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Departure From The Faith

1Tim. 4:1

The apostle Paul has demonstrated a progressive development in his letter to Timothy, one thing built upon another.

- I.** In chapter one we saw the proclamation of truth in order to prevent and stop false doctrine.
- II.** In chapter two we saw the preparation for the proclamation of truth by prayer and piety.
- III.** In chapter three we saw the personal qualifications of church offices for bishops, deacons and deaconess.

In chapter four we are going to see the perversion of truth by deception through false doctrine verses godly doctrine. The first five verses are one complete unit regarding apostasy in the latter times.

- I.** The proclamation of apostasy. Vs. 1
- II.** The particulars of apostasy. Vs. 2-3b
- III.** The problem of apostasy. Vs. 3b-5

The fourth chapter is in direct contrast to the mystery of godliness just proclaimed at the end of chapter three, instead of living in obedience to the word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit

in order to manifest godliness, people were departing from the faith obeying seducing spirits and doctrines of devils manifesting the Satanic nature of the attack on godliness.

We want to look at only the proclamation of apostasy which reveals to us three things. 1Tim. 4:1

- I.** The person revealing the apostasy. Vs.1a
- II.** The period and people affected by the apostasy. Vs. 1a
- III.** The perversion in the apostasy. Vs. 1b

I. The person revealing the apostasy.

* “Now the Spirit expressly says”. Vs.1a

A. The Spirit is the third person of the trinity.

* The word now “de” would be better translated “but” revealing the obvious contrast between godliness through the Spirit of God and ungodliness through the spirit of deceiving spirits.

1. He is referred to with a personal pronoun, “He”.
2. He can guide.
3. He can speak.
4. He can be grieved.
5. He can be lied to.
6. He can direct.
7. He can know, understand and possess wisdom.

B. The Spirit is the One continuing the ministry and work of Jesus in His absence.

1. Jesus called Him another comforter, meaning another of the same kind as He. Jn. 14:16
2. Jesus called Him the Spirit of Truth who dwells in the believer. Jn. 14:17
3. Jesus said He would not come unless Jesus Himself went away. Jn. 16:7
4. Jesus said He would not speak of His own authority but only what He would. Jn. 16:13
5. Jesus said He would not glorify Himself but Jesus. Jn. 16:14
6. Jesus said He would bring all things to their remembrance and teach the believer. Jn. 14:26
7. Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem so they could receive the Holy Spirit and be empowered for service. Lk. 24:49, Acts 1:8

C. The Spirit is the agent of clear communication.

1. The word expressly “retos” means distinctly in specific terms, He reveals things that are understood clearly, plainly and unmistakably.
 - a. The word is used in this form only one time in the New Testament.

- b. The root word “reo” means “that which was spoken” and is translated “orator” one time regarding Tertullus the lawyer who accused Paul at Caesarea. Acts 24:1
2. The phrase appears only one time in the New Testament.
 - a. It is not found in the Old Testament.
 - b. It is not in reference to the words of Jesus.
3. The words being clearly spoken by the Holy Spirit and were now being illuminated at the time of its fulfillment. 1Pet. 1:10-12
4. The person of the Holy Spirit speaks through men through prophecy as one of the gifts of the Spirit. Rom. 12:6
 - a. The Spirit uses prophecy in four ways.
 - 1) For edification. 1Cor. 14:3
 - 2) For exhortation. “ “ “
 - 3) For comfort. “ “ “
 - 4) For revealing future events, the mind, will and deep things of God. Duet. 18:22, 1Cor. 2:9-10

* The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Rev. 19:10g
 - b. The Holy Spirit called out Paul and Barnabas to the work of the Gentiles. Acts 13:2

- c. The Holy Spirit was the leading spokesman in the first church council. Acts 15:28
- d. The Holy Spirit spoke through Agabus the prophet about Paul's imprisonment at Jerusalem. Acts 21:10-11
- e. The Holy Spirit spoke through men so that they would be infallible and inerrant as they were carried along by the Spirit insuring the source and content of the message to be of God and not man's own impulses, called inspiration. 2Pet. 1:20-21
- f. The Spirit spoke God's word as breathed out from Him revealing God's divine will and mind to be recorded, called revelation. 2Tim. 3:16-17
- g. The Spirit makes the revelation of God alive and understandable to man, called illumination. 1Cor. 2:12-16
* The believer is not to despise prophecy. 1Thess. 5:20

