

1 Timothy 4:1-6

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[0 : 0 0] so we continue then in our progress at this stage through 1st Timothy we come now in this chapter 4 to how Paul continuing on from chapter 3 says the spirit speaketh expressly then the latter times some shall depart from the faith now the first contrast that we have to recognise here is that the spirit speaking expressly this is as opposed to the mystery which was spoken of at the end of chapter 3 verse 16 without controversy great is the mystery of godliness although it was something which had been at one stage hidden but was now revealed so likewise this is something which which God makes known to his people but which is nevertheless a deep truth that is not necessarily understood or appreciated by all right away it is something which has to be waited upon something which has to be unfurled unfolded by the Lord by contrast to that deep mystery the spirit speaketh expressly right out in the open that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils now if we think in terms of the spirit speaking some take for a line that this means well those who have the gift of prophecy in the gaze of the apostles it's them that we're speaking and saying well this is going to happen this is going to this falling away is going to take place if that were all that we were going on we think well who is Paul talking about what does he mean but of course where the spirit is speaking and wherever the spirit is speaking it will always be in line with the written word of God it may be something that is new in the sense of particular to our situation and God may speak freshly as it were through and out of his word to our particular situation or to a particular event or circumstance in our lives this is one reason how the word of God is always fresh always new a living word and it will speak perhaps particularly to our immediate situation but what the spirit speaks will always be found to be in line with what the spirit has previously revealed through the written word of God in other words as we've said many times in the past the spirit of God cannot and will not ever contradict the word of God so where we have the spirit speaking

Paul is not just simply referring to those like Agabus that we read of in the Acts who had the gift of prophecy and others who were able to prophesy because the Lord had laid on them that spirit they would likewise say the same thing but Paul himself of course speaks in this and in other places but if it's going to be of the spirit then it will likewise also be in line with what the word has revealed there are various places in Daniel for example that speak of this not least in chapter 11 verse 30 the ships of Kittim shall come against him therefore he shall be grieved this is one of the kings that was being prophesied about in Daniel 11 and return and have indignation against the holy covenant so shall he do he shall even return and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant in other words this king this one who sought to throw down the Lord's people would cooperate collaborate with those who themselves had turned away those for them that forsake the holy covenant there will always be at every age those who having pledged themselves to the Lord and to his cause will then turn away from it and side with basically the spirit of Antichrist the spirit of the age the spirit that is against the Lord and this of course is in line exactly as we would expect with what Jesus himself got in Matthew 24 for example verse 11 many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many now if people are going to be deceived there must be a certain plausibility in what the false prophet is saying if for example somebody is going to come up to you and say don't believe Jesus believe Allah believe Muhammad then a Christian is going to say well that's not right we know Jesus is the son of God so we're not going to be taken in by this or somebody else says no no don't believe Jesus believe Buddha that's not in line with what we always believed before but if somebody says no no believe Jesus but Jesus wants you to do this and Jesus would always want you to be like that well that's not in line with what we had before that's not in line with what the word of God actually says no no but this is a new teaching a new word of God a new spirit for the age and so on it's deceiving because it's plausible and because it seduces it gives this sort of desire and willingness and so on many false prophets shall rise as Jesus says

Matthew 24 verse 11 shall deceive many and because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold now iniquity of course an expression a form about our sin but it does literally imply that which is within iniquity that which is inside that which from which our evil actions spring and so on the iniquity shall abound because that false who within abounds the love of many for the Lord waxes cold when we cease to love the Lord when that vital relationship living relationship is no longer there or has cooled then everything else becomes a bit of a drag if you don't have the spirit and the beating heart of love for Christ then church is just a bit of a chore and meetings oh it's a drag and the Bible becomes dry as dust prayer is just a duty if you even don't neglect it altogether and it all becomes a bit of a drag if we haven't got that burning love for the Lord if you haven't got that love for Christ within the heart then the love of many shall wax cold because this iniquity abounds that he that shall endure to the air the same shall be saved and likewise later on in that same chapter 24 of Matthew

