An Unguarded Faith

1 Timothy 4:1-5

Intro

- Paul opens the letter directing Timothy:
  - To guard the doctrine of the church (1:1-3)
  - That doing so is necessary for "love from a pure heart and a sincere faith" (1:5)
- Then Paul gives instruction on:
  - How the people in the church should understand themselves in relation to it and one another
  - How and by whom the church should be led
- Now Paul returns to a warning that some will depart the faith because they do not hold to the truth
- As Tim has pointed out, 1 Timothy is a letter from Paul to Timothy about the church.

How necessary is the church to you?

What role does it play in your life?

Is the church somewhere you go to get something you need, or is it something that God has ordained to guard your faith?

Text

[14] I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, [15] if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. [16] Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,

believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.

1 Timothy 3:14-16

- "a pillar and buttress of the truth"…There is such a thing as truth, and the church that Jesus ordained and against which he said the "gates of hell would not prevail" is what stands it up.
- The hymn is strophe-contrasted and represents the Christological foundation of all truth.

Paul warns that there is a spiritual war being waged to distract those in the church from Biblical Christianity.

4 *Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons*

1 Timothy 4:1

- "the Spirit"…Having charged Timothy to guard the teaching of the church in chapter 1, Paul now states that God has revealed to him that those who depart will do so because they entrust themselves to something other than that teaching.
- "deceitful spirits and teachings of demons"
    - Is there a specific here?
    - Paul understood that to believe anything other than the bona fide, apostolic witness to the resurrected Christ is not just an epistemological condition, but a spiritual one.

Anyone who claims authority over the witness of Scripture is either deceived or a deceiver.

2 *through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared*

1 Timothy 4:2

- "whose consciences are seared"…There is a real effect to committing oneself to false beliefs.

[3] who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

1 Timothy 4:3

- "forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods"
    - What is the specific here?
- "By those who believe and know the truth"

[4] For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, [5] for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

1 Timothy 4:4-5

- Paul reasserts the authority of God (implied as expressed through the sound teaching of the church) over the way that believers should live.
- "for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer"…The Lord, not the traditions of men, determines what is good.

<u>Closing</u>

The issue at stake in these verses is our relationship to the church and God's word.

- Are you being formed by the culture or the teaching of a Biblically faithful church?

This is why GB is Protestant, preaches the way we do, deals with difficult passages like Tim preached a few weeks ago the way that we do.