

Thriving Exemplar

1 Timothy 4:1-16

Thriving - a state of active, robust flourishing, deep purpose, and continuous expansion (not just surviving).

Exemplar - an ideal archetype or standard that is worthy of study, imitation, and emulation.

What is the danger?

- Deceitful spirits
- Teachings of demons
- The hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. **14** And no wonder! For Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. **15** So it is no great surprise if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will be according to their works.

Two examples of their lies.

1. They forbid people to marry.
2. Demand people abstain from certain foods.

On the subject of eating or not eating certain foods (1 Corinthians 10:23-33; Romans 14:1-23; Colossians 2:16)

In summary,

Food is neutral. Partake or don't.

If you abstain, don't judge those who partake.

In fact if you make it an issue of religious piety or a matter of theological principle Paul has even stronger words.

Colossians 2:8, 16-17, 20-23 Be careful that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition, based on the elements of the world, rather than Christ. **16** Therefore, don't let anyone judge you in regard to food and drink or in the matter of a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day. **17** These are a shadow of what was to come; the substance is Christ. **20** If you died with Christ to the elements of this world, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world? Why do you submit to regulations: **21** "Don't handle, don't taste, don't touch"? **22** All these regulations refer to what is destined to perish by being used up; they are human commands and doctrines. **23** Although these have a reputation for wisdom by promoting self-made religion, false humility, and severe treatment of the body, they are not of any value in curbing self-indulgence.

There is freedom in Jesus.

God created everything, including all kinds of food.

So receive the joy of God's creation with thanksgiving.

Mark 7:18-19 He said to them, "Are you also as lacking in understanding? Don't you realize that nothing going into a person from the outside can defile him? **19** For it doesn't go into his heart but into the stomach and is eliminated" (thus he declared all foods clean).

Acts 10:9-16 Peter's vision

A voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat."

14 "No, Lord!" Peter said. "For I have never eaten anything impure and ritually unclean."

15 Again, a second time, the voice said to him, "What God has made clean, do not call impure." **16** This happened three times, and suddenly the object was taken up into heaven.

Everything God created is good!

As followers of Jesus we are people of thanksgiving!

Question: Take time to reflect, are there any areas you have wrongly judged/prohibited in your life or the lives of others?

How do we teach and live our lives as an example of God's design for human flourishing?

Psalms 16:6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;

How do I put into practice the difference between healthy boundaries and over indulgence?

vs. 6-10, These things...

From 2:1-4:5

Timothy,

1:5, The goal of our instruction is love

1:18, Timothy, my son, I am giving you this instruction

3:14, I write these things to you,

- Be an encouragement through your teaching and your life to the brothers and sisters.
- Continue as a servant.
- Nourished by the words of the faith and the good teaching.
- Train yourself in godliness.
- Labor and strive fueled by your hope in the living God.

Gospel

- God's kingdom and rule have arrived on earth in the person of Jesus.
- A royal public announcement that Jesus is the crucified and risen Lord and King of the world (Incarnation to Glorification).
- The kingdom of heaven is an immediate, accessible reality.
- The life of the future is therefore both a present reality and a hope of life to come

Eternal Life - to know God, to be in relationship with him and to experience all the goodness of that relationship both in the present age and the age to come.

vs. 11, Command (lead) and teach these things. (lead and influence)

vs. 12, Don't let anyone despise your youth.

Set an example for the believers (speech, conduct, love, faith, purity).

vs. 13, Give your attention to public reading (of Scripture), to exhortation (preaching), and teaching.

vs. 14, Don't neglect the gift that is in you (Spiritual gift). What is this gift? Naturally, it is the gift for ministry as a preacher/teacher of the Word.

vs. 15, Practice, be committed, and experience growth (observed by others).

vs. 16, Pay close attention to your life and your teaching.

Persevere, continue to experience the promise of salvation.

Timothy's life is to contrast those that were described in 1:19, those who have rejected faith and a good conscience, and have shipwrecked the faith.

Lived theology -> a life that lives the gospel!

Question: Does my life reflect the truth that the gospel is good news?

How are you experiencing the kingdom of heaven right now in your everyday life?

It is likely that not all of Paul's instructions to Timothy are applicable to the particularities of your life, however what encouragement / exhortation do you need to grab hold of concerning your pursuit of Jesus and your care for others?

Lead and influence

Don't be intimidated.

Setting an example

Understand and utilize your Spiritual gift / gifts.

Commitment, practice, and growth

Am I whole (beliefs and practice congruent)?

Daily refreshed as a person who is experiencing salvation.