Illustration

The Holy Spirit wanting to get the will and work of God done forbade Paul to preach the word in Asia or Bithynia and gave him a vision of a man from Macedonia to come and help and brought them to Philippi. Acts 16:6-10

Application

1. The Holy Spirit speaks to each believer every day to bring understanding in the deep things of God to guide and direct their lives. 1Cor. 2:10
2. The present work that God is doing in His church is by the person of the Holy Spirit and He adds to the church such as are being saved by Him. Acts 2:47
3. The Holy Spirit speaks to His church through the gift of prophecy through the preaching and teaching of the word of God. 1Cor. 14:3
4. The Holy Spirit speak as clear today as He did in the days of the early church through His word, making His word alive and relevant for the need of our day bringing conviction to the believer's life or giving clear understanding as to what is spiritual error. Heb. 4:12

The person revealing the apostasy is God the Holy Spirit!

II. The period affected by the apostasy.

* "That in the latter times some will depart from the faith". Vs. 1a

- A. The phrase "latter times" is found only once in the New Testament, as well as in the Old Testament. Dan. 8:23
 1. The word latter "husteros" means that which comes after.

- a. The word times “karios” means season, segment or epoch.
- b. The phrase means the seasons that will come after, it is in the plural, they will occur from time to time.
- 2. This departure is the occasional season occurring from time to time throughout the last days, known as “the latter times”, a willful turning away from the truth of the Gospel.
 - a. This is not referring to the great apostasy just before the Lord's return for His church but occasional departures that would and have taken place from time to time. 2Thess. 2:3
 - b. The article is found in Second Thessalonians identifying it as “*the apostasy of all apostasies*”, while the departure here in Timothy has no article, it is just one of many to come that will climax in the final apostasy.
- 3. The message of John was that it was already the last hour and the Antichrist was coming but even then many antichrists had come already, by which they knew it was the last hour. 1Jn. 2:18
- B.** The phrase is different and distinct from the phrase “The last days” which encompasses the period from the first coming of the Lord Jesus to His second coming.

- 1. The last days cover the time between Pentecost and the return of Jesus after the seven year Tribulation. Acts 2:16-21
- 2. The last days are marked as perilous or irreconcilable times because of self-love, self-pleasure and self-absorption. 2Tim. 3:1-5
- 3. The last days are declared to be the period of time which God has chosen to speak to man by His Son Christ Jesus. Heb. 1:2
- 4. The last days will be occupied with scoffers of the Gospel message. 2Pet. 3:3-4
- 5. The last days will have mockers in the “last time” who will walk according to their own ungodly lust. Jude 1:18
* The word for time is “chronos”, at the end of the last days.
- C.** The phrase applies to people affected by the apostasy.
 - 1. The people are identified by the word “some” it is a key word to the epistle, appearing fifteen times.
 - a. The word is used for the false teachers. 1Tim. 1:3, 5:24
 - b. The word is used for those seeking the office of an a bishop. 1Tim. 3:1, 5

- c. The word is used for those who have strayed from the faith. 1Tim. 1:6, 4:1, 5:15, 6:21
- 2. The proclamation is that some will depart from the faith.
 - a. The word depart “aphisteemi” means to remove, to desist, to desert, to draw away or withdraw oneself from a place of abiding.
 - 1) It is used of Satan after he tempted the Lord in the wilderness, “he departed from Him for a season”. Lk. 4:13
 - 2) It is used of one Judas of Galilee who drew away many after himself in the day of the census. Acts 5:37
 - 3) It is used of John-Marks departure from Paul and Barnabas in the mission field. Acts 15:38
 - * The basic meaning is to stand or walk away from something or place you have been, the context determines if it refers to good or evil.
 - b. The faith is in reference to the objective truth of the Gospel and the Scriptures, Christianity.
 - 1) God’s Divine revelation to redeem lost man from his lost condition!
 - 2) The heresy had come from within the church leadership as Paul prophesied. Acts 20:28-29