Jesus says there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect behold I have told you before this is not some deep mystery this is not some oh if you can understand it oh if you can unlock the mysterious sayings of Jesus he couldn't be more plain I have told you before I'm telling you in advance what is going to happen and of course this is exactly what Paul himself had said if we look turn just back a couple of pages from this first Timothy the second Thessalonians in chapter 2 at verse 3 let no man deceive you by any means for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition a falling away first what did he say to the Ephesian elders remember that Timothy is appointed to lead appointed is the footnotes say a first bishop of the Ephesians but in taking his leave of the Ephesian elders

Paul says in Acts 20 verse 28 take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God which you have purchased with his own blood for I know this that after my departing shall grievous wolves entering among you not sparing the flock also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them now here's the twofold thing here one is the destruction and the weakening and the sowing of doubt and dissension and unbelief amongst the flock and the other is drawing away people after this false teaching and they'll be drawn away because it sounds at one level so plausible and so this surely is what God must want of us Peter likewise again because this is the spirit speaking expressly if that is of the spirit then it will emerge again and again in those who are the true servants of the Lord it will emerge again and again in that which the Lord has revealed and written it's not just some ethereal spirit if you can grasp it if you can grab hold of it if you can hear what the spirit is saying it will be in line with what is written in God's word 2nd Peter chapter 3 verse 3 knowing this first there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lust and saying where is the promise of his coming for since the father speaks all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation scoffing and coming trying to sow doubt in the hearts of the Lord's people 1st John chapter 2 turn it one page chapter 2 verse 18 little children it is the last time and as you have heard the antichrist shall come even now are there many antichrists whereby we know that it is the last time they went out from us but they were not of us if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us now Paul of course writes also to the

[9 : 40] Corinthians and 1st Corinthians 11 it must needs be that there will arise heresies and other decisions so that those who are approved those who are the Lord's can be seen clearly whose are his and who are not again turning a couple of pages we see in the letter of Jude and verse 18 and 19 how they told you before there should be mockers in the last time who should walk after their own ungodly lusts these be they who separate themselves sensual not having the spirit but ye beloved building up yourselves in your most holy faith praying in the holy ghost keep yourselves love of love of love of God now you see what the contrast is here what Paul is writing to Timothy there is this express warning of the spirit that this falling away is going to happen amongst some and of course in line with the teachings of Jesus this is what we should expect we don't like that idea none of us like that idea we would like to think that if somebody comes to the Lord if somebody looks like the other

Lord says the other Lord and determinedly affirms that the other Lord we would want them to stay in that we would not want them to grow in that we would always want that to be the case we don't want anyone to be lost or to fall away but the infallible message and teaching of the word of God is that there will be such who will fall away and they will draw others with them and what they say will sound plausible and it will sound yes it can make sense in the spirit of the age it seems to fit in with what we put like to think and what we ought to think and it sounds so plausible in the latter times shall some depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirit now seduction is different from coercion you know to seduce somebody for example if we think of the essential and the physical sense is not the same as to coerce or to rape for example because it implies a certain albeit temporary willingness almost a willingness against one's better judgment to be seduced is to willingly cave in to be overcome by the kind of pleasurable desire to go along with whatever it may be that is suggested to you to be seduced implies a temporary as it were lowering of the drawbridge throwing wide of the gates and allowing the fortress to be taken and all of these things despite one's better judgment which in the cold light of day you say no I shouldn't do this no of course

I don't want to do this but seduction is not coercion in the classic sense it's not cold stone coercion it is rather the persuading that oh yes of course this is the right thing to do many should depart with it think of the parable and so on we would love to be able to say oh yes he scattered the seed every single one of them came up thirty sixty a hundred fold well of course we know they didn't some were taken away by the birds of the air and others sprang up and they looked great but they were really self-showing promising great and then the sun came out and scorched them and they withered and died and others of course they sprang up but they were choked by thorns and thistles and weeds that soaked up all the nutrition out the ground and they too withered and died three out of the four examples came to nothing but there were those that did persevere those that produced out of the good soil so Jesus himself teaches the spirit expressly declares that there will be a falling away and they think oh that's terrible oh that's so disgusting oh that's awful and in a sense it is what is our responsibility apart from holding and bearing up one another in prayer and support and all that we can do your primary responsibility to yourself and your soul is to make sure that whoever else falls away

