. 1:23-24 “...but we **preach Christ crucified**: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ **the power** of God and the wisdom of God.
 - (a) We see that what is carefully omitted in this form of godliness is an unashamed presentation of the good news of Jesus Christ as God's provided righteousness for a spiritually dead sinner and the clarion call to receive it by faith in Jesus Christ alone.
 - (b) We also see that they carefully omit proclaiming God's method which is The Cross and the Blood. In other words, the vicarious humanity of Jesus Christ crucified for all humanity and the propitiating, atoning Life Blood poured out as the only means of salvation.
 - (c) “The denial falls not on the person of Christ but on his work”...
 - (i) “Their gospel is one of human reason and appeals to human resources...they are usually sincere and full of humanitarian zeal; but unregenerate.”¹¹
- d) “**have nothing to do with them**” Lit. from these, turn away
 - i) Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of Dallas Theological Seminary wrote in 1947: “As certainly as the last days are now present, so certainly this injunction is now to be heeded, and the Lord's people are called upon to separate from churches and institutions which deny the gospel of God's saving grace through the substitutionary blood-redemption of the cross. To support ministries which “deny the power thereof,” is to lend aid to Satan- the enemy of God.”

⁸ Strong's Concordance #434

⁹ Strong's Concordance #4312

¹⁰ Strong's Concordance #5187

¹¹ Lewis Sperry Chafer; *Systematic Theology- Vol. II Angelology, Anthropology; DSP; 1947; p. 106-109*

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- (1) I must confess, there have been times when I have not been as clear, attentive and obedient about this I should have been and too my shame, time has been squandered and God's enemies aided.
- (2) Biblical separation is just that, it's Biblical. Paul urges us to "pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 2 Tim. 2:22
- e) **V. 6** "They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth--men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected."
 - i) "They" here, are the false teachers who know how to identify the vulnerable and the gullible. In Ephesus they had gained control over women "who were literally, 'heaped with sin and fed by various lusts'...Their carnality and immaturity rendered them easy targets for the false teachers. Out of a so called 'openness to learn' they evidently embraced as a fad whatever new heresy came along. Their problem was that they could not recognize the truth when they saw it."¹²
 - (1) In other words their "religious learning" was their form of godliness, but the truth they could never acknowledge was their true wretchedness as sinners and faith in Jesus Christ as their only remedy. As Titus 1:16 says, "They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny Him."
 - ii) Jannes and Jambres were Pharaoh's court magicians who counterfeited the signs Moses and Aaron presented before him.
- 3) **2 TIMOTHY. 4:3-4** "For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."
 - a) "men will not put up with sound doctrine"
 - i) Listen to Chafer again: "Great religious activities are possible without coming into complication with saving faith. It is possible to fight against sin and not present the Saviour, or to urge the highest Scriptural ideas and yet offer no reasonable way of attainment. There is a strange fascination about these undertakings which are humanitarian and are religious only in form and title. **And there is a strange attractiveness in the leader who announces that he is not concerned with the doctrines of the Bible, because the helping of humanity is his one passion and care;** yet all his passion is lost and his care is to no real end unless coupled with a very positive message of a particular way of salvation, the true understanding of which demand a series of most careful distinctions."¹³
 - (1) I can think of a no more local or recent example of this than the 2012 book titled "Five Uneasy Pieces- Essays on Scripture and Sexuality". In this book, some of Australia's leading lights in both Christendom and the world, so twisted and distorted the Word of God with their "plastic words" that they made the Bible out to support homosexuality and same-sex marriage. The eight contributors to this book

¹² A. Duane Litfin; *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*; Dallas Theological Seminary; Victor Books, 1983; p. 756

¹³ Lewis Sperry Chafer; *Systematic Theology- Vol. II Angelology, Anthropology; DSP; 1947; p. 110*

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simply would “not put up with sound doctrine” anymore. Sadly, “*Five Uneasy Pieces*” had become enshrined as doctrine within the many who are following these masquerading servants of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:14-15). This book and its authors are exactly the kind of teachers Paul is referring to here.

- (2) Many have turned their itching ears away from the truth and are listening to these deceivers because they will tell them what they want to hear. The lies being taught “suit their own desires”.
 - (3) We are living in the times Paul spoke of.
- ii) I close with the thoughts of Lewis Sperry Chafer from the Preface to his 8 Volume, 1947 Systematic Theology which for decades was the actual curriculum for students at Dallas Theological Seminary. Men like David Jeremiah, Chuck Swindoll, J Vernon McGee and John Walvoord are just a few of those who sat under this curriculum.
- (1) “Systematic Theology, the greatest of the sciences, has fallen upon hard evil days. Between the rejection and ridicule of it by the so-called progressives and the neglect and abridgement of it by the orthodox, it, as potent influence, is approaching the point of extinction...The unchanging emphasis in the Scriptures upon doctrine, which subject is referred to in the New Testament more than forty times and is that to which the Christian is to “take heed”, stands as a silent rebuke, whether heeded or not, to all modern notions which belittle the importance of Dogmatic Theology, and also stands as a corrective to those who neglect any portion of it. It is no secret that the average minister is not now reading Systematic Theology, nor will such writings be found to occupy a prominent place in his library...The present situation is not one of passing moment. As well might a medical doctor discard his books on anatomy and therapeutics as for the preacher to discard his books on Systematic Theology; and since doctrine is the bone structure of the body of revealed truth, the neglect of it must result in a message characterized by uncertainties, inaccuracies and immaturity...It is a short step indeed from the ignorance of doctrine to the rejection and ridicule of it, and it can safely be stated that there is no rejection of sound doctrine which is not based on ignorance.”¹⁴

May the Lord give us all ears to hear and wills to obey, taking heed and action where we must as His disciples. Amen!

¹⁴ Lewis Sperry Chafer; *Systematic Theology- Vol. I Prolegomena-Bibliology-Theology Proper; DSP; 1947; p. v-viii*