**God’s Design for the Church (1 Timothy)**

**Fan the Flame (1 Timothy 6:3-5)**

**Recap:**

* **Finish Chapter 1**
* **Finish Chapter 2**
* **Finish Chapter 3**
* **Finish Chapter 4**
* **Finish Chapter 5**
* **Living as Servants Part 2**
  + **New Identity in Christ-Matthew 27:57**
  + **Priesthood-1 Peter 2:9**
  + **Household of God-1 Timothy 3:15**
  + **Saved-Mark 16:16**
  + **Son/Daughter-Galatians 3:26-28**
  + **Beloved-1 Thessalonians 1:4**
* **Read 1 Timothy 6:3-5**
* **Today’s message we will discuss how false teachers are identified by their false doctrine, their attitude of pride, their leaning towards controversy and discord, their apostasy of the faith and their motive to profit.**

1. **False Teachers are Identified by their False Doctrine (v. 3)**
   1. **False Doctrine Teaches Rebellion**
      1. **“If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness”**
      2. **What is Paul referring to when he says, “If anyone teaches a different doctrine?”**
      3. **The context seems to refer to his previous instruction about slaves and their masters.**
      4. **No doubt, many in the church thought Paul should have taught rebellion against the governing authorities. Sometimes masters mistreated their slaves; however, Paul said slaves should respect and serve them. The government commonly persecuted Christians: however, Paul taught Christians to pray for their authorities and submit to them (1 Tim 2:1, Rom 13:1-3)**
      5. **This has been a trick of Satan from the very beginning. He tempted one third of the angels to rebel against God in heaven (Rev 12). He also tempted Eve to rebel against God. Therefore, you will commonly find this teaching in the church and society. Satan, the usurper, tempts children to usurp their parents’ authority, Christians to rebel against authority. Yes, when authority calls for us to sin, we should refuse. But even when we refuse, we should be respectful (1 Pet 2:17)**
      6. **Satan commonly seeks to incite rebellion. He whispers, “You can be like God” “You can be your own God-your own authority.” Be careful of any teaching that promotes rebellion against authorities.**
   2. **False Doctrine disagrees with the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ (v. 3)**
      1. **What does Paul mean by “the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ”?**
      2. **This refers to false teachers having incorrect Christology. False teachers will often teach that Christ is not God or that he was not human. This type of teaching was common with Gnostics-an early Christian cult which attacked the church of Ephesus. John, who pastored the church after Paul and Timothy, said this in his epistle:**
      3. **1 John 4:2-4: By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.**
      4. **Gnosticism was influenced by Greek Philosophy which taught that the body was evil, and the spirit was good. Therefore, Gnostics believed that Christ could not have been fully God since he came in a human body-he was only a manifestation of God. They attacked both his full humanity and deity. He was something less than God and something less than human.**
      5. **John said that anyone who does not acknowledge that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. This refers both to him being fully God and fully human. This is the problem with Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, and other religions. They teach Jesus was an angel, not God or something else that does not fully agree scripture.**
      6. **When testing doctrine, we must ask, “Does it teach a correct view of Christ-fully human and fully God?”**
      7. **Any Teaching that disagrees with Scripture. Pope Francis was recently quoted: “God is for everyone, and therefore, we are all God’s children.” “There is only one God, and all religions are like languages that try to express ways to approach God. Some Sikh, some Muslim, some Hindu, and some Christian.”**
      8. **Health and Wealth Gospel disagrees with Scripture in 5 ways**
         1. **The Abrahamic Covenant is a means to material entitlement.**
         2. **Jesus’ atonement extends to the “sin” of material poverty.**
         3. **Christians give to gain material compensation from God.**
         4. **Faith is a self-generated spiritual force that leads to prosperity.**
         5. **Prayer is a tool to force God to grant prosperity.**
      9. **Adding to Scripture** 
         1. **Genesis 3:1b-3: He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, let you die.’”**
         2. **Genesis 2:16-17**
      10. **When testing doctrine, we must ask, “Does it agree with Scripture?”**
   3. **False Doctrine does not agree with Godly Teaching**
      1. **What does Paul mean by stating false teaching does not agree with Godly Teaching?**
      2. **False teaching will often teach license to sin-freedom to disobey God’s law. It fails to produce holiness in the lives of those who follow it.**
      3. **Colossians 2:21:23: Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” (referring to the things that all perish as they are used)-according to human precepts and teachings? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.”**
      4. **When testing doctrine we must ask, “Does it lead to holiness? Does it teach correct Christology? Does it agree with the rest of Scripture? Does it teach submission to authorities or rebellion?” While a true teacher is known for faithfully teaching God’s Word, a false teacher pervert it.**