- D. The phrase “some will depart from the faith” creates a problem with some from the human perspective in their unbalanced understanding of what is called “eternal security” by five point Calvinist.
 - 1. The departure from the faith is the outcome of the exercise of one’s own free will to choose. Josh. 24:15
 - * A valid and necessary Biblical doctrine.
 - 2. The Scriptures are very clear that some who appear to depart were never of the faith in the first place. 1Jn. 2:18-19
 - a. This is always an absolute possibility when someone departs from the faith but not the only one.
 - b. There are three groups indicated, the faithful believers, those who now departed from the faith and the false teachers.
 - 3. The Scriptures are equally clear that there are some that do depart or stray from the faith having known the truth.
 - a. Paul says Hymenaeus and Alexander made shipwreck of the faith and delivered them over to Satan that they learn not to blaspheme, to be shipwrecked you have to be in the ship, he didn't say they were never of us. 1Tim. 1:19-20

- * In fact Paul's deliverance of both men over to Satan was in view of restoration as much as the young man who was sleeping with his step-mother at Corinth, treating him as one saved!
- b. Paul again names Hymenaeus and one Philletus saying that they had strayed from the truth saying that the resurrection had passed already and overthrowing the faith of some. 2Tim 2:17-18
- c. Paul names one more individual Demas who forsook Paul having loved this present world. 2Tim. 4:10

Illustration

Who would dare to say that a child was never born if the child died before birth or at any stage of development unable to reach adulthood, so it is presumptuous to declare that one was born-again or not after falling away, God is the only one who knows.

* Our responsibility is to call them to repentance!

Application

1. The seeming contradiction and irreconcilable differences between God's predestination and man's free will, should never cause us to exclude both truths of the Scriptures, nor lead us to the practice of stacking the scriptures in favor of one

side at the expense of the other, because a delicate balance is subject to God's unique attribute of *forknowledge* which no man possesses.

- a. Jesus said, "And the **servant who knew** his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he, **who did not know**, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more." Lk. 12:47-48

* The focus is on man's free-will!

- b. Jesus said. "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand." Jn. 10:27-29

* The focus is on God's ability protect and keep a person from anyone snatching them out of His hand but it is not excluding a person's free-will that is never violated by God!

- c. Peter tells us, "For if, after they have **escaped** the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, **they are again entangled in them**

and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.” 2Pet. 2:20-22

* The focus is on man’s free-will without any contradiction to predestination, this verse is not teaching that they were never born-again!

2. All the warnings in the Old and New Testament against departing from the Lord are always to the believer not the unsaved for they are in a condition of separation from God.
 - a. The book of Hebrews confronts the Hebrew who had left the Old Testament sacrifices as the means of their standing before God recognizing that Jesus was the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world.
 - b. The author tells them not to drift away from the word spoken to them, not to have an evil heart of unbelief and to depart from the living God, not to fail to enter into His rest. Heb. 2:1, 3:12, 4:1
 - c. Why? “For it is impossible for those who were **once enlightened**, and **have tasted the heavenly gift**, and have **become partakers**

of the Holy Spirit, and have **tasted the good word of God** and the **powers of the age to come**, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. Heb. 6:4-6

- d. What does he mean? That if these Hebrews returned to animal sacrifices in faith to repent of their sins, after being born again, it would be impossible for God to renew them again to repentance under the Mosaic system they returned to, for they were temporary.

* The text says nothing about not being unable to return to Christ, if they acknowledge their error and repented!

3. For anyone to believe that a person who has exercised their free-will to be saved and rationally think that a person no longer has to continue to exercise their free-will in the process of their salvation, is illogical and unbiblical, contradicting the proclamation of Jesus to abide in Him or be cut off and cast into the fire. Jn. 15:4-6
4. Salvation is taught from three perspectives in the Scriptures.
 - a. We have been saved in the past. Eph. 2:8
 - b. We are being saved in the present. 1Cor. 1:18
 - c. We shall be saved in the future. Heb. 9:28
 - d. Calvary Chapels have always followed the balance that Pastor Chuck Smith has so wisely maintained, the middle ground of

“abiding”, not being polarized to either extreme of Calvinism or Arminianism.

The period affected by the apostasy are seasonal times between the first and the second coming of Christ!

III. The perversion in the apostasy.

* “Giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons”. Vs.1b

A. The method of the perversion is through deceiving spirits.

1. The source is Satanic in it’s origin, Paul has already mentioned the Satanic influence and attack that is ever present.

1Tim. 2:14, 3:6-7

* These are fallen angels that left their first estate at the time of Satan’s rebellion against God. Is. 14, Ezk. 28, 2Pet. 2:4, Jude 1:6

2. The word deceiving “planos” means wandering, roving as planets, the word vagabond comes from it, these are fallen spirits who go around to entice men and women with error.

