2017 will be the next Year of Jubilee. I believe we should began to study and be aware now, even a year ahead of time, of the importance of this year prophetically, and what we can expect from a Loving Holy God's judgment of a wicked world.

A Present Day Disciple

Prayer Study #494

1st Timothy 4

First Love Ministries of Perry, GA USA

1 Timothy 4Amplified Bible (AMP)

Apostasy or Description of False Teachers

4 *But the [Holy] Spirit explicitly and unmistakably declares that in later times some will turn away from the faith, paying attention instead to deceitful and seductive spirits and doctrines of demons,* ***2*** *[misled] by the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared as with a branding iron [leaving them incapable of ethical functioning],* ***3*** *who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from [certain kinds of] foods which God has created to be gratefully shared by those who believe and have [a clear] knowledge of the truth.* ***4*** *For everything God has created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;* ***5*** *for it is sanctified [set apart, dedicated to God] by means of the word of God and prayer.*

The Jews thought of time as being of two ages: this present age and the age to come.

We find these terms throughout the Bible. *This present age,* i.e. the one we live in now, is full of evil and progressively gets worse and worse until He comes. *The age to come*, which will begin with the Second Coming of Jesus to earth to establish His Kingdom on earth, will be full of goodness. Isaiah gives us some characteristics of this wonderful time when the knowledge of the glory of the Lord fills the earth as the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14):

The Glory of the Coming Fullness of the Kingdom

(Isaiah 11 and 12)

1. All the animals will not longer eat each other or harm humans (ex. The wolf will dwell with the lamb. The lion will eat straw like the ox. Cows and bears will eat together.)
2. Children will no longer be afraid of wild animals (even putting their hands in the holes of formerly poisonous snakes) and will lead them.
3. There shall be no accidents or deaths.
4. Jesus will stand as the standard around which all nations will gather.
5. All men will look to Christ for safety and deliverance.
6. Jews will go as missionaries taking the Word of God from Jerusalem to all nations.
7. The nations shall seek Jesus.
8. There will be universal peace.
9. His rest, which he gives to us, will be glorious.
10. He will recover His Jewish remnant.
11. He will gather the outcasts of Israel.
12. The envy and pride of Ephraim shall depart.
13. The enemies of Judah will be cut off.
14. There will be a highway of holiness for the remnant of His people.
15. The righteous ones shall praise Him.
16. The Gentiles will seek Jesus and will bless the Jewish people.
17. There will be no fear.
18. The righteous will be full of joy.
19. The inhabitants of Zion will sing and cry out and shout the greatness of the Holy One in the midst of the remnant company.

20. His name will be exalted over all the earth.

The transition between these two ages is called in scripture *the Day of the Lord,* a day full of chaos and catastrophes, when the whole earth will be shaken to its foundations. The culmination of this day will be a last supreme world war or Armageddon and a last universal judgment.

We have looked at the Day of the Lord many times, and I have presented the same information concerning this day, but I want to repeat it one more time so that we all have a clear understanding of what this day will be like:

1. **The Day of the Lord**

   Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is at hand and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come (Joel 1:15).

   But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write un to you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the LORD so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with a child, and they shall not escape. But ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief (1st Thessalonians 5:2-4).

   The Day of the Lord, therefore, is a period of time (not just one day) in history at the end of the age in the last days when the Lord openly intervenes in the affairs of men. It is an apocalyptic term and also a prophetic term and is thought to be the Lord's outpouring of His wrath (see Psalm 2) and will be characterized by catastrophic weather and earthly calamities such as plagues, famines, pestilence, and drought. (see Isaiah 2:12, Isaiah 13:6-9, Amos 5:18-20, Jeremiah 46:10, 1st Corinthians 5:5, 1st Thessalonians 5:2, 2nd Peter 3:8-

10). According to Jay Atkinson of The Latter Rain Ministries, “It is that time between the age of evil, in which we presently live and which will be destroyed, and the golden age of peace and justice, the future Millennial Kingdom to come on the earth. It is the fall of the old order and the ushering in of the new.” Joel tells us that this will come as a destruction from the Almighty, a day of wrath and fierce anger, trouble and distress, a day of gloom and thick darkness for the proud, the rich, and the lofty. Joel also asked the question in Joel 2:11, “Who can endure it?” And indeed without the fullness of the Holy Spirit we will not be able to endure it and will not stand. The Day of the Lord will culminate in the final shaking and sifting of the Church, the fall of the Babylonian World System, the fullness of the Latter Rain, and the coming forth of the Bride who has made herself ready. The Bride will come out of the closet and meet the Bridegroom.

The Day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night. The scriptures emphasize that many in the Church will be asleep and unprepared. The Word says that they that sleep, sleep in the night. This is when the thief comes. We must wake-up from our spiritual slumber and be ready. Many think that we have already entered the beginnings of this day.

The Messianic Christians of the 1st Century had been brought up with an understanding from Old Testament Scripture concerning *the Present Age, the Day of the Lord, and the Age to Come.* In the New Testament, Matthew 24 is one of the best explanations for the characteristics of the end of *the Present Age* and the *Second Coming of Christ.* Jesus Himself is talking, and among many other things, He addresses false Messiahs and false prophets that will appear with signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, even the elect (Matthew 24:11) so we must be extremely careful that we don’t walk in deception

during this time.

False teachers had already, only a few years after Jesus ascended into heaven, tried to infiltrate the Church of Ephesus, which was one of the most powerful churches of the 1st Century. The genuine, Bible based teachers saw these false teachers as being directed by demons. Slaves, back then, like livestock, were occasionally branded to show whom they belonged to. Paul is saying in this passage that Satan brands false teachers, marking them as his personal property.

