

# 1 TIMOTHY

LESSON FIVE

“THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY”

Chapter 4:1-12

[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

[D] 3:14-15 Intended Visit

[E] 3:16 The Mystery of Godliness

Paul now moves from his teaching on the mystery of godliness to write of something much darker.

[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

[D] 3:14-15 Intended Visit

[E] 3:16 The Mystery of Godliness

[E] 4:1-12 The Mystery of Iniquity

Look for the answers to these questions:

1. Where is the phrase “the mystery of iniquity” found in the Bible?

Match the word to the correct definition:

- |                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Sin ____           | a) Wickedness in character       |
| 3. Iniquity ____      | b) A deliberate act of rebellion |
| 4. Transgression ____ | c) To miss the mark              |

5. What are the two parts to Paul’s teaching on “The Mystery of Iniquity”?

6. How can a person’s conscience become seared with a hot iron?

7. What verse teaches us why we should pray before we eat?

8. True or false? A good minister should only teach NEW things.

9. What are the two kinds of exercise in 1 Timothy 4: 7 and 8?

10. What are the SIX ways Timothy was told to be an example?

The phrase “the mystery of iniquity” comes from Paul’s second letter to the Thessalonians. This is the spirit of antichrist that tries to disrupt the work of the Holy Spirit.

## 2 Thessalonians 2:7a

<sup>7</sup> For the mystery of iniquity doth already work...



Before we begin in 1 Timothy 4,  
let us examine **three words** that are  
closely related but have different  
meanings:

SIN,  
INIQUITY, and  
TRANSGRESSION.

**All three words are in Psalm 32:5**

<sup>5</sup> I acknowledged my **sin** unto thee,  
and mine **iniquity** have I not hid.

I said,

I will confess my **transgressions**  
unto the LORD...



To **SIN** is to miss the mark. It is a violation of the divine law in thought or in act. \*

\*Strong's Concordance, ἁμαρτία (hamartia)



**Psalm 32:5**

I acknowledged my **sin** unto thee,  
and mine iniquity have I not hid.

I said,  
I will confess my transgressions  
unto the LORD...

**INIQUITY** is wickedness or immorality in nature or character.  
It is not an action, but the *character* of an action.



**Psalm 32:5**

I acknowledged my sin unto thee,  
and mine **iniquity** have I not hid.

I said,  
I will confess my transgressions  
unto the LORD...



A **TRANSGRESSION** is a *deliberate* act of rebellion against the given standard.



### Psalm 32:5

I acknowledged my sin unto thee,  
and mine iniquity have I not hid.

I said,

I will confess my **transgressions**  
unto the LORD...

Paul's teaching on the Mystery of Iniquity has these two parts:

- 1) The characteristics of iniquity:
- 2) What is needed to confront iniquity:

First, he exposes false doctrine by comparing it to the truth of God.

1) The characteristics of iniquity:

a) False teachings of demons (1-3a)

b) The true teaching of God (3b- 5)

2) What is needed to confront iniquity:

## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

- 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly,  
that in the latter times some shall  
depart from the faith,  
giving heed to seducing spirits,  
and doctrines of devils;
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy;  
having their conscience seared  
with a hot iron;
- 3<sup>a</sup> Forbidding to marry,  
*and commanding to abstain from  
meats...*

## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

- 1 **Now the Spirit speaketh expressly,** that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
- 3<sup>a</sup> Forbidding to marry, *and commanding to abstain from meats...*

The Holy Spirit speaks expressly (clearly) through the Scriptures and the gifts of the Spirit. These two will always agree.

## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

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some shall depart from the faith,  
giving heed to seducing spirits,  
and doctrines of devils;
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy;  
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with a hot iron;
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The latter times are the current church age.



## The false teachings of devils

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- 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times **some shall depart from the faith,** giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
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Christians will harden their hearts to God, and live according to popular doctrines.

## The false teachings of devils

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- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
- 3<sup>a</sup> Forbidding to marry, *and commanding to abstain from meats...*

Seducing spirits appeal to man's lust for something empowering and sensational.

