

1 Timothy 4:1–5

Manmade Religion Is Doctrine from Demons that Robs Us of True Grace

**Thursday, December 22, 2022 • Read 1 Timothy 4:1–5**

*Questions from the Scripture text: Who speaks about what times (v1)? What will some do then? What will they give heed to? What will they speak (v2)? What condition of their consciences will leave them willing to do so? What are two types of demonic lies they will teach (v3)? Why is forbidding particular foods so wicked—Who made them? Especially for whom? To receive them how? Why are marriage and food good (v4a)? What is the proper thing to do with God's creation (v4b)? What two things actually do make holy the receiver, the thing received, and the receiving of it?*

**What are some lies that compete with the truth?** 1 Timothy 4:1–5 looks forward to the second reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these five verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **anything that is presented as a way of holiness but hasn't come from Christ is a demonic lie.**

When we realize that the great truth that the church guards is Christ Himself (3:16), we realize that nothing else must be laid down alongside Christ's gospel (cf. Gal 1:8–9). Where do other religious ideas come from? vv1–2 tells us: demons that tell lies, and people that believe them and repeat them.

How can they do this? Their consciences have been "seared with a hot iron." They are so accustomed to thinking and doing what's wrong that their consciences have lost any sensitivity—tender skin has been replaced with dead scar tissue.

One demonic lie that is often believed or repeated is that the "latter times" are something unique to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. If it was already the "latter times" when Paul was writing to Timothy, it has been the "latter times" for a while!

But our own passage has two explicit examples of what the Spirit has explicitly warned about. We are not surprised that both are practices of the papist church: forbidding marriage (as they do with priests) and prescribed fasts. After 3:16 rejoicing in how all holiness comes from Jesus, we can see just how demonic it is to think that it can come from refusing some good creation from God. Manmade religion has an appearance of wisdom to us, but is actually of no true spiritual value since only the Lord can produce the fruit of anything religious (cf. Col 2:20–23).

In fact, v3 reminds us that whatever good God has created is especially for believers. They are the rightful heirs of all good things, and His goodness has a special focus upon them. Holiness is not obtained by refusing them, but rather expressed by receiving them with thankful hearts (v4).

How does holiness come? The how question is determined by the "from Whom" question. Since it comes only from the Lord Himself, it comes only by means that He has appointed, and v5 gives us two biggies: the Word of God and prayer. As the Lord makes us holy by these, our receiving of His good gifts will be increasingly holy as well.

By contrast, manmade religion comes from deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. They are lies spoken in hypocrisy. They are opposed to the truth as it is in Jesus.

**What are the ways that the Lord has taught us that He gives us holiness? What are some manmade rules or traditions that feel spiritual? Why are they useless? Why are they actually harmful? Where did they come from?**

*Sample prayer: Lord, You have warned us that some would depart from the faith by adding to the religion that You have given us. But we are still constantly adding something or another from the ideas or traditions of men. Forgive us! We even refuse Your good gifts, as if our problems are in the creation rather than in ourselves and our wicked use of them. Forgive us! And make us to receive all Your good gifts with thanksgiving. Sanctify us by Your Word and prayer, we ask in Jesus's Name, AMEN!*

ARP110B "The Lord Has Spoken to My Lord" or TPH270 "At the Name of Jesus"

**For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit [bit.ly/harpCHAH](https://bit.ly/harpCHAH)**

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](https://hopewellarp.org))**

First Timothy chapter 4 verses 1 through 4. These are god's words. Sorry. Not one through four one through five. First Timothy chapter 4 verses 1 through 5. These are god's words. Now, the spur expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith. Giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.

Speaking lies in hypocrisy. Having their own conscience seared with a hot iron. Forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from foods which god created to be received with thanksgiving. By those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of god is good. And nothing is to be refused.

If it is received with thanksgiving four, It is sanctified.

And nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving. Four. It is sanctified by the word of god. And prayer. So far the reading of god's inspired and inherent word. Well, one of the reasons that paul had sent this letter to Timothy one of the reasons, He and Timothy had gone back and he had left Timothy in Ephesus.

Was to institute reformation in the church. The need for reformation was most obviously seen to many. By the immorality that was in the lives of the people, but the immorality in the lives of the people was a result of false doctrine being taught that not only that, which was from the holy spirit and the scriptures and Those words that the holy spirit was accumulating by the ministry of the apostles, To the church in the new testament.

But there were people who were teaching other things. In addition to those other things alongside of those, the kind of thing that That paul had written when he was writing to Galatians. And he says, if anyone teeth Proclaims to you any other gospel. And there, the language is actually literally any gospel alongside the one and he says, not that there is another gospel.

But any gospel alongside the one that you have heard, let him be a curse in other words, which he pronounced as an anathema, just quite literally, let then go to hell or endure. Hell. And so the the immoral living was because of extra biblical in addition to the bible teaching and the reason that And the mechanism by which extra biblical teaching was arising up in the church was men who had not been gifted called ordained to the office.

Uh, we're teaching. And, And teaching. Doctrine at the teaching and leading the congregation in prayer. So he's already dealt with the with these things. In the first three chapters of this letter, especially the need for men to be leading in prayer but specifically for overseers who are called and gifted and properly recognized as the one selected by the holy spirit, to be the ones who rule and teach in the church.

And they're ruling and teaching is. Important. Especially for, as we heard at the end of chapter 3 last week and the verse that leads into today's passage The preaching and teaching of the church is especially of christ as god manifested in the flesh. Vindicated by the spirit justified by the spirit, both during his life.

Um, especially at his baptism but then especially at his resurrection. Seen by angels messengers, probably both angelic and human. The, the word can be generically used there but see the resurrected christ's seen by those whom he was going to send. Into the nations to preach the gospel. And it goes directly from scene by messengers to preach among the gentiles.

Among the nations believed on in the world, which proves that he is the one. Who who has poured out his holy spirit as he sits on the throne? Um of glory now received up in glory, it has demonstrated that he is sitting on the throne, by the fact that he by his all-powerful, Holy spirit is giving not just the gospel to be preached among the nations.

But giving that he himself would be believed on in the world. So this is how Uh, the lord makes christians and grows christians through the preaching of christ from the scriptures. And the church is supposed to be the ground and foundation the instrumental pillar and buttress of this truth about jesus in the world and that actually leads us into Our five versus for today.

Now, the spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith. Giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons speaking lies in hypocrisy. Now, the reason why Uh, paul is writing this to Timothy is because Timothy was already ministering in the latter times. The latter times are the times during which jesus is sitting upon his throne in glory, in another place in first corinthians 10, he is writing about what what Happened to the exodus.

Generation the wilderness generation and he says Um, These. Things happened to them. But they have been written down for our instruction upon whom the ends of the ages of come. So you may have heard people talk about the last days as if it's something that is recent or Um, Or wasn't up until now.

I guess that's the same as recent. But the last days is all of the days since the lord jesus, sat on his throne and poured out his spirit. That's the way the bible talks about the latter times, the last days, Timothy was ministering in the latter times. And so he needed to know what the spirit said was going to happen in the latter times so that he could reform the church in Ephesus.

Oh, for the good of those believers who were in danger of what's described in this passage. So, he says, now the spirit expressively expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons speaking lies in hypocrisy. Having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.

Um, that is Their conscience about speaking that, which is from the bible or from the spirit as opposed to that, which is from themselves. It no longer functions too many times. They have. They have spoken that, which was from man, instead of that, which is from god and did not listen to the pricking of their conscience by the holy spirit, and now they're conscience.

Has a great big callus on it. It's been seared with a hot iron, it is not sensitive. Sometimes they say things that are biblical and that are from the apostolic message from the spirit, sometimes they say things that are just from man and tradition and they can't tell the difference anymore.

Because they've been combining the two. For so long. Their consciences are seared. As if with a hot iron and so they're speaking lines and they from verse two, they don't even know that they are lies. But they are telling to do things that seem to have religious value forbidding to marry.

Well, certainly that must be a good way to fight against fight against lust and the the desire for the wrong kind of interaction with women. If you're never going to to marry it all you can just buy the force of your will decide that that's not going to be part of your life anymore.

Of course, that's utter nonsense. That anti-Christ that man of sin. Um, The, the pope And the papacy they have tried this. They have told exactly this one. And it has not helped, it has hurt. Those priests to our Subject to this false commandment. Become some of And of course, What man-made religion can't produce.

The grace of god and the heart. And so here they have no grace in the heart and they are put into circumstances in which they become some of the worst. Most, abusive, most enslaved sinners in that area. Similarly verse 3 and commanding to abstain from foods. Well, surely that will help us not live for the flesh, not be gluttons.

Etc. No. The commanding of Of fasts that are instituted by the church not responses to god's providence. Not as an occasional part of worship which doesn't just mean infrequent. It means responding to a specific occasion in god's providence but the church just commanding Abstinence from certain foods. They, they invent man-made religion, and what happens?

Instead of coming to your food. And being thankful as one who believes and knows the truth, that the creator of this food, The creator of my taste buds. The, the one behind the fact that it tastes so good, and is so enjoyable, he's the one who became flesh for me.

And died and rose again for me, he's the one who's sitting on the throne of glory. He is the one who has poured out his spirit, and by his spirit has caused those who saw him to write down all that remained, all that was necessary for us and the bible, he is the one who even has given me my faith didn't just send preachers.

Of the bible. But by his spirit has given me faith. And he now has given me this food. And shall i not enjoy it? Is good from his hand. That's the way. Uh, to think about food, that's the way to fight bloody. That's the way. To fight indulging. The flesh.

Because at some point if you're enjoying this as one who is thankful and under the glory of god, you get to that point where eating more might be sinful. And the spirit helping you in that moment. You decide? Absolutely not. I will not sin against the one who has done me such good by preferring the, the earthly fleshly pleasantness of the thing.

Over him. And so, thankfulness is a much better regulator Real thankfulness, the work of the spirit and the heart of the much better regulator. Then. The laws imposed by men. This forbidding to marry or commanding to abstain from foods. And he says, for every creature, every creation of god is good, and nothing is to be refused.

If it is received with thanksgiving for it, is sanctified by the word of god and prayer. Now, that doesn't just mean, as long as you're a bible reading person and a

praying person you could do whatever you want. And just be thankful for it and it's okay. No. It has made holy.

By the right. Uh, by the spirit's use of the ministry that he has ordained for making us, holy. It has made holy by the spirit's work, and the heart. Using the means of grace, the word and prayer to work, graciously in our hearts. That is the religion that is from Jesus Christ.

Jesus sitting on the throne of glory. His spirit working in our hearts using men whom he has called, to preach the word and to lead the congregation and prayer, especially to lead the men who are going to be lifting up their hands and various times and and leading in prayer.

And then blessing the use of his means to the work in our hearts, that makes our hearts fully. That makes our hearts thankful. This is the religion. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. And man-made religion. Only creates. Counterfeits. Look at the parallel passage in Colossians 2, beginning in verse 20.

Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles, Of the world. And he's talking about, Earthly. Commandments. As we'll become more. More apparent here. He's, we're picking up in the middle of of the letters. So The, the phrase is Uh, going back to verse 8, beware lest anyone, teach you through philosophy and empty, deceit, according to the tradition of men.

According to the basic principles of the world and not according to Christ, okay? So he's referring to the traditions of men as principles that come from earth. How can those help you? There's can't help you the God man. Who came from heaven. He can help you. So he back in verse 8, beware lest anyone cheats you through him, through philosophy, and empty, deceit, according to the tradition of men according to the basic principles of the world and not according to Christ, and then verse 20 and therefore if you died with Christ, from the basic principles of the world, From.

The traditions of men. If in Christ, you died. To man-made additions to the Bible. Then why he says, As though living in the world. Do you subject yourself to regulations? Do not touch. Do not taste, do not handle. You hear the the similarity between between that and the doctrines of demons in first Timothy four, one through five.

Which all concern things which perish with the using. According to the commandments and doctrines of men. These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom. In self-imposed religion. The false humility. And neglect of the body. Butter of no. Value against the indulgence. Of the flesh. And so, there are things.

That have the appearance of wisdom. The appearance of humility like it says here. Or the appearance of sanctification. Or the appearance of joy. Or the appearance of thanksgiving. But if it comes, From the tradition of man from the invention of man. Than it does not have attached to it.

The promise. Of the power of the Holy Spirit and the power of the resurrected Christ working in the heart, To change the heart. And that's why all man-made religion, whatever it is. However, wise, it sounds Any religious invention of man. Is. A demonic lie. Designed to steal from us.

The reality, the genuine thing that is actually in Jesus. Which leaves us with two possibilities if we follow it one. We'll just not have. Sanctification. Which has been the case for many who tried to follow these rules. And have plummeted, deeper and deeper into obvious sin. Or. Even worse.

Will have a false sanctification. Will have some measure of success. And making us feel like we're, we've got self-control. Feel like we are spiritual. Feel like we're joyous. But there's counterfeit joy as well. Sentimental feelings. That are rooted in earthly things. Instead of an arisen, and And rate and ruling.

Christ. And that's an even worse position to be in. To not actually have Jesus. I have it masked over. Because demonic lies. Have convinced you that you have Jesus. The Lord protect us. And his church. From these deceiving spirits doctrines of demons. And lies spoken in hypocrisy. By those whose consciences are seared as with a hot iron.

Because they've done it so long, they don't even know. That it's wrong anymore.

My father in heaven. If there is anything in our own, Thought understanding practice. That is not from your word that is from the traditions of men that is from our own devising, from our own wills that will worship that. We heard about in Colossians to We pray. Lord that you would deliver us from it.

Grant to us, repentance. Restore sensitivity to our consciences. So that we are able to tell. When we pray o Lord that you would help us to cling to you to cling to Christ. Cling to all that is from your word that your spirit would bless your word to it, that we would be full of thanksgiving because our hearts have been made.

Holy Through your blessing, upon your word and your blessing upon prayer. Your blessing upon baptism and the supper. Your blessing upon the means of your grace work. Graciously yes, we pray. That we may be full of the real life. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. And we pray for your church.

That wherever, She is in bondage. To the traditions of men. That you would have mercy. And that you would come by your spirit. And set her free. Into the glorious freedom of one. Who has only that, which is from Jesus. For we ask it in his name. Amen.