WEEK 7 · SERMON NOTES

TRAIN YOURSELF FOR GODLINESS

1 Timothy 4:1–10

BIG IDEA

Discernment keeps you from the counterfeit; training forms you into the likeness of Christ. And both flow from hope in the living God, not a bid for His approval.

SERIES QUESTION

What does a healthy church family look like — and what threatens it?

ANCHOR VERSE · 1 TIMOTHY 4:7–8

"…Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

THIS WEEK'S PASSAGE · 1 TIMOTHY 4:1–10 ESV

1 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.
6 If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. 7 Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; 8 for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.
9 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. 10 For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

BEFORE WE BEGIN

- Every soldier knows a fitness test is coming. But you cannot _____ for it.
- Nobody passes because of the night before. You pass because of a hundred ordinary mornings when you did not feel like getting up, and you got up anyway.
- For two weeks, Paul stops talking to Timothy about the church and starts talking to Timothy about Timothy. And this morning, he is talking to _____.
- A healthy house needs healthy people in it. So how do you take spiritual growth seriously without turning it into another way to _____ yourself?

READ MORE *1 Timothy 4:1–10 · 1 Timothy 3:15*

NOTES

MOVEMENT 1 · vv. 1–3a

SPOT THE COUNTERFEIT

Deception rarely shows up looking like _____. It usually shows up looking like extra _____.

- Paul says the Spirit expressly says this. It is not a hunch. He warned these same leaders face to face that false teachers would rise from among your own selves (Acts 20:30). Not from outside. From _____ the house.
- "Later times" is not some distant future. The last days began when Jesus came. So it can happen in _____.

- The lie comes through human mouths, but it starts with deceitful spirits. The people who carry it have _____ consciences, so they can teach something destructive without being troubled.
- What did these teachings actually teach? Not “go party.” They taught: do not get _____, and do not eat certain foods.
- The lie looked more spiritual than the truth. More serious. More disciplined. Church, the enemy is not _____.
- Satan disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14). These rules had an appearance of _____, but no power to change a heart (Col 2:23).
- Our version sounds like Jesus, plus: Jesus plus a list of rules nobody can find in the Bible, the right diet, the right clothes, my side’s politics.
- Ephesus said the body is the enemy. Our culture says the body is the savior. Different costume, same _____.
- Fasting is biblical. Singleness is a gift. The problem is not choosing them to seek God. The problem is _____ them as the price of holiness.

THE TEST (1 JOHN 4:1)

Does this teaching agree with God’s _____? Does it lead me to trust and obey Jesus? Or does it add requirements God never gave and make my standing with Him depend on keeping them?

READ MORE *Acts 20:30 · 2 Corinthians 11:14 · Colossians 2:23 · 1 John 4:1*

NOTES

MOVEMENT 2 · vv. 3b–5

RECEIVE THE GIFT

God is not _____, and holiness is not _____.

- Paul answers the lie by going back to page one: “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very _____” (Gen 1:31).
- The false teachers forbade marriage. But marriage was God’s idea before sin ever entered the world. The first thing God called not good was a man _____ (Gen 2:18).
- And food? God told Israel: eat, be full, and bless the Lord (Deut 8:10).
- Verse 5: it is made holy by the word of God and prayer. Not because the food was dirty and prayer washed it. The gift is set _____ for what God made it for.
- God’s Word says it is good. Our prayer says thank You. And something ordinary becomes an act of _____.
- Jesus did this. Before He fed the five thousand, He looked up to heaven and gave _____. On the night He was betrayed, He took bread and gave thanks.
- A counterfeit faith is suspicious of every good thing. It cannot enjoy a meal, a marriage, a Saturday off, or a good laugh without feeling _____.
- Every good and perfect gift is from above, from the Father of lights (Jas 1:17). If it is enjoyable, that does not make it sin.
- Marriage is good inside His design. Food is good when it does not become your god. Thanksgiving turns our attention back to the _____.

THE GRATITUDE TEST

Here is a test for your spirituality: is it _____?

READ MORE *Genesis 1:31 · Genesis 2:18 · Deuteronomy 8:10 · James 1:17*

NOTES

MOVEMENT 3 · vv. 6–8

TRAIN FOR GODLINESS

Nobody _____ into godliness. You have never once floated _____.