**What are some of the prevalent false teachings attacking the church? How have you experienced them?**

1. **False Teachers are Identified by their attitude of pride (v. 4)**
   1. **“he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing.”**
   2. **James 4:6: God fights against the proud but gives grace to the humble.**
   3. **The false teacher is rejected in part because of his pride. It keeps him from submitting to God and the wise counsel of others. He seeks a following and for his name to be exalted, instead of the Lord’s; therefore, the Lord opposes him.**
   4. **Isaiah 14:14: Like Satan declaring that he will be like the Most High, false teacher are consumed with themselves and their ideas.**
   5. **Moses was called the humblest man on earth (Num 12:3) and Christ was characterized by his humility, as he humbled himself by becoming a man and dying for our sins (Phil 2:6-8). Jesus calls for all to come to him because he is “gentle and humble” in spirit (Matt 11:28-29) However, false teachers are marked by conceit as well as their doctrine.**
   6. **The word “conceited” is derived from a root which means “smoke” “The verb means “to puff up like a cloud of smoke.” In English we would describe such a person as “blowing smoke, or “full of hot air.”**

**Have you seen or experienced spiritual pride in false teachers or others? How can we protect ourselves from the temptation towards spiritual pride and instead develop humility like Christ?**

1. **False Teachers are Identified by their leaning towards Controversy and Discord (vv. 4b-5)**
   1. **“He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction…**
   2. **The false doctrine used by the false teachers’ pride leads them to an “unhealthy” interest in controversies and verbal disputes. “Unhealthy” can literally be translated “sick.” Their love for some brand of false teaching developed a spiritual sickness in them. They are consumed with controversies over words.**
   3. **How does Paul describe the discord false teachers are prone towards? Paul describes this discord in five ways**
      1. **False Teachers are prone to envy**
      2. **False Teachers are prone to dissension**
      3. **False Teachers are prone to slander**
      4. **False Teachers are prone to suspicions**
      5. **False Teachers constantly bicker with others.**
   4. **Why are false teachers prone to doctrinal controversy and discord with others? How have you seen or experienced this? How can we keep the fruit of constant discord from being borne in our lives?**
2. **False Teachers are Identified by their Apostasy from the Faith (v. 5)**
   1. **“and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth”**
   2. **Romans 8:7: For the mind that is set on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.**
   3. **1 Corinthians 2:14: The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.**
   4. **Hebrews 6:4-6: For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the son of God to their own harm and holding him in contempt.**
   5. **Acts 20:28-32: Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all they flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night and day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.**
   6. **Have you ever known someone who fell into false teaching and away from God all together? How did it happen?**
3. **False Teachers are Identified by their Motive to Profit (v. 5)**
   1. **“and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.”**
   2. **What does Paul Mean by Profit? It could mean at least two things**
   3. **False Teachers are pre-occupied with financial profit.**
   4. **False Teachers are pre-occupied with personal profit or self-help.**
   5. **In what ways have you seen ministers or ministries that focus on profit-Financial or Personal?**

**Conclusion:**

**What are the characteristics of false teachers? How can we identify them?**

1. **False Teachers are Identified by Their False Doctrine.**
2. **False Teachers are Identified by Their Attitude of Pride.**
3. **False Teachers are Identified by Their leaning towards Controversy and Discord**
4. **False Teachers are Identified by Their Apostasy from the Faith**
5. **False Teachers are Identified by Their Motive to Profit.**