



Welcome!

Welcome to the "Dig Deep" Bible studies. These studies are based on the message series, "Inside the Pastor's Mind," a study on the New Testament book of 1 Timothy. These short Bible studies are meant to help you take Sunday's message home and reflect on it throughout the week and apply it to your daily life. If you missed a message, or want to listen to it again, go to www.fishersoffamily.org and click on the "Media" link and download the message audio. We pray that you are blessed in your study of Scripture!

Read 1 Timothy 4:1-16

Pastor Zach began his message by talking about some of the dangerous lies that deceiving spirits will seek to spread, causing some to "abandon the faith" (verse 1). The Greek verb behind the phrase "abandon the faith" is *apostesontai*, from whence we get our word "apostasy." Some Christians teach that once a person is saved by Jesus, they can never lose their salvation. What does this verse 1 seem to indicate about whether or not this is true? Does this mean that we should be worried about losing our salvation (Romans 8:38-39)?

Note that although these dangerous lies originate with spirits (verse 1), they are mediated through people (verse 2). Note some people who have taught dangerous spiritual lies. How does Paul's warning encourage us to be discerning when it comes to the spiritual teaching that we receive? What are some things you can do to guard yourself against false teaching?

The false teaching that Paul confronts in verse 3 is legalism. Pastor Zach mentioned that a first century group called the Gnostics often forbade people to marry while another group called the Judaizers maintained rigid dietary restrictions as outlined in the Old Testament, even though these restrictions were later abrogated by Christ. What forms of legalism do we struggle with today?

Although the false teaching in verse 3 centered on legalism, others go to the opposite extreme and promote libertinism. That is, you can do whatever you want whenever you want. How does Paul confront this heresy in 1 Corinthians 10:23-24? In a culture that puts such a high premium on individual rights, what are some of the ways that we fall pray to a libertine attitude?

Although Paul attacks both a legalist and libertine use of God's gifts, what does he say about the gifts of God themselves in verse 4? From where does he derive this attitude (Genesis 1:31)? How, then, would you evaluate this definition of sin: Sin is taking the best gifts of God and misusing them in the worst way? What are some ways that you misuse God's gifts?

In order to properly receive God's gifts in neither a legalistic or libertine way, we are to consecrate them "by the word of God and prayer" (verse 5). Explain how you could properly receive each of these below gifts, steering clear of legalism or libertinism, and using both God's Word and prayer to guide your use of these gifts:

- Sex
- Having an alcoholic drink
- A new job
- Going out with non-Christians to a party
- Money

Because God has given us so many wonderful gifts, Paul calls us to "point them out to others" in verse 6. Pastor Zach mentioned that the Greek word for "point them out" is *upotithemi*, which means literally "to place before." In other words, we are to place the gifts of God before others in attractive and gracious ways. What are some gifts that God has given you that you can place before others? What is the most important divine gift that we can place before others? If we place divine gifts such as donations for the poor, food for the hungry, and compassion for the hurting in front of those who need it, but never place the "truths of the faith" (verse 6, i.e., the gospel) in front of these same people, are we living up to our calling as Christians? What are some different circumstances in which you could place the gospel before another person?