- Feed first. Before Paul tells Timothy to train, he tells him to eat: being trained in the words of the faith carries the idea of being _____.
- You cannot feed people what you are not eating yourself, and you cannot fight a lie you have never measured against the truth. So stop wasting time on silly myths: spiritual _____ that sounds deep and goes nowhere.
- If you belong to Jesus, you are already in His family. These habits do not purchase His love. Godliness is a life shaped by love and reverence for God, and the goal is to become more like Jesus.
- "Train" is gymnazo, the root of gymnasium: the sweaty, repetitive, unglamorous work of an athlete. And notice, train yourself. Nobody can do your _____ for you.
- Bodily training is of some value. Some, not none. But godliness pays out in this life, and it pays out _____.
- Look at Jesus: rising very early, while it was still dark, He went out to a desolate place and prayed (Mark 1:35). If the Son of God scheduled time with the Father, what makes us think we can _____ it?
- Prayer. Scripture. Worship with God's family. Generosity. Fasting. Serving. Like the tree planted by streams of water (Ps 1:2–3), the fruit shows up outside your devotional time: someone interrupts you and you answer with _____.
- You spot the counterfeit by being so familiar with the real thing that the fake feels wrong in your hands. Discernment is trained by constant practice (Heb 5:14).
- It will not always feel good. For the moment all discipline seems painful, but _____ it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:11). Keep showing up.

ASK YOURSELF

What are you practicing every day, and who is it making you _____?

Tell your neighbor: Start _____.

READ MORE *Mark 1:35 · Psalm 1:2–3 · Hebrews 5:14 · Hebrews 12:11*

NOTES

MOVEMENT 4 · vv. 9–10

STRIVE FROM HOPE

We don't train to get into the _____. We train because we're _____ in it.

- This is the third trustworthy saying in this letter. Toil means to work to the point of exhaustion. Strive is where we get our word _____.
- Look at the reason: because we have our hope set on the living God. He is not an idol you have to carry. He carries you. Hope first, _____ second.
- Saved by grace, not by works. Saved for good works (Eph 2:8–10). Get that order wrong and you end up exhausted or _____.
- Even the effort is His. Work out what God is working in (Phil 2:12–13).
- Nobody does PT in order to enlist. You do PT because you already wear the uniform. You already belong to the _____.
- God is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. His mercy reaches every person (2:4), and that rescue becomes yours through faith in Jesus Christ. Nobody in this room is outside His reach.
- A word to the tired. Some of you were raised in a church where discipline became a scale, and you never made weight. Jesus says, come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you _____ (Matt 11:28).
- The training is real. But it happens under His _____, not under the counterfeit's whip.

> **REMEMBER**
> **Grace does not make the Christian life effortless. Grace makes the effort _____.**

READ MORE *1 Timothy 2:4 · Ephesians 2:8–10 · Philippians 2:12–13 · Matthew 11:28–30*

NOTES

THIS WEEK

TEST IT · THANK HIM · TRAIN

[ ] **TEST IT**

Name one teaching or voice you have been trusting. Hold it up to God's Word this week. Does it agree with what He says, or add requirements He never gave? (1 John 4:1)

The voice I'll test:

[ ] **THANK HIM**

Every meal this week, pause and thank God out loud. With your family. In the car. At the DFAC. Let gratitude retrain your heart. (1 Tim 4:4–5)

Where I'll say thank You:

[ ] **TRAIN**

One discipline. One day. One time. Write it down before you leave this building. Not your ideal week. Your actual week. Tuesday at 5:45, before the kids wake up, I will read one chapter. Small reps. Real reps. (1 Tim 4:7)

My one discipline / Day / Time:

[ ] **KEEP PRAYING YOUR TWO NAMES**

From Week 3 — every day. We are not done.

THE CHARGE · THIS WEEK'S ANSWER TO THE SERIES QUESTION

A healthy church family holds to the truth, receives God's gifts with thanks, and grows in godliness because its hope is in the living God.

What threatens it is a faith that looks extra holy but is empty, forgets to give thanks, and drifts because nobody is training.

WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT TELLING ME THROUGH THIS MESSAGE?

ANSWER KEY

Before We Begin: cram · you · prove

Movement 1: Spot the Counterfeit: sin · holiness · inside · ours · seared · married · dumb · wisdom · lie · requiring · Word

Movement 2: Receive the Gift: stingy · misery · good · alone · apart · worship · thanks · guilty · Giver · grateful

Movement 3: Train for Godliness: drifts · uphill · nourished · gossip · reps · forever · wing · patience · later · become · training

Movement 4: Strive from Hope: family · already · agonize · effort · proud · unit · rest · yoke · worth it