The main false doctrine of the day was Gnosticism, which we have already discussed in detail. Two specific things that the Gnostics taught were food is part of the material world and therefore evil so you should eat as little as you could get by with and the physical body was also material and evil. Therefore, everyone should suppress fleshly desires and abstain from getting married.

Paul refutes these claims, declaring that nothing from God should be refused, if it is received with thanksgiving and sanctified by the Word of God and with prayer.

Barclay comments on this section: "True Christians do not serve God by enslaving themselves with rules and regulations and insulting His creation; they serve Him by gratefully accepting His good gifts and remembering that this is a world where God made all things well and by never forgetting to share God's gifts with others."

A Good Minister's Discipline

6 *If you point out these instructions to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant*

of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished [through study] on the words of the faith and of the good [Christian] doctrine which you have closely followed. ***7*** *But have nothing to do with irreverent folklore and silly myths. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness [keeping yourself spiritually fit].* ***8*** *For physical training is of some value, but godliness (spiritual training) is of value in everything and in every way, since it holds promise for the present life and for the life to come.* ***9*** *This is a faithful and trustworthy saying worthy of full acceptance and approval.* ***10*** *It is for this that we labor and strive [often called to account], because we have fixed our [confident] hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe [in Him, recognize Him as the Son of God, and accept Him as Savior and Lord].*

Paul is writing to give practical advice to Timothy, but the advice is applicable to any Christian. Paul urges Timothy to *point these instructions to the brothers and sisters.* The King James says "*put the brethren in remembrance of these things," and another translation says, "to lay these things before the brethren."* In other words, don't issue orders or try to bully people into doing something. Be gentle and suggest godly advice to the brothers.

Paul tells Timothy that, in order to teach others, he must feed on the Word and continually be learning so that his life becomes more and more like Jesus, and he knows Jesus better and better every day he lives. Only then will he be an effective teacher.

Timothy must avoid pointless tales and stories which entertain but do not change people's lives. He is to exercise spiritually by reading an studying. Paul is not putting down physical exercise, but he emphasizes that physical exercise is so much less in importance. Spiritual exercise has supreme importance in both this life and in the life to come.

Finally, Paul reminds Timothy that the reason we struggle to live the Christian life is ultimately because we want to come nearer and nearer to the presence of God. Barclay says, "No one has ever claimed that the Christian life is an easy way; but its goal is God. It is because life is lived in the presence of God and ends in His still nearer presence that Christians are willing to struggle so hard. The greatness of the goal makes the toil worthwhile."

Be an Example

11 *Keep commanding and teaching these things.* ***12*** *Let no one look down on [you*

because of] your youth, but be an example and set a pattern for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in [moral] purity. ***13*** *Until I come, devote yourself to public reading [of Scripture], to preaching and to teaching [the sound doctrine of God's word].* ***14*** *Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, [that special endowment] which was intentionally bestowed on you [by the Holy Spirit] through prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands on you [at your ordination].* ***15*** *Practice and work hard on these things; be absorbed in them [completely occupied in your ministry], so that your progress will be evident to all.* ***16*** *Pay close attention to yourself [concentrate on your personal development] and to your teaching; persevere in these things [hold to them], for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.*

Paul exhorts Timothy not to let his youth be a hindrance in his ministry. At this time Timothy was not a young teenager. He had first gone off with Paul 15 years prior to this time. Paul used a word for *youth* (*neotes),* which was used for one of military age or one up to 40 years old. The early Church wisely generally wanted men of maturity and would not consider a man to be a Bishop unless he was at least 50. We do not think Timothy was

anywhere 40, much less 50. Paul tells Timothy to silence his critics who think he is too young, for the responsibility he has been thrust, with by being mature in works and conduct.

Timothy's conduct should exemplify *agape* love, a love that seek nothing but the good of others, even of enemies, and has no bitterness, vengeance, hatred, or unforgiveness. Timothy must act in such a way that shows complete loyalty to Christ, no matter how difficult the circumstances are, and he must have purity, which is living life according to the standards of Jesus Christ.

Next Paul gives the pattern of the 1st Century Church service. First, there is public reading and teaching of Scripture. The Christian worship service should always be Bible-centered and not *Chicken Soup Stories* centered! The Bible is sometimes a difficult book to understand and must be taught by those who have spent time in study.

The Christian worship service should also exhort people to act, i.e. to do something with what they have been taught. The service ends with prayer, and some aspect of the prayer should be prayer seeking the help of the Holy Spirit so the believer can be empowered to live in action the Bible message.

Christian leaders must remember that they have been set apart for a special mission by

the Church. They must also remember that they should spend time daily “to think about these things,” i.e. the Gospel message.

‘Twas the Night Before Jesus Came

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‘Twas the night before Jesus came and all through the house
Not a creature was praying, not one in the house.
Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care,
In hopes that Jesus would not come there.

The children were dressing to crawl into bed,
Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.
And Mom in her rocker with baby on her lap
Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the East there arouse such a clatter,
I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash!

When what to my wondering eyes should appear
But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here
With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray
I knew in a moment this must be THE DAY!

The light of His face made me cover my head.
It was Jesus! returning just like He had said,
And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth,
I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life which He held in His hand,
Was written the name of every saved man.
He spoke not a word as He searched for my name.
When He said, "It's not here" my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had been written with love
He gathered to take to His Father above.
With those who were ready He rose without a sound,
While all the rest were left standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late.
I had waited too long and thus sealed my fate.
I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight.
Oh, if only, I had been ready tonight.

In the words of this poem the meaning is clear.
The coming of Jesus is drawing near.
There's only one life and when comes the last call,
We'll find that the Bible was true after all.