

## 04-01-2020 First Timothy 4:1-5 Bible Study

Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5 in any translation. I will print the NET 2 translation.

4:1 Now the Spirit explicitly says that in the later times some will desert the faith and occupy themselves with deceiving spirits and demonic teachings, 2 influenced by the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared. 3 They will prohibit marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For every creation of God is good and no food is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving. 5 For it is sanctified by God's word and by prayer.

### Comments:

Our reading begins with a reference to the Holy Spirit. We know that is the reference because it has the definite article with the word "Spirit." We note that at the end of v. 1 Paul speaks of deceiving spirits. This is a reference to the fallen angels, spirit beings, in the service of Satan himself. The very last words of v. 1 are "demonic teachings."

This should remind us we are engaged in spiritual warfare. Eph. 6:12 (NLT) says, ***"For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places."***

V. 2 warns us that there are teachers of God's Word who lie and can lead us away from faith. We know how harshly military traitors are treated. Even worse is a faith traitor. Paul uses an interesting word picture when he says the liars have a seared conscience. You sear or cauterize a wound to stop the bleeding. A seared conscience is one which no longer works.

Positive signs are when they mess with God's teaching about marriage, forbidding what God has not forbidden or doing the same thing with certain foods (Re-read Acts 10:9-16). There are two dangers to avoid: Not to condemn what God condemns or to add commands and prohibitions to God's Word.

Prohibitions about food are dissolved by the simple truth of v. 4: "...no food is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving." Food and marriage are made holy (sanctified) by God's word and prayer.

If you know the Bible you can easily recognize such false teaching. Which is why we all need to be students of the Bible. Knowing what is really says, rather than what someone says it says, is for your protection.

Remember Jesus telling us the story of "The Rich Man and Lazarus" (Luke 16:19-31). When the rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his brothers to warn them about hell, he said, ***"If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead."***

**Reflection Question:** Do you know your Bible well enough that you find it easy to recognize false teachers? If someone claims to be a teacher from God and never asks people to repent or seldom (maybe never) uses the word sin, they are not from God. Don't let anyone add to God's word or subtract from it.