

## **PASTORAL GLEANINGS ON GUARDING OUR HEARTS**

### **V. Avoiding The Things Of Satan**

**(1 Timothy 1:18-20; 3:6; 3:7; 4:1-5; 5:11-15; 2 Timothy 2:24-26)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Six times in the Pastoral epistles, Paul addressed the issue of Satan in relation to ministry in the local church, what should be no surprise to us believers. After all, the local church is “the pillar and foundation of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15 NIV), so we should expect Satan to target the local church for spiritual defeat.
- B. We thus view the passages involved for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

#### **II. Avoiding The Things Of Satan, 1 Timothy 1:18-20; 3:6; 3:7; 4:1-5; 5:11-15; 2 Timothy 2:24-26.**

- A. We must avoid teaching blasphemous things that lead to God’s use of Satan to punish us, 1 Timothy 1:18-20:
  - 1. Paul had charged Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:3-11 to remain at Ephesus to teach certain men not teach Hebrew myths nor to misuse the law, but to use it lawfully to convict people of sin in order to lead them to Christ, 1 Timothy 1:18 (William Hendriksen, NTC: Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles, 1974, p. 84).
  - 2. However, Hymenaeus and Alexander had departed from Biblical truth to teach Hebrew myths and/or an errant application of the law so that they had blasphemed, 1 Timothy 1:19-20 with 1:4-11; *Ibid.*, p. 86-87.
  - 3. Paul had thus given them over to Satan to face suffering to teach them not to blaspheme, 1 Timothy 1:20.
  - 4. Thus, we must avoid God’s discipline under Satan by using Scripture to teach the truth that honors God.
- B. We must avoid putting a new convert into leadership lest he fall into Satan’s sin of pride, 1 Timothy 3:6:
  - 1. A new convert may have a worldly view of oversight that can tempt him to be proud if he is made a leader.
  - 2. We must then wait for a man to mature enough to be humble before putting him into church leadership.
- C. We must avoid putting a man with a bad reputation with unbelievers into church leadership lest he be reproached by the world or trapped by Satan into thinking that he can escape discipline for sin since he is a leader, 1 Timothy 3:7 (William Hendriksen, NTC: Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles, 1974, p. 129):
  - 1. An upright reputation is necessary for any man who is put into spiritual oversight in a church because he is a public figure before not only the local church, but also the unsaved community around that church.
  - 2. If one has a poor reputation, he needs to be kept out of leadership in the local church since he can either be mocked by the unsaved and hurt the church’s testimony or he can become proud and think that he can do whatever wrong he desires since no one objects to his being in office regardless of his sins.
- D. We must avoid doctrines of demons that distort how one is to meet his physical needs, 1 Timothy 4:1-5:
  - 1. Paul warned that in the latter days, doctrines of demons would arise that forbade marriage and restricted people from ingesting certain foods, distorting the meeting of normal physical needs, 1 Timothy 4:1-3a.
  - 2. These doctrines were to be countered with the truth that marriage is honorable (Hebrews 13:4a) and all foods acceptable to God if they be received with thanksgiving (1 Timothy 4:3b-5).
  - 3. Satan can also tempt one to meet his needs by committing immorality (Hebrews 13:4b; 1 Corinthians 7:5) or gluttony (Deuteronomy 21:20), so we must renounce both the extremes of denying or of indulging one’s physical appetites to avoid the temptations and snares of the devil on the addressing of physical needs.
- E. We must avoid encouraging women to be idle but rather to marry and become homemakers lest they turn aside after Satan to become idle busybodies, tattlers and abusive with their speech, 1 Timothy 5:11-15:
  - 1. With no government welfare in the Early Church, churches would financially support widows, but they did not support young widows lest they be idle and become busybodies who committed sins with the tongue.
  - 2. Applied to us, we must encourage women not to be idle, but preferably to get married and be homemakers to avoid being used by Satan to harm the local church by being busybodies and sinning with the tongue.
- F. We must avoid being taken captive by Satan by our lusts to oppose God’s servants, 2 Timothy 2:24-26:
  - 1. Paul revealed that those who oppose God’s upright messengers in the local church are taken captive by Satan through sin to do Satan’s will of countering God’s messengers and thus trying to hinder the discipling process in the local church, 2 Timothy 2:24-26.
  - 2. Accordingly, we must watch that we avoid living by means of our sinful natures that we leave no room for Satan to ensnare us into opposing God’s servants in the local church, cf. Galatians 5:16.

***Lesson:* Satan tries to hinder the discipling process of local churches by various means, so all believers must rely by faith on the Holy Spirit to obey Scripture to avoid giving Satan room to use them to trouble the local church.**

***Application:* May each believer rely by faith on the Holy Spirit to obey Scripture for victory over Satan.**