I will not do so I will not allow the flickering flame of love to Christ to go out I must nurture this I must keep it carefully tended I must seek to feed that flame and seek to feed that love and that relationship that although some may be lost that it should not be me you notice you have heard me saying the past no doubt although Jesus says it was essential it had to be that he should be betrayed and that he would be handed over to the Romans and be crucified it didn't in a sense it didn't have to be Judas Judas still had the option to say no I'm not going to betray the saviour I'm not going to do that that's wrong I'm going to stay loyal to him I'm going to stay faithful to him and some other means would have been deployed by the Lord to bring about his final work of redemption but it didn't have to be him who was the traitor and yes friends some will fall away but what each of us must determine is whoever else falls away mustn't let it be me the spirit speaketh expressly in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits they sound good they sound plausible of course God would want to be inclusive and loving and of course he wants everybody to be together of course he doesn't it sounds so good but if it means that we are now stating that which the Lord himself has stated the opposite of in his infallible word then it's not rocket science to work out who's deceiving who and we don't really have to think what is likely to be true is it this spirit of the age or is it the word of God if it is really the word of God which supposedly some churchmen for example are going by saying oh of course

Christians should be like we want to be loving we want to be inclusive we want to support these things and so on if that is the case then surely the spirit who is God the Holy Ghost might just might have revealed it to some of his servants maybe a few years earlier maybe even a few centuries earlier maybe he might have revealed it to Jesus or to the apostles or to the early church but no only in these supposedly enlightened days it takes the unbelieving world to declare that when a sin becomes sufficiently fashionable the church can now say it shouldn't be a sin anymore then that's the spirit we go with it's just one example we could multiply examples but whether it is a seducing spirit is it the Holy Spirit well if it is the Holy Spirit it will be in line with what God himself has revealed otherwise it is as it says he's speaking lies speaking lies through it says in our version here but it means by means of hypocrisy claiming to be so much better so much pure so much higher and that is of course what is claimed nowadays isn't it well this is what

[16 : 58] Jesus would be like Jesus would be loving Jesus would be gracious and so on Jesus would want everybody to be equal but what is the life that goes with it what is the witness what is the consistency that is hypocrisy speaking lies and hypocrisy having their conscience seared with a hot iron now we think of something being cauterized seared with a hot iron what is the effect of that sometimes you know you might read all or see perhaps in depictions something with a fearful wound and they try and stitch it up a bit or whatever and then they put something red hot and of course it's agony but it cauterizes the wound it seals as it were against infection perhaps but also what is it doing it deadens it to any sensation it makes that particular wound dead to any sensation that is the effect of cauterizing being seared with a hot iron but there's also the sense here of it might mean to be understood as branded branded with a hot iron whereby that which is evil sometimes criminals or evil doers would have a stamp or a particular letter that depicted their crime branded onto their skin now if that were the case of course it's immovable you can't just wash it out or wipe it off or whatever the case may be but rather what we have here is a contrast a contrast again between the branding with a hot iron of that which is evil as opposed to what the

Lord says you know in chapter one where he talks about being sealed with the Holy Ghost being sealed by his word knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man but for the disobedient the ungodly for sinners for unholy and profane murderers of us hornwonders and so on this is the evil but we are to be sealed with that which is the Holy Ghost chapter 2 Timothy in chapter 3 we talk about being sealed with the Holy Ghost find the reference here 3 I think it's verse 5 here having a form of godliness denying the power of it all I'll find the reference I apologise it's dodging me but the contrast is between being sealed with the Holy Ghost on the one hand or being sealed with a hot iron on the other hand and when the Lord imprints his seal upon us where he prints his seal upon us and that is a sealing for good you know the sacraments are signs and seals of the covenant of grace it is marked upon us but where there is evil it is as it were branded it's so deep and so hard we can't get rid of it and they cite examples here of this hypocrisy forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from means which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth now that could be applied simply to the food regulations on the one hand but also to marriage itself there would be a sense in which some might say oh no you've got to be more holy more pure this was part of what was called the gnostic heresy of the first century whereby all matter all things of the flesh are evil you've got to separate yourself from that you've got to be pure you've got to be holy so you don't have anything to do with marriage and all sexual relations involved with that that's dirty that's impure you don't have anything to do with that as though simply abstaining from this sanctified union is somehow going to make you more holy but in fact all that happens as we know in situations where such things are forbidden is that the mind and the will and the heart simply runs to all manner of iniquity even if that outward practice remains forbidden forbidden to marriage

God has not forbidden it some people are called to singleness of life Jesus was called to singleness of life many people are called to singleness of life and it is sanctified if it be given to the Lord but so also is the sanctity of the marriage bond if it be given to the Lord received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer now this was the hypocrisy those who said oh no no you don't touch these meats that are unclean and you don't have anything to do with marriage and with all that sensual stuff no no you've got to be holy you've got to be pure this is man made ideas which God himself has not required of people this is one of the first instances of man inventing rules again under a gospel dispensation which is what the

Pharisees did under the old Jewish dispensation there's what God commanded in his word which Jesus never took issue with and in fact he upheld and he required people and there was all the man made regulations on top of it meant to make them look more holy what God has ordained we dare never say to be sinful and what God has given by way of gift is to be received with thanksgiving but here's a little warning for us if it is something upon which we cannot ask the blessing of God if it is something which we cannot truthfully say should be sanctified to God then we can't pretend it is of the Lord if I was to say well I'm off to the casino now I'm going to the casino because I want to try and gamble and make enough money so I can give it all to the church and then we can get all our property sorted out and we can maybe get on a new roof or a new carpet or whatever the case may be and we can do some good with it that's why I'm going that's why I want to go there

I want to make enough so that I can do this good with it well that may be a noble intention but the method of doing it is never going to be sanctified of God because such a thing is built upon the losings of other people people are not going to open casinos unless they're going to make profit from it who are they going to make profit from all those who will lose and if you happen to get a payout even if you're blessed with it even if you happen to be a winner you're only winning on the back of all the other losers who have then poured their money into that and lots it's just an example of how we can think of oh yes but I want to do good with it if you want to do good do it God's way do it the honest day's work for the honest day's wage if you haven't got I'll never make enough that way then pray the Lord to provide it pray the Lord who controls all the resources of the heavens and the earth if we have need take it to the Lord if we have need ask the

[24 : 08] Lord to provide if we have something that we genuinely need as opposed to just want then ask the Lord but if it can be sanctified by the word of God and prayer then fine great but if it's that which is of itself sinful we can't make that holy just by praying about it just by asking God's blessing on it heard a year or two ago about a former minister who I have known personally who having left his wife then had taken up with another woman and intended to marry her and having taken a step back from the ministry was then once everything had settled out was then going to go back into the ministry in his own intention with this new wife having deserted his other one and so when he was confronted by a colleague not me I have to say but another colleague let's say what what about your vows what about your calls oh I'll have you know I've prayed about this now what does he imagine that he's praying about this did he say oh

God oh it's okay then you prayed it that's fine no problem despite everything I've said in my word this is what we mean by seducing spirits it seems good to us because it's in line what we want to do what the flesh wants to do what the world wants to do what the spirit of the age wants to do and if we can somehow make that seem sanctified then that pleases us we can say oh I've prayed about it oh yes I've sanctified this is for the best intentions it's what I want every creature of God is beautiful nothing to be if it be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer nothing in the word of God is going to sanctify the kind of behaviour of my former colleague and friend nothing in that is going to make God say oh yeah this is okay because you've prayed about it this is holy because now the spirit of the age allows it if thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things thou shalt be a good minister of

Jesus Christ nourished up in the word of faith and of good doctrine put unto the house of tain you know that which you have received that which you've learned that which you've acquired so far continuing it God wasn't deceiving you when he gave you his revealed word God wasn't deceiving you when he said be ye holy for I am holy God speaks only the truth this word that we have translated as nourish it's we think of nourish as in past tense nourish in the past the actual original in the Greek is an ongoing present ongoing word that means nourish and continuing to nourish it's in the sense of if we go back to this example of Jacob in Genesis 49 he says he blessed Joseph and said God before whom my fathers Abram and Isaac did walk the God which fed me all my life long unto this day bless the lads and he's talking about blessing Ephraim and Manasseh now feeding is something that we need every day nourishing we need every day if you know if there's any day in your life you pick a date it's how old you are think of saying oh third of

March 1972 or whatever it was or 19th of September 1984 whatever it may be you know however long it was or however recent almost certainly on that day you ate something you were fed who provided that for God provided that for faith God is the one who feeds you day by day and has continued to do so if he didn't you would be dead if he didn't feed and provide and nourish you in the body you would be dead by now and if he doesn't do it in the soul and the spirit you will die spiritually now this is one reason why Paul is so urgent upon Timothy that you know if you put the brethren in remembrance of these things then you'll be a good servant good minister of Jesus Christ nourished and nourishing ongoing present up in the word of faith and of good doctrine where unto thou hast attained good doctrine means teaching that which you have been taught that which you have learned and the faith is that by which you may hold upon it that which you believe the words of the faith you see we've talked a lot about the kind of negative spirit of the age some of it is more obvious than others and some of it is just seductive but the end result of it always will be corrosive and what do I mean by that

I mean that it will seek to draw us off from devotion to Christ love for Christ warmth for Christ it will seek to cool our ardour for him it will seek to make the things of God a bit of a drudge a bit of a duty oh no we don't really need all that you know that may have been fine in the forties and fifties but now come on we're modern people we've moved on beyond that now we know better than the Bible now we have the spirit of the age the spirit of the age will always be there the age may move on but the spirit that seeks to deceive us away from Christ is never going to give up now you can't necessarily stop the fact that people are going to fall away from the faith of Christ people who once maybe professed that faith once maybe affirmed that faith once maybe burned in their zeal for the Lord there would have been a day when

[29 : 53] Judas was a red bought disciple of Jesus he cast out demons in the name of Jesus he healed people in the name of Jesus but at the end of the day apostle though he was he proved to be a false apostle and such is the danger that lies in wait for any one of us if we let go of Christ if we do not hold fast to that love in him that which he gives we receive sanctified by the word of God and prayer that which he has revealed we believe and we trust in that which his spirit may yet reveal that's fine but it will always be in line with what he has revealed already the spirit speaketh expressly it's there in the old testament it's there in the teachings of Jesus it's there in the teachings of Paul and of Peter and John and Jude because it is the same Holy Spirit that reveals these warnings and these things it is the spirit of the age and the spirit of this world and the prince of the power of the air who will always seek to corrode our relationship with Christ if I put the brethren in remembrance of these things the danger always that is there to our own souls it's like if you're walking through a minefield you don't get two or thirds of the way oh well that's fine I haven't stepped on anything yet no problem

I can just relax no if you continue vigilant and careful where you put your feet then you won't get blown up if you keep on carefully testing and watching each step and following where someone may have led you through or the way that is clearly marked with the little flags or whatever the case may be you will be protected you will be kept safe but if you think oh I've got this fine I don't need this guy I can go my own way through this mine you know I'll be fine I look each step that I take I'm fine eventually you know what is going to happen because the Lord will protect and keep us if we hold fast but then it is a clear warning and it will happen to some may God grant that it do not happen to us us one conclusion about this you know what I will seek me upon us so let's take that it will switch silo to my p lens so before we've got it■■■ businesses now who have a cross taurate and boost in our life especially with the ■■■■■■ streams we've got for you and through thises we've got it there and our suppression in our■■■■ here all the formation of fighting this study is great there and I hope that you know that if me hasn't built it right now and we hope that we need to tell this you know that there will have to cover a lot of things in there

Kitchen there's security section