

Repeated Words, Themes, and Ideas

1. Faith/Doctrine/Truth/Word, the Spirit clearly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith and give heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 4:1. Those who believe and know God's Truth know they can marry and partake of all foods because God created them to be received with thanksgiving. After all, every creature of God is good and nothing is to be refused if received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer, 4:3-5. If Timothy teaches the brethren in Ephesus the words of faith and good doctrine he's carefully followed, he will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, 4:6. Until Paul arrives, Timothy must give attention to reading (God's Word), exhortation (through God's Word), and teaching (God's Word), 4:13. Timothy must meditate on and give himself entirely to studying, teaching, and applying God's truths so that his progress may be evident to all, 4:15. Timothy must pay close attention to his conduct and God's teaching; he must persist in them, for in doing so he will save himself and those who hear him, 4:16 (other places this appears: 1:2, 3, 4, 5, 5-7, 10, 18, 19; 2:5-7, 11-14; 3:9, 15-16).
2. False/Bad Doctrine, the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, give heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, and speak hypocritical lies because their conscience is seared, as they preach asceticism regarding foods and even marriage, 4:1-3. Timothy must reject profane and old wives' fables and instead train himself to be godly, 4:7 (other places this appears: 1:3-4, 6-7, 19-20).
3. Seeing God's Word simply as Doctrine/Instruction vs. Personal Life-transforming Power, those who depart from the faith by giving heed to deceiving spirits and demonic doctrines, who speak hypocritical lies and whose conscience is seared, only see rules to be followed, i.e., they erroneously see God's Word as doctrine or instructions that forbid things like marriage and various foods. But those who know and believe, who've been personally transformed by God's truth know that God created many things like marriage and various foods to be received with thanksgiving. They know that every creature of God is good and nothing is to be refused if it's received with gratitude since it is sanctified by God's Word and prayer, 4:1-5. Instead of erroneous doctrine which includes profane, old wives' fables which only produce instructions or rules for abstinence, Timothy must teach those in Ephesus God's words of faith and good doctrine, which he's carefully and personally followed. God's Word applied in this manner is profitable for all things, i.e., it will transform this life and the life to come. This is something worthy of our complete attention and acceptance. It's what Paul and others labor in; it's why they're willing to suffer for pursuing this life of godliness and transformation. They do it because they have confidence that the living God can save them because He's the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. This is what Timothy must command and teach, 4:3, 6-11. Timothy's audience in Ephesus needs saving from the stale, impersonal and erroneous doctrinal view of God's Word, that it's a set of instructions designed to keep us away from things that will lead to sin. Therefore, Timothy must be an example to them of God's transforming power in his speech, conduct, love, spirit, faith and purity. He must give himself entirely to God's Word so that his personal transformation will be evident to all. He must focus on teaching and encouraging them to apply God's Word instead of keeping a bunch of rules. In doing this, he will save himself and them, i.e., it will rescue him from the difficult task ahead of him in Ephesus and them from their impersonal view of God's Word which is currently causing many problems [1:3-7; 2:1-15], 4:3, 12-16 (other places this appears: 1:3-7, 8-16, 18-20; 3:15-16).

4. Godliness/Ungodliness, the Spirit clearly says that in latter times false teachers will depart from the faith and give heed to deceiving spirits and demonic doctrines. They will preach their hypocritical lies that godliness is reached through abstaining from foods and even marriage. But those who believe and know God's truth about godliness know that there's nothing ungodly about marriage or eating various foods. We can partake of both if we receive them with thanksgiving. After all, every creature of God is good and nothing is to be refused if it's received with thanksgiving for it is sanctified by God's Word and prayer, 4:1-5. Timothy must reject profane and old wives' fables (which lead to ungodliness). Instead, he must train himself to be godly in the words of faith and good doctrine which he has carefully followed. 4:6-7. Bodily exercise profits a little compared to spiritual exercise, i.e., pursuing godliness by applying God's words of faith and good doctrine is profitable in this life and the one to come, 4:6-8. Paul and others train hard in spiritual godliness in order to profit from it in this life and the one to come because they trust that the living God can save them since He's the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe, 4:8-10. Timothy must be a godly example to the brethren in Ephesus in speech, conduct, love, spirit faith, and purity, 4:12. Timothy must meditate on and give himself entirely to studying, teaching and applying God's truths so that his godly progress will be evident to all, 4:15 (other places this appears: 1:3-4, 5, 6-7, 9-10, 13, 18-19, 19-20; 2:1-2, 8, 9-10, 11-15; 3:1-7, 8-13, 14-15, 16).
5. God, those who believe and know God's Truth know that there's nothing wrong with marriage or eating various foods because God created both to be received with thanksgiving. For every creature of God is good and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving since they are sanctified by the Word of God and prayer, 4:3-5. Paul and others work hard on godliness (which profits in this life and the life to come) and they're also willing to suffer reproach for pursuing the same because they have confidence that the living God will save them because He's the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe, 4:8-10 (other places this appears: 1:1, 2, 9-11, 12-17; 2:1-4, 5; 3:5, 15, 16).
6. Jesus, if Timothy instructs the brethren in Ephesus in the words of faith and good doctrine which he has carefully followed, he will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, 4:6 (other places this appears: 1:1, 2-3, 12, 13-14, 15, 16; 2:5-6, 5-7; 3:13, 16).
7. Save/Salvation, Timothy must pay close attention to his conduct and to teaching God's Word, i.e., his behavior must be a constant pursuit of godliness according to God's Word and his teaching must do the same for those who hear him. If he continues in these, he will save himself and those who hear him [i.e., he and they will be saved from all the problems in Ephesus caused by the doctrinal lies and errors], 4:16 (other places this appears: 1:4-5, 12-14, 15, 16, 18-19; 2:4, 11-15).