



2017.7.2



Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- When you think of "doctrines of demons" that come from "deceitful spirits" (1 Timothy 4:1), **what sorts of things** do you envision? What would they be about? What would they be like?

Paul identifies things such as limiting marriage, avoiding certain foods (4:1-3), and slacking off in the workplace (6:1-3) as "doctrines of demons"! (No mention of ouiji boards, pentagrams, or seances.) Do those strike you as particularly satanic? Why or why not? What does that suggest to you?

- **Why** do you think that we are able to identify anorexia as a disorder but not gender confusion? (In both cases confused thinking denies an objective biological indicator—pounds or chromosomes.)
- When philosophies clashed, as in the case of marriage and diet restrictions vs. gratefully enjoying God's good gifts, Paul proved which one was true by appealing to Genesis 1 ("*everything created by God is good*")—see Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25 and 31). **Why** is Genesis a legitimate basis?
- Pastor Doug noted that, when compared to objective biblical truth, the United States has become an atheistic state. Which also means that when persuasion or propaganda fail, sheer force will be used. How do you see that happening today?

How do you see that happening in Hebrews 10:32-39?
For which biblical truths do you think you will be willing to suffer?

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Application-Challenge

- Become a student of the Bible by using Talking Points, Walking Points.
- Buy and read a good doctrine survey, such as:
A Survey of Bible Doctrine by Charles C. Ryrie (ISBN: 978-0802484383)
Christian Beliefs by Wayne Grudem (ISBN: 978-0310255994)
- If you would like to know God personally, contact us at <connect.tcc.org>. Scroll down to the Ministry Information Request section and mark the first or second checkbox. We look forward to helping!

Sermon Summary

Here in the United States, we are in the midst of a moral revolution. The prevailing cultural view is that truth and morality are individually and socially determined. We have unashamedly rejected God from the moral equation. Biblical morality has not only been rejected, but is openly mocked. As a result, Biblical notions of right and wrong, truth and error have come under open attack. If truth is relative, as society assumes it is, then you can't say with any true moral authority that anyone is wrong, or that anything is immoral. All you can say is, "I don't like it." So how do we determine what is true and what is false, what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil?

In the opening five verses of chapter 4, Paul is trying to drive home one simple point to Timothy and his first century readers: Don't allow your thinking to be compromised by unbiblical notions (vv.1-6). Much of what passes as "truth" or "moral and right" today is actually demonic in origin (v. 1). Satan's strategy from the very beginning has been to persuade us to doubt what God has said (Genesis 3:1). Satan does more than just create doubt in Eve's mind concerning God's command; he intentionally misrepresents what God has said. Satan loves to negatively portray the biblical boundaries God has wisely set for us. By listening to Satan's lie, Adam and Eve sowed the seeds for all the evil we see in the world today. It all began when our first parents rejected God's good and perfect commandments. We have been following their lead ever since. Those who propagate unbiblical teaching serve as Satan's unwitting pawns (v. 2). Paul called these teachings the doctrines of demons, because that is their source. Satan is the god of this world, and he propagates his agenda through human agents whose consciences have been seared to Biblical truth.

Satan's lies manifest themselves in our world in many ways (v. 3). In 1 Timothy 6:3, Paul is battling an error called "asceticism": The idea that abstinence from physical things is essential to spiritual purity. If at any time, for spiritual reasons, we legalistically draw boundaries that are more confining than what God has drawn, we are guilty of asceticism. In Ephesus where Timothy was ministering, these false teachers were teaching that if you want to be truly spiritual, you will abstain from sex and limit yourself to eating certain foods, perhaps vegetables only. Satan traffics in the unbalanced Christian life. He tends to urge us toward polar extremes.

Satan is a liar and a deceiver—and he seeks to propagate his lies and deceptions throughout human society through his unwitting followers. Perhaps the biggest lie Satan has successfully promulgated is that we are alone in the universe, and that man, rather than God, is the center of all things. Once that lie has been accepted, God's good moral boundaries begin to fall, one by one. In a world without a divine moral lawgiver, man decides what is right and what is wrong, what is moral and immoral. We presume to arrogantly act as though we answer to no one but ourselves. Right and wrong is whatever we say it is. When you take God out of the world, it leads to moral confusion and chaos. Our selfish desires, rather than a biblically-informed conscience, become our moral guide. And because the human heart is easily inclined toward evil, it is not leading society to a good place. We are merely reaping what we have sown. This prevailing mindset poses a great challenge to the Christian church as we seek to speak truth to our culture. What is the remedy to this demonically-inspired, dangerous, and defective world view? The gospel! It is the truth that there is a God who loves the world so much that he sent his only Son to reveal himself to us and to bear the guilt of our sin on a Roman cross.

This same God has given us a divinely-inspired book called the Bible, in which he reveals his divine will for mankind. It is a blueprint for successful living in God's world. The truths revealed in this book are God's answer to Satan's lies. False teaching can only be identified and corrected by an appeal to the Scriptures (vv. 4-5). If you don't have a good biblical grid, you will be susceptible to embracing and propagating Satan's lies. You will become part of the problem rather than part of the solution! How do you detect a lie? You compare it to what the Scripture says. It is not that difficult. You need to become familiar with the Scriptures. When you hear something that differs from the Scriptures, you will know it is wrong. If we are to become astute at detecting error, we need to constantly be growing in our familiarity with the Scriptures. As Paul states, if we want to be "good servants of Christ Jesus," we must "constantly nourish ourselves on the words of the faith and of sound doctrine" (v. 6).

