

Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 Scripture: 1 Timothy 4

## Transcript

Well, many of you have probably heard the phrase “Doctrine Divides, but Love Unites.” Many so-called churches today use this phrase that say doctrine is not important in the church and all we need to do is love, love, love, love, right? That's what it's all about. We just need to love, and so the pastors that are leading these places...they don't teach doctrine.

All they do is they tell stories during their messages. And they tell everyone then to go out and love Jesus. That's what your job is to do. Go love Jesus, go love one another. Love yourself, be encouraged. Be motivated to go and be a champion. And all this kind of stuff that they tell people to do.

And sadly, a lot of these churches they look no different than a Woodstock event from the 1970's. Right? Peace, love and happiness. That's what it's all about. But if we are to love Jesus. What Jesus? Who is this Jesus that we're talking about? What do we believe about Him?

How do we love one another if those are commands and what we're called to do, how do we do all of this? Well, without doctrine, none of these questions will ever get answered. We need doctrine. We need the truth of God's Word. Doctrine is very important, very important in the Christian life.

And not only do God's people understand this, the importance of doctrine, but Satan knows it too. Satan understands doctrine and the importance of doctrine. John Kitchen says this, “The devil is not against doctrine, he is against true doctrine.” He's against true doctrine.

Everyone of us has a belief. Every single person has some kind of belief that has been passed on to them by some kind of doctrine, something that they have learned that has been passed on to them, and they're going to take that doctrine then and pass it on to someone else. That's how it works.

And doctrine does divide. It's a true statement, doctrine divides. Doctrine does divide because truth and lies don't mesh. Because right and wrong don't go together. Truth and lies don't mesh. And so yes, it's true. Doctrine does divide, but doctrine also unites. Doctrine unites as well. RC Sproul said “It binds together the hearts of God's people who celebrate the truth of God together.”

Doctrine does divide, but doctrine also unites those of us that are believers. Right? Around the truth of God's Word. We need doctrine, and we need true doctrine in order to be taught in our churches. But Satan wants to infiltrate the church with his false doctrine, and he does it through false teachers. That's his tool. That's who he uses.

And so tonight as we study 1 Timothy 4, we're going to see the marks of false teachers and the marks of faithful teachers. Two points:

1. The marks of false teachers
2. The marks of faithful teachers

So let's look at our first point here.

## 1. The Marks of False Teachers found in verses 1-5.

Paul tells Timothy, Mark chapter 4 verse 1, *“but the Spirit explicitly says that in later time some will fall away from the faith.”*

Now what's interesting is Paul has just come off of this great confession at the end of chapter 3 there, where he says:

16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness:  
He who was revealed in the flesh,  
Was vindicated in the Spirit,  
Seen by angels,  
Proclaimed among the nations,  
Believed on in the world,  
Taken up in glory.”

That's the great confession of the church. As we are the pillar of the truth, as we are the pillar and the support of the truth. But look at what Paul says. He comes with this “but” in chapter 4 verse 1, *“but the spirit explicitly says”* you have the true church, but you will have a false church as well. You will have false Christians, fake Christians, false converts. You're going to have them within the church.

And how do we know this? Well, because Paul says the spirit explicitly says the Spirit has revealed to him that in later times you're going to have false teachers in the church and fake Christians in the church.

Now what does he mean by these later times? Well, scripture often refers to this as the last days. That's the time between Pentecost and the return of Christ, which means it's now. Right? We are living in the late, the later times or the last days. And he says *“some will fall away from the faith.”* Now this does not mean that people were saved. This is where a lot of false doctrine comes in around even this verse, saying that someone can be saved, and then they can lose their salvation.

As if somehow the sealing of the spirit can be lost, and no longer are they sealed with the Holy Spirit, God gives up on them, and then they can become unbelievers. Which tells you their salvation is all about who? Them! Right? Whether they have earned it, or whether they have not. They've earned it, they've lost it. But when he says here that they've fallen away from the faith, this doesn't mean that they've lost their salvation. You cannot lose your salvation.