### Mark 13:22

For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, **to seduce,** **if it were possible, even the elect.**



## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

- 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, **and doctrines of devils;**
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
- 3<sup>a</sup> Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats...

If it is not a doctrine of God, what is it?  
Remember the charge – “teach no other doctrine”!

## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

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- 2 **Speaking lies in hypocrisy;** having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
- 3a Forbidding to marry, *and commanding to abstain from meats...*

### Psalm 12:2

They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.*

## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

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- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; **having their conscience seared with a hot iron;**
- 3<sup>a</sup> Forbidding to marry, *and commanding to abstain from meats...*

When something is “seared with a hot iron,” it loses feeling. A person can become so hardened by the continual practice of iniquity that it no longer bothers his conscience to do wrong.

## The false teachings of devils

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- 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
- 3a **Forbidding to marry,** *and commanding to abstain from meats...*

The marriage of a man and a woman was established by God for the good of the individual and society. It is required of bishops and deacons to have a wife. But for 1,000 years, the Roman Catholics have demanded that their priests and nuns remain unmarried. Is this a doctrine of God?



## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

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that in the latter times  
some shall depart from the faith,  
giving heed to seducing spirits,  
and doctrines of devils;
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy;  
having their conscience seared  
with a hot iron;
- 3<sup>a</sup> Forbidding to marry,  
**and commanding to abstain from  
meats...**

Paul answers this false doctrine about diet with the true teachings of God.

## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

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- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
- 3<sup>a</sup> Forbidding to marry,  
***and commanding to abstain from meats...***

## The true teachings of God

### 1 Timothy 4:3b-5

- 3<sup>b</sup> ... which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.
- 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:
- 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

## The false teachings of devils

### 1 Timothy 4:1-3a

- 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
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## The true teachings of God

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- 3<sup>b</sup> ... which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.
- 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:
- 5 **For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.**

This is why Christians give thanksgiving at every meal and ask God to bless their food.

Next, Paul shows the church's great need for faithful ministers of truth:

1) The characteristics of iniquity:

a) False teachings of demons (1-3a)

b) The true teaching of God (3b- 5)

2) What is needed to confront iniquity:

a) True ministers and their duties (6-11)

b) True ministers and their example (12)



Next, Paul shows the church's great need for faithful ministers of truth:

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b) True ministers and their example (12)

He must be blameless in his DOCTRINE and EXAMPLE.

## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:6

<sup>6</sup> If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

Too often we think it is our duty to teach the Church NEW things when we should be encouraging them to remember things they already know.



## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:6

<sup>6</sup> If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, **thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ,** nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

This is a work that God will honor.



## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:6

<sup>6</sup> If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, **nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine,** whereunto thou hast attained.



Good doctrine feeds the soul.

### Matthew 4:4

... It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:7

<sup>7</sup> But refuse profane and **old wives' fables**, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.

Earlier, Paul told Timothy that he should “neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies.” Now he warns of a different kind of fable.



## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:7

<sup>7</sup> But refuse profane and **old wives' fables**, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.

An **old wives' fable** is a story believed to be true but actually just a superstition. Stories like these were often passed down by older women to a younger generation.



## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:7

- <sup>7</sup> But refuse profane and old wives' fables, *and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.*

How long can you go without exercise and still stay in shape?

As someone said, “Seven days without prayer makes one weak.”



## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:8-9

- 8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.
- 9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation.

Paul compares two kinds of exercise – physical and spiritual. Both require commitment and hard work. Only one has eternal value.





## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:10

<sup>10</sup> For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

The work of the ministry is not for men who desire a life of ease.



## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### 1 Timothy 4:10

<sup>10</sup> For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, **because we trust in the living God,** who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

In the church of the living God,  
we must trust in the living God.



## True ministers and their duties (4:6-11)

### **1 Timothy 4:11**

<sup>11</sup> These things command and teach.