Learning the Christian Faith through Q&A

For hundreds of years believers have learned the Christian faith—and thus been protected from shipwreck—through the use of catechisms. The word “catechism” comes from the Greek *katecheo* which means “to instruct by word of mouth”. In Galatians 6:6, Paul wrote: “Anyone who receives instruction in the word (literally, “is catechized”) must share all good things with his instructor (literally, “his catechizer”)”. Paul is saying that there is a body of Christian doctrine that is to be passed along to others. So, a catechism is simply the truths of the Christian faith put into question and answer format.

When we learn the truths of the Christian faith we are built up and protected from error. But as theologian J. I. Packer warns, today we have all but lost the practice of catechesis, with the result that:

*Superficial smatterings of truth, blurry notions about God and godliness,
and thoughtlessness about the issues of living
—career-wise, community-wise, family-wise, and church-wise—
are all too often the marks of evangelical congregations today...*

Contrast this with the experience of Pastor Tim Keller...

Jonathan, our youngest, was waiting for us to pick him up at his babysitter’s house. As he stared pensively out the window, she asked him: “What are you thinking about?” Unbeknownst to her, this triggered the adult-asks-a-question-and-I-provide-an-answer part of his brain, so his answer was (taken from the pages of the catechism) “*God.*” “*What are you thinking about God?*” she responded in surprise, and got the even more surprising answer (comprising the next question from the catechism): “*How he made all things for his own glory.*” She almost fell over—she thought she was in the presence of a prodigy! Really, it was just the catechism.

The following simplified children’s catechism covers only the essentials of the gospel, but if committed to memory will serve as a foundation for a growing faith. Here are some suggestions for its use:

- Read one question and answer aloud at mealtimes. Discuss it, making sure everyone understands.
- Next, read the question and allow others to try to answer from memory.
- Make flash cards with the question on one side and the answer on the other.
- Review the same question and answer at night and the next morning. Spend a few minutes with children at bedtime helping them remember the answer, then reviewing at breakfast the next morning.
- Record it and listen during everyday activities such as commutes, work-outs, chores, etc.

The practice of catechesis takes truth deep into our hearts. If we will re-engage in this biblical practice in our homes, we will find again God's Word filling our lives:

Let the word of Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives.
Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives.
Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.
And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks through him to God the Father.

—Colossians 3:16-17

Learning the Christian Faith through Q&A

1. **Who made us?**
God made us—and everything else!
2. **Why did God make us and everything else?**
For his own glory.
3. **How can we glorify God now?**
By believing in him and lovingly obeying him.
4. **Why should we glorify God?**
Because he alone deserves it.
5. **Is there more than one God?**
No, there is only one God, but he exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
6. **Where is God?**
God is everywhere.
We cannot see him, but he sees us.
7. **What does God know?**
God knows everything we think or do.
Nothing can be hidden from God.
8. **What can God do?**
God is able to do everything
that agrees with his holy nature.
9. **How do we know what God is like?**
The Bible—God's perfect word to us—
tells us what he is like.
10. **Who wrote the Bible?**
Holy men who were led by the Holy Spirit.
11. **Do I have a soul and a body?**
Yes; the Bible teaches that I also
have a soul, and it will never die.
12. **What is sin?**
Sin is any lack of conformity to,
or transgression of, the law of God.
13. **What does "lack of conformity" mean?**
Not being or doing what God requires.
14. **What does "transgression" mean?**
Doing what God forbids.
15. **What does sin deserve?**
The wrath of God, now and forever.
16. **Does God want to punish us?**
No, he loves us and wants to save us.
17. **Did Jesus ever commit any sin?**
No, not even one. He is holy.
18. **How could Jesus redeem and save us?**
Christ, the sinless Son of God, became a man. Then,
by keeping God's law for us, and taking our sins upon
himself, he suffered the punishment we deserve.
19. **What is meant by the atonement?**
Christ satisfied divine justice by his suffering
and death in the place of us sinners.
20. **What happened after Christ died for us?**
He rose from the dead, as he said he would.
21. **What is meant by justification?**
It is when God forgives us and
treats us as if we had never sinned.
22. **Who will be justified?**
All who repent and believe in Christ alone
to bear their sin—but only those!
23. **What does it mean to repent?**
To be sorry for sin, and to hate and to forsake it,
because it is displeasing to God.
24. **How does one believe in Christ?**
By trusting in him alone to save us.
25. **What is prayer?**
Prayer is talking to God, thanking and praising him,
confessing our sins, and asking him for what we need.
26. **What is sanctification?**
When we cooperate with God he makes
forgiven sinners holy, in thought and deed.
27. **Where is Christ right now?**
In heaven, praying for us.
28. **What happens when people die?**
The body returns to dust but the soul goes into
the world of spirits—the saved into God's presence;
the lost are separate from him, in torment.
29. **Will Christ come again?**
Yes; he will come again to judge the world.
30. **What will happen to the lost?**
The lost will be judged and cast bodily into hell,
a place of dreadful and endless torment.
31. **What will happen to the saved?**
The saved will receive a glorified body and forever
be with God in heaven, a glorious and happy place.