What he's talking about here is that they were never really a part of the Christian Church. They were never true Christians. They were never truly a part of it. They played along with it. They knew the “Christianese”. They knew how to talk the talk, but they didn't walk the walk and they fell away. They sang all the right songs they gathered together with the true church. They said all the right words, but their hearts were never for Christ. They were never truly converted.

And so that's what he's saying here when they will fall away from the faith. What is he talking about when he says the faith? That simply the Christian doctrine, the truth of God's Word, that Paul was entrusted with to pass on. It's the knowledge of the truth that leads to salvation. That's the faith, and that's what they have fallen away from. They have left it. Which doesn't surprise us, right?

Jesus says in Matthew 22:14 *“For many are called but few are chosen.”* Or Matthew 7:13-14 *“Enter through the narrow gate for the gate is wide and the ways broad that leads to destruction and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life and there are few who find it.”*

Jesus told us this was going to happen. That many would fall away. Many would go down that broad path. And so Paul is telling Timothy that although we have this great confession of Christ, there are many people who will seem like they have confessed this too. But in the end they will fall away. It will be revealed that they were never of us.

What will they do? They'll pay attention and follow after false teachers. So what do these false teachers look like?

Well, Paul lays this out for us. Where he says *“paying attention to deceitful spirits.”*

1. First of all, these people are deceivers. False teachers are deceivers. People will follow after false teachers. This is something that is the habit of their life. That's what when he says paying attention, that is, they continually pay attention. It's the habit of their life to follow after these false teachers, these deceitful spirits. They are literally addicted to them, so that's what he's talking about here.

And they continue to follow after these deceivers. What does he mean by “deceitful spirits?” What does he mean there? Well, these are demonic spirits who operate in and through these false teachers. That's how Satan works. Demonic spirits that are working in and through these false teachers to get into the church and to try and divide the church. To try and bring in false teaching to the church. To draw people away from the truth.

These false teachers would be identified by their deception, they are deceivers. Pretending to be true teachers, they are deceivers as they teach the doctrines of demons.

2. Second, they teach doctrines of demons. They teach doctrines of demons. Not only do they deceive people, but they also teach the doctrines of demons. There is sound teaching that is the doctrine of God and there is false teaching, that's the doctrine of demons. Anything that is not of God is of Satan, and that's what these false teachers spout. If what they're teaching doesn't line up with the Word of God, it's from Satan.

And sadly, you turn on the radio station today, turn on your TV today and there's a lot of doctrine of demons that's going on there. These men that are being used as agents of Satan to spout false doctrine and many people follow after them. They're deceivers and people follow them.

3. Third, they're hypocrites. Look in verse 2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience, as with the branding iron, these guys are play actors. They espouse themselves to be one thing on stage, but there another person off the stage.

I remember talking with Costi Hinn about his trips, that he would take with his uncle Benny, Benny Hinn. And they would stay in these hotels that would cost \$25,000 a night. He said, he said Ace, you walk in these rooms and they are full of gold. I mean it's just gold everywhere. Amazing. And there's Benny on the stage, he would go in front of the people

and he would act like a humble man, like a humble man of God. But off the stage is a prideful, arrogant follower of money. He was full of himself and full of his money. These guys are hypocrites and they're liars, and they draw people away from the truth.

The word liar here comes from 2 Greek words. *Pseudos*, which means false, and *logos*, which means word. Literally false words. They're false words and it implies a knowledge of deception rather than an innocent misleading of someone. It's not that they're innocent and misleading people, but they know they have a knowledge of their deception. They know that they're deceiving people.

These false teachers know that they're deceiving people with their lies, but --look at what it says about their conscience. It's what? Seared. It is seared. Their conscience is so seared that they are no longer bothered by it, and so what do they do? They continue to spout off lies and it doesn't even faze them. Because they are totally deceived and they're instruments of Satan, they're hypocritical liars, they're play actors.

