



# SUNDAY EVENING

## AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Title:** Where Bad Theology Comes From

**Passage:** 1 Timothy 4:1-5

**Speaker:** Pastor Dan Preston

**Introduction:** People often believe things about God simply because they have heard them repeated enough times. Statements may sound spiritual or convincing, but that does not necessarily make them true. That is why it is so important for believers to know what God's Word actually says. What we believe about God shapes the way we live. False teaching often sounds spiritual and may even contain elements of truth, but somewhere along the way, something has been distorted or added to what God has said. That is why believers must learn to recognize truth from error and remain grounded in sound doctrine.

### I. Bad Theology Comes From Departing From the Faith

One of the saddest things a person can witness is someone who once seemed close to God slowly drift away from the truth.

*"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."  
(Matthew 24:11)*

*"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 'Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.'" (Acts 20:29-30)*

There are some things Christians cannot abandon and still remain biblical Christians.



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It is easy to hear a sermon like this and think about “those people out there,” but Paul is writing to the church. This is a warning for believers to stay grounded, stay discerning, and stay anchored in truth.

### **II. Bad Theology Comes From Spiritual Deception**

False teaching is not merely an intellectual problem; it is a spiritual one.

Lying is not just something Satan does occasionally; it is his native language. Deception is one of his primary weapons.

A steady diet of shallow preaching, social media theology, motivational Christianity, and emotional teaching can slowly shape the way a person thinks without them ever opening the Bible carefully for themselves.

The closer you stay to truth, the easier it becomes to recognize error.

### **III. Bad Theology Comes Through Hardened Hearts**

False teaching does not just come from bad information, it comes from hearts that have become hardened to truth.

Nobody plans to harden their heart toward God. It happens through compromise, disobedience, neglected prayer, and neglected Scripture. Over time, a person resists truth until their heart becomes less responsive to God.

Bad theology does not just grow in the mind; it grows in hearts that slowly stop listening to God.

### **IV. Bad Theology Often Shows Up in Legalism**

Every church culture has a tendency to slowly drift toward elevating preferences, traditions, or personal convictions to the level of biblical authority.



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Legalism gives the illusion of spirituality while allowing the heart to remain unchanged. It is much easier to measure external behavior than internal holiness.

Biblical Christianity is about transformation.

## **V. Sound Theology Produces Gratitude, Not Pride**

God's gifts are meant to be received with gratitude, not rejected with pride.

Sin distorts what God made and causes people to misuse His gifts. Biblical theology teaches us to receive God's gifts thankfully, properly, and within the boundaries He established.

Christianity can slowly become more about maintaining an image than walking with Christ.

When a person truly understands salvation by grace, gratitude naturally follows. When you realize you are a sinner saved by the mercy of God, it changes the posture of your heart.

When truth is rightly understood, it does not pull a person away from God's goodness—it drives them straight into gratitude for it.

**Conclusion:** This passage reminds us how important it is for believers to stay grounded in truth. False teaching does not usually appear obvious; it often sounds spiritual and convincing. That is why we must stay anchored in God's Word, keep a tender heart toward conviction, and remain faithful to the truth. In a world full of confusion and deception, God has called His people to be rooted, discerning, and steadfast. Sound doctrine is not just about gaining knowledge; it is about knowing God rightly and living faithfully for Him.

*“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;” (Ephesians 4:14)*



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