Next, Paul shows the church's great need for faithful ministers of truth:

1) The characteristics of iniquity:

a) False teachings of demons (1-3a)

b) The true teaching of God (3b- 5)

2) What is needed to confront iniquity:

a) True ministers and their duties (6-11)

b) True ministers and their example (12)



## True ministers and their example (4:12)

### 1 Timothy 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

No matter your age, gender, color, caste, education, or financial situation, you can always be a good example of a follower of Jesus Christ.



## True ministers and their example (4:12)

### 1 Timothy 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, **in word,** in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

### Ephesians 4:29

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.



## True ministers and their example (4:12)

### 1 Timothy 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word,  
**in conversation,**  
in charity,  
in spirit,  
in faith,  
in purity.



In the KJV Bible, your “conversation” is your way of life. Philippians 1:27 says, “Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.”

## True ministers and their example (4:12)

### 1 Timothy 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, **in charity,** in spirit, in faith, in purity.



As 1 Corinthians 13 makes clear, without charity, we are nothing.



## True ministers and their example (4:12)

### 1 Timothy 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, **in spirit,** in faith, in purity.



### Romans 12:11

<sup>11</sup> Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

## True ministers and their example (4:12)

### 1 Timothy 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, **in faith,** in purity.



It is easy to give in to fear, and so it will be a lifelong challenge to keep your faith. As Jesus said, “Fear not: believe only” (Luke 8:50).

## True ministers and their example (4:12)

### 1 Timothy 4:12

<sup>12</sup> Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, **in purity.**



Our hope keeps us pure.

### 1 John 3:2-3

- <sup>2</sup> Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.
- <sup>3</sup> And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

In just 12 verses, Paul exposed the characteristics of iniquity, and the way to overcome it.

1) The characteristics of iniquity:

a) False teachings of demons (1-3a)

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a) True ministers and their duties (6-11)

b) True ministers and their example (12)

[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

[D] 3:14-15 Intended Visit

[E] 3:16 The Mystery of Godliness

[E] 4:1-12 The Mystery of Iniquity

This section is now ended.

[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

[D] 3:14-15 Intended Visit

[E] 3:16 Mystery of Godliness

[E] 4:1-12 Mystery of Iniquity

[D] 4:13-16 Intended Visit

[C] 5:1 to 6:2 Christian Duties

[B] 6:3-21a Admonition, Practical

[A] 6:21b Benediction

See how the pattern reverses  
like a reflection in a mirror:

[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

[D] 3:14-15 Intended Visit

[E] 3:16 Mystery of Godliness

[E] 4:1-12 Mystery of Iniquity

[D] 4:13-16 Intended Visit

[C] 5:1 to 6:2 Christian Duties

[B] 6:3-21a Admonition, Practical

[A] 6:21b Benediction

[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

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[C] 5:1 to 6:2 Christian Duties

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[A] 6:21b Benediction



[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

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[A] 6:21b Benediction

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[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

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[E] 4:1-12 Mystery of Iniquity

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[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

[D] 3:14-15 Intended Visit

[E] 3:16 Mystery of Godliness

[E] 4:1-12 Mystery of Iniquity

Our next lesson starts here

[D] 4:13-16 Intended Visit

[C] 5:1 to 6:2 Christian Duties

[B] 6:3-21a Admonition, Practical

[A] 6:21b Benediction

Questions to test your understanding of this lesson:

1. Where is the phrase “the mystery of iniquity” found in the Bible?

Match the word to the correct definition:

- |                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2. Sin ____           | a) Wickedness in character       |
| 3. Iniquity ____      | b) A deliberate act of rebellion |
| 4. Transgression ____ | c) To miss the mark              |

5. What are the two parts to Paul’s teaching on “The Mystery of Iniquity”?

6. How can a person’s conscience become seared with a hot iron?

7. What verse teaches us why we should pray before we eat?

8. True or false? A good minister should only teach NEW things.

9. What are the two kinds of exercise in 1 Timothy 4: 7 and 8?

10. What are the SIX ways Timothy was told to be an example?

Each question is worth 10 points. Do NOT share your answers with other students.



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