4. Fourth. They teach salvation by works. They teach salvation by works. Look at what it says in verse 3. *"men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth."*

Now Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7:8, *"But I say the unmarried and to the widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I am."* Right? He says it's good if you remain single. Because there's problem in marriage, right? There's problems that come. Yeah, all the wives leaned over... right? There are things that go on, so Paul says, look, it's good for you to be married. If you have the gift of singleness, stay single. Don't go and get married. And he also limits marriage for believers to only marry believers. Right? Believers should not be marrying unbelievers. You are not to be unequally yoked.

It is also OK for Christians to abstain from food. In fasting. Fasting and prayer typically go hand in hand, where you will take some time off from eating foods so that you can fast and pray, spend time in prayer with God.

Jesus says in Matthew 6:16-17 *"Whenever you fast do not put on a gloomy face As the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance, so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward in full, but you when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face."*

So Jesus wasn't against fasting. He's for it. Jesus is not, also, he's not against singleness either. He's for it. He's for abstaining for food for a while. But Satan comes in and he makes that a prerequisite for salvation or holiness. You see how he takes the truth right there, and he just begins to twist it a little. And it becomes a lie, and these false teachers, they take it.

You oftentimes we see this with priests in the Catholic Church, right? And if any of you grew up in the Catholic Church, you see this where the Catholic Church teaches that this is a biblical mandate for the priests, it's not. It's not. For many cult groups it becomes the way to salvation by the do's and the don'ts. That's what false teachers teach. The do's and the don'ts. And they're saying you will be saved or you will become more holy by the do's and

the don'ts. And Jesus says no...salvation is by faith in Me alone. Not by the things that you do or don't do. Salvation is not by works, but that's what these false teachers teach.

No good works will save us. It is only through faith in Christ alone. Paul goes on and then he tells us that all things are good for us, in verse 4 *“for everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude.”*

While these false teachers are telling you the do's and don'ts, do this and don't do that. God says we are to receive everything with gratitude. We're to be thankful for the marriage that we have or to be thankful for the food that we have. We're to give praise and glory and honor to God as we enjoy God's creation. That's what we were created to do...to give glory to God through His creation. And so those are the marks of false teachers.

What about faithful teachers? Paul goes on and he talks to Timothy about faithful teachers. What are these true Biblical teachers like?

## Point #2 the Marks of a Faithful Teacher

Paul lays out for us 10 Marks of a Faithful Teacher here.

1. Number one. **He warns people.** He warns people. Look in verse 6 *“In pointing out these things to the brethren.”* Paul says your job as a faithful teacher is to warn people. Faithful teachers will warn others of false teachers. That's why I warn you, and I will name names and I will tell you *“don't follow after those people.”* Warned. I will warn you. That's what faithful teachers do. They're called to warn their people.

Paul warned the Ephesian church in Acts 20, right? And now he's telling Timothy to warn them about the false teachers that are going to come into the church, but not only in the church, but they're going to come from within. There are going to be people that are in the church. These wolves are going to rise up within the church. And Paul says, *“pointing out”* and *“pointing out these things”* when he says pointing out, this is not done in a commanding way though. But a humble, persuasive way out of love for people.

That's what Paul is getting after with the heart of Timothy. He is saying *“Timothy. If you want to be a faithful teacher, listen point these things out.”* Don't command them. Don't come upon them real hard, but in with humbleness and persuasion, lovingly encourage them and say *“don't follow after these false teachings and these false teachers.”* That's what the faithful teacher does.

2. Number two. **He serves his people.** He serves his people, look at he goes on in verse six 6B *“you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus”* Now notice what this faithful teacher does in order to serve the people. What does he do? He teaches them the truth. In order to serve them, he teaches them. That's what he says when he says *“pointing out these things to the brethren,”* he's saying, teach these things to the brethren. Warn them of these things. That has to do with teaching. He is to teach them the truth.

There are many guys who go around thinking that they're serving their people by telling them cute little stories about themselves, and they never get down to the truth of God's

Word. Faithful teachers are to teach the truth. That's no way for a pastor to serve his people by telling them stories all day. Pastors are called to preach the truth of God's Word, and by doing so, the people are served, you're served. Right? When you get the teaching of God's Word, your hearts are encouraged, your hearts are strengthened by the truth of God's Word, and that's what faithful teachers are to do. They're to serve the people by doing things, by teaching them the truth. And by also by doing things behind the scenes, when no one is watching. He's always looking for ways to make sure that the flock is being taken care of. That's what faithful teachers do. They serve at all times.

3. Number three. **He's a student of scripture.** He's a student of Scripture. He says *"constantly nourished on the words of the faith and the sound doctrine which you have been following."* He is preoccupied with the truth. Faithful teachers are preoccupied with the truth of God's Word. He doesn't get caught up in the culture of the day, trying to be relevant or trying to be cool for the people. He's focused on the truth.

Sadly, there are many churches today who are full of guys who call themselves pastors who don't even teach their people the Word of God. And they call themselves pastors. They call themselves churches. Paul Washer recently had said "The new term, now for pastors is life coach and he said good. I love that because they're not pastors call them life coaches." They're not shepherding their people, they don't care about their people. But these places are just full of fluff. They're full of fluff and they're not teaching the Word of God, but pastors are to be students of Scripture, preoccupied with the Word of God. We're not preoccupied with church growth, not preoccupied with vision-casting or hiring social media technicians. We're to teach the Word of God. That's what faithful teachers do. Because that's the greatest need of the people. That's our greatest need is the truth of God's Word.

4. Number four. **He's disciplined.** He disciplines himself in godliness. He disciplines himself in godliness. He goes on in verse 7.

*"On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; 8 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."*

A faithful pastor is nothing apart from pursuing godliness. Every faithful pastor, every faithful teacher, is to pursue godliness. How could he expect his congregation to pursue godliness if he's not doing it himself? He must pursue godliness.

Charles Spurgeon said "periodical godliness is perpetual hypocrisy." Periodical godliness is perpetual hypocrisy. It can't be hypocrites. Faithful teachers need to be men who are pursuing godliness. They train themselves or they discipline themselves in godliness. It must be a constant pursuit in their life. And Paul uses an illustration here...he uses the illustration of bodily discipline -- that people go through physical training in order to benefit their body. Right? And they do it today.

We've got gyms all over the place and memberships are all full at all these gyms so that everybody can go in and discipline their bodies and train their bodies. But what does he say

about that? It's only of what? Little profit... it's only a little profit. Some pastors spend too much time in the gym. They need to get in their studies and study God's Word and discipline themselves for godliness.

Just as people do this for their physical bodies, pastor pastors need to do this spiritually. It's a kind of spiritual discipline that's not only good now. This spiritual discipline is not only good now, but it will bring blessing for all of eternity. It's an eternal impact that true teachers are having on people. As they pursue this godliness, it has eternal implications.

5. Number five. **He works hard.** He works hard. A faithful teacher works hard. Look at verse 10:

*“10 For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.”*

“For this” for what? “This” here that he's talking about is the godliness back up in verse 8 and the promise that comes with godliness. “For this” -- for this godliness you labor and you strive. The word “labor” there, this word stresses the wearisome nature of the labor. It is laboring to the point of exhaustion. That's what faithful teachers do. They become exhausted. Because they're laboring for the people. And they strive.

This has the idea of a fight or a struggle. From the Greek word which we get our English word agonize. We agonize. Ministry is a work for the soul of men. And that's what faithful teachers are to be concerned with, to labor and strive for the souls of men, for the souls of their people. Because it's a work that has eternal implications and therefore the work that a faithful teacher must do must be to labor and strive for his people's soul and the souls of other people. That's what they're called to do. To be hard workers.

6. Number six. **He teaches the Word.** Look what he says there. *“Prescribe and teach these things.”* Prescribe. This word means to keep commanding, and has the idea of teaching with authority - that you teach God's Word with authority. These aren't suggestions.

When pastors stand in their pulpit, faithful preachers stand in their pulpit, they're not giving suggestions to their congregation. Their job is to command. To command them to obey God's Word. Isn't that what Moses did with Israel? Obey, obey, obey. That's what his command was to them, and that's what faithful teachers are to do.

He is a man who is under authority who preaches with authority to call God's people to obedience to His Word. His job is not to be popular with the people, but to be a preacher to the people. He's not an entertainer, but he's an expositor of God's Word.

That's what he's to do. Faithful preachers aren't in the pulpit to please men, but they are there to please God. That's the role of a faithful teacher, and God calls them to preach the truth of His Word. Faithful teachers are to teach the Word of God.

7. Number 7. **He is to live an exemplary life.** Look at verse 12. *“Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.”* Now Timothy was a young man, right? Put into the pastorate there, as a young man. But he's called to a big task. “Yeah, I know you're a young man there Timothy, but you got a big task.” And he was to live in such a way that all people, both young and old, could look at his life and model after him after young Timothy.

One of the greatest impacts faithful teachers can have on people is by living in such a way that shows others that he believes what he preaches. You live this way because you believe it. You believe what you're preaching.

In seminary, they used to tell us, “Gentlemen, you live in a glass house.” That's what they told us. “Get used to it. Everyone's watching and they want to know everything that you do. You live in a glass house.” And that's the rest of your life in ministry because the people are watching. And Paul tells Timothy that...” Timothy you live in a glass house.” So live in such a way that you would bring glory and honor to God. Instead of bringing reproach upon yourself.

Many people are looking for ways to discredit Christianity and how they do it is by attacking the pastors. They want to go after the leaders. They want to go after the elders of the church and sadly many many pastors have given them a reason to discredit Christianity. Because of the way that they live their lives. We see, I mean, you could turn on secular news and there they are ... these so-called pastors that are not living above reproach. And what do they do? It allows the world to discredit Christianity, but faithful teachers are to live in such a way that they're models of what true Christianity is.

8. Number eight. **He exalts God's Word.** He exalts God's Word. Verse 13 *“until I come give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.”* This is why we have scripture reading on Sunday mornings. This verse right here. This is why we do public reading of scriptures on Sunday morning. We read God's Word so that all of us can be reading it together.

Why? Because we hold God's word high because we have a high view of God and therefore we have a high view of His Word. That's what we're called to do. You don't need to hear from me on Sunday mornings. You need to hear from God. You need to hear from His Word. And it's the Word of God that we use to exhort, and to teach the truth. He exalts God's Word.

9. Number nine. **He stays focused on his calling.** Look at verse 14 *“do not neglect the spiritual gift within you which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.”* There are so many ways for faithful teachers to become distracted today. So many ways. Lots of ministry, and people and other things, that are pulling their attention away from ministry. And some get easily distracted and therefore they neglect the call to which they have been called.



Many today are distracted with this whole conference era that we live in. It seems like every other week there's a new conference, right? I mean, you just look on the internet and it's conference, after conference, after conference, and these pastors, these faithful teachers, these guys that are supposed to be in the pulpit, preaching and teaching their people, are gone at conferences all the time.

I preached an installation message for a guy one time, and that's what I told him in that installation message before his whole congregation. I said don't get caught up in conferences. Be with your people.

Now, is it OK to go to a conference? It's OK to go to a conference. I'm not saying all conferences are bad, it's OK to go to a conference. But sadly, what these guys do is they begin...they become so infatuated with conferences that they're wanting to go to all of them and they want to go and speak at all of these conferences. No, you're to shepherd the flock of God among you. That's what you are called to do. That's the task you're to do, and you need to be focused on that calling.

That's what Paul is telling Timothy here. You need to be focused on it. Don't give up. He encourages Timothy to stay the course. Don't give up. Keep on going. You've got to stay focused, Timothy. There's a lot of distractions around you don't get distracted. Stay focused on the calling to which you've been called.

10. And then finally number Ten. **Faithful teacher is all in.** He is all in. Look at verse 15. He says *"Take pains with these things, be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all."*

When I was playing football at Idaho, one of the years, our motto was "all in" and they had it printed on the back of every single shirt, so that every guy that you saw when he turned around there it was "All-in", and we all understood, we knew what that meant. We were "all in". It meant that at 5:00 o'clock in the morning, when we're going to weightlift we're there "all in" at 5:00 in the morning, lifting weights. And then after that we got in the snow, and we run and we're "all in." We're not gonna give up. We had to do that. You don't give up .. you're "all in." Coaches wanted us to eat, sleep, and breathe football, and we did. That's what you do.

Paul is telling Timothy here you need to be all in. Be all in Timothy. *"absorbed"* there ..that word, absorbed, that you see in the NASB, is in italics there because it's not in the Greek. Paul literally says there be in them be in them. He's telling Timothy that he needs to be engulfed with ministry. That's what he's saying there. And so implied is absorbed. You need to be absorbed in this work of ministry, consumed by your work of ministry, Timothy. Not consumed by your golf game, but consumed in the ministry. In your work.

MacArthur says the servant of Jesus Christ is never off duty. He is all in. That's what faithful teachers are. They're all in. They think about ministry all the time. It's on your mind all the time. He's all in, and every faithful teacher must be all in to the ministry to which he has been called.

And then Paul concludes here, he gives a conclusion, in verse 16, he says, *“Pay close attention to yourself and your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”*

Paul wraps it up with this one statement that summarizes the 10 marks of a faithful teacher above it. He says *“pay close attention to yourself.”* Paul is telling Timothy he needs to watch his life. Watch your life Timothy. Check your heart, examine yourself Timothy. In order to be affective in ministry, a faithful teacher must live a holy life. That's what you're called to do, Timothy.

And pay attention also to your teaching. He also needs to focus on his teaching. He needs to make sure that he's teaching God's Word ...the truth of God's Word. And then he says, persevere in these things. Look Timothy, it's not going to be easy. It's not going to be easy. It's going to be hard. But the faithful teacher will persevere. That's what he's called to do.

On the first day of seminary, they would tell us, as we were about to embark on this difficult life of ministry, the first thing that they would say as we all sat down. Ray Meringer said this, he was like a drill sergeant there for all of us guys. And he would literally tell us, he said, “Gentlemen, there's the door. You can leave now. And if you leave, we will fully refund you. No hard feelings. But if you stay in this room. Get ready. Because it's going to be hard.”

Sadly, many men should have got up and walked out that door. Because there's many men that are filled in our churches. Pulpits that are filled with men who shouldn't be in pulpits. They should have walked out. They're not qualified. They don't focus on the truth of God's Word, they're in it for themselves instead of for the people.

But Paul calls Timothy to be all in for the people. This is your ministry Timothy, and this is what you are called to do. And this is what every faithful pastor is called to do... to live it out.

We need to stand upon the truth of God's Word. Don't be deceived, don't be led astray by the false teachers. But listen to the Word of God, as the Word of God is preached from faithful teachers and stand upon the truth of God's Word. That's what we're called to do. We stand upon true doctrine because we understand that it's true doctrine that binds our hearts together, right? As the true church. That's what brings us all together, is the truth of God's Word, and that's what we're commanded to preach and teach from every single pulpit. Preach the truth of God's Word.

That's what Paul is telling to Timothy as he leads and pastors this church in Ephesus.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for our time in Your Word tonight and seeing the difference between false teachers and true faithful teachers. And Father I pray that You would help us to stay focused upon true doctrine and not be led astray. Father, it breaks our hearts to see people who walk away from the faith. Lord, I pray that no one here does, that You would draw them to Yourself. That they would persevere in the faith that they would stay grounded and rooted in true doctrine that's taught in Your Word. Father, guard us, protect us from the lies of the enemy. I pray that You would protect every single person here from false teachers, that they would not be led astray, but they would be fixed upon the truth of Your Word to bring You glory and honor in our lives. We pray in Christ name. Amen.