Growing Strong in Faith | Part 6

Lesson 3 1 Timothy 4:1-10 June 25, 2023

False and True Teaching

INTRODUCTION

In 1978, the world was shocked at the mass murder/suicide of 909 men, women and children in Jonestown, Guyana. The leader of the Peoples Temple was a man named Jim Jones. He came to faith as a child through the ministry of a Nazarene woman. Over the years, he was involved the Pentecostal and Disciples of Christ denominations. But Mr. Jones felt he was given "special revelations" from God, and he allowed those revelations to distort his belief in the Holy Scriptures. He amassed many followers, ending the tragic deaths of over 900 people.

I would like to say we don't have cults like this any longer, but I would be wrong. But so often we see the distortions of scripture far more subtle. We see the Word of God being added to or watered down to fit the opinion of the teacher or culture.

In our lesson this week we are going to look at what a false teacher is, how to spot false teaching, and our response and protection to the distortions.

Memory verse: "That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe."

—1 Timothy 4:10

Pray, and read 1 Timothy 4:1-10. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. Who are the deceivers that distort scripture? (1 Timothy 4:1-2)

2. What do they say is deceptive? (1 Timothy 4:3-5)

3. How should we respond? (1 Timothy 4: 6-8)

4. Why do we "labor and strive"? (1Timothy 4:10)

INTERPRETATION: What do the passages mean?

1. What do we learn about false teachers and/or prophets? (Deuteronomy 13:1-3; Jeremiah 23:13-14; Matthew 7:15-20)

2. The greatest deceiver in all of scripture is Satan himself. He is wily, sneaky, and will convince us our sin is not sin and our opinions are wiser than the scriptures. We see him twice in scripture using his evil abilities to distort the truth. How did the serpent distort the command of God for Adam and Eve? (Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-6) How did the devil distort the word of God while trying to tempt Jesus? (Matthew 4:1-10)

3. Read 1 John 2:15-17. How do the warnings of this passage apply to the temptations we saw in the Genesis and Matthew passages above?

4. Paul encourages Timothy to strive for godliness to combat the false teachings of his day. How can we protect ourselves from being conned by the false teachers of today? (Matthew 4:1-10; Ephesians 6:10-20)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. Unfortunately, we, as Christians see the distortion of God's Word throughout our culture and all cultures of the world. Take the following Biblical truths in scripture and explain how you see it being distorted in today.

• Creation: Genesis 1

• Marriage: Genesis 2:22-24

• Virgin birth: Matthew 1:18-25

• Mankind's redemption: John 3:16, 14:6

• Sin of mankind: Romans 1:18-32, 3:23

2. Was there ever a time that you were tempted to believe the words of a false teacher? How did you handle the situation?