3. The instrument of the deception is man, Paul had warned the Ephesian elders that some of them would lead people astray and after themselves. Acts 20:29-31, 2Tim. 3:5, 7, 13

4. The activity of spirits are evidence of spiritual warfare. Eph. 6:10-12
 - a. The Devil is the god of this world. 2Cor. 4:4
 - b. The warning is to Christians not the unbeliever in comparison to Eve. 2Cor. 11:1-4
 - c. The possibility of being led away is to the Christian clearly. 2Pet. 3:17-18
 - * You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

B. The message of the perversion is demonic in nature.

1. The demons that roam the earth seem to need a body to possess as we see in the Gospels.
 - a. The possession could be involuntary and violent as the young boy who the disciples could not deal and his father begged Jesus to heal him. Lk. 9:38
 - b. The possession could be voluntary through enticement, curiosity and the pleasure of power attained.

* The New Age movement is one of the greatest instruments of Satanic activity through channelers and spirit guides, for it is nothing less than revived Hinduism with fancy glitter.

2. The truth being taught is not so much teaching about demons but demons teaching through the agency of man to deceive and seduce men and women.
 - * This is indicated by the subjective genitive in the Greek!
 - a. We are exhorted to try the spirits and see if they are of God. 1Jn. 4:1, 6
 - b. We are told very clear that when believers act contrary to the word of God, the influence is earthly, sensual and demonic. Ja. 3:15
 - * This doesn't mean that a Christian can be demon possessed but he can certainly be influence, if he or she walks not in the Spirit but in the flesh. Gal. 5:16-18

Illustration

C. S. Lewis in his book "The Screwtape Letter" depicting conversations between Satan and one of his fallen angels "Wormwood". In one occasion it is recorded, "Our policy, for the moment is to conceal ourselves. Of course this has not always been so. We are really faced with a dilemma. When the humans disbelieve in our existence we

lose all the pleasing results of direct terrorism and we make no magicians. On the other hand, when they believe in us, we can not make them materialists and skeptics. At least, not yet. I have great hopes that we shall learn in due time how to emotionalize and mythologise their science to such an extent that what is, in effect, a belief in us, (though not under that name) will creep in while the human mind remains close to belief in the Enemy." Page 45

* How accurate this describes our society today, thinking that Satan and demons are mythological and unreal!

Application

1. Behind idolatry there are demons the Scriptures tell us. Lev. 17:7, Deut. 32:17, Ps. 106:36-37, 1Cor. 10:20
2. Many of the appearances of religious figures to their followers are demons impersonating the dead love ones, angels or Mary who appears on everything from statutes that cry or bleed, to being seen on a tortilla. 2Jn. 7-11
3. Satan as well as his ministering spirits can transform themselves into angels of light. 2Cor. 11:14
4. The apostle Paul told the Galatians that even if an angel or themselves preached another gospel than they had received, that person was to be anathema, the strongest word for damnation in the Greek. Gal. 1:8-9, Col. 2:18

- * The worship of angels is the “in thing” lately!
- 5.** The message of perversion is always to discredit the person of Christ and the work of Christ for redemption.
- a.** The humanity of Jesus will be attacked. 1Jn. 1:1-4, 2Jn.7
 - b.** The deity of Jesus will be attacked. Jn. 1:1,14
 - c.** The sufficiency of Jesus for salvation will be attacked. Col. 2:9-10
 - d.** The uniqueness of Jesus as the only way, the only name and only mediator will be attacked. Jn. 14:6, Acts 4:12, 2Tim.2:5
 - e.** The claim of Jesus about salvation by grace through faith apart from works but resulting in and unto works created before the foundation of the world. Eph. 2:18-10
- 6.** The Scriptures are the test to authenticate what is of God not experience, regardless if we can see, touch or hear the phenomena. Acts 17:11, 2Tim. 3:15-17

The perversion in the apostasy is the result of deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons!

Conclusion

Paul has proclaimed to us a clear warning of the future periods of apostasy to come in order to be better prepared to defend the faith, to pray, serve and oversee.

- I.** The person revealing the apostasy is the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit!
- II.** The period affected by the apostasy is the latter times, which are seasons throughout the last days!
- III.** The perversion in the apostasy is through deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons!