

The Pastoral Epistles

I Timothy 4:1-5 – “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,² through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared,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.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.”

Paul’s concern for the purity of the church is evidenced in this text. He is aware of dangers that lie in wait for the body and bride of Christ in “_____ times.”
What times are those?

Eschatological perspectives:

To the Jewish believers – Eschatology begins with Christ’s coming.

- * _____ 30-31 – is a prophecy of the last days. 31:31-34 specifically refers to Christ’s work in the new covenant, which falls right in the middle of the eschatological context.
- * _____ 2:36-45 – is a prophecy of world empires. 44-45 specifically refers to the Kingdom of Christ, which would naturally be established upon his appearing. Right?
- * _____ 52-54 – is a prophecy of Israel’s restoration. 53 is the classic chapter on Christ’s atoning work, but it falls in the middle of a prophecy about Israel’s end hope.

To modern believers – Eschatology begins with the Tribulation period.

There is evidence of later times even today for some have devoted themselves to “deceitful spirits and teachings of demons.”

“deceitful spirits” – spirit which deceives or _____ to error

“teachings of demons” – demon _____

The character of these who teach bad doctrine is stated in verse 2. They are “liars” and their “conscience is seared.”

“liars” – *pseudo-speakers*, those who speak that other than _____

“conscience is seared” – understanding of reality is cauterized or _____

* Note * This probably speaks to a permanent disfiguring, as well as the sealing result of cauterization.

The prominent teaching of these liars is that they “forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created...”

“forbid marriage” – oppose marriage

“require abstinence from foods” – teach separation from food

Teaching which promotes dietary restriction on religious grounds is outside of our faith and doctrine. However, because it is a basic human need, when appeal is made to that, it seems like a legitimate avenue of demonstrating devotion or dedication.

* Current illustration: Lent. Lent is a solemnity religious observance in the Catholic liturgical calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends approximately six weeks later, before Easter Sunday. The purpose of Lent is the preparation of the believer for Easter through prayer, doing penance, repentance of sins, almsgiving, and denial of ego.

According to verses 4 and 5, what dietary restrictions are there for God’s people?

Why dietary restrictions in the Law (IE Leviticus 11)? The Bible doesn’t have a specific answer. But let’s consider the nature of the Law: It was a requirement for covenant blessing (Deut. 28), it was never a means of _____ sanctification (Gal. 3:11-14), it was never a means of _____ sanctification (Gal. 3:1-5).

Now, verses 4 and 5 do mention a condition to consuming any foods, that it be received with “_____.”