

1. Paul calls the church the pillar and ground (or buttress, support) of the truth. Explain this picture.

2. Verse 16 starts with the “mystery of godliness” and ends with a doxology to the Lord. What is the connection? What exactly is meant by “the mystery of godliness”?

3. Explain each of the following as it pertains to the Lord Jesus:
 - Manifested in the flesh (when?)
 - Vindicated by the Spirit (how?)
 - Seen by angels (where and when?)
 - Proclaimed among the nations (by whom?)
 - Believed on in the world (*all* the world?)
 - Taken up in glory (when and how?)

To put it another way:

1 Tim 4:1-2 (DBY) But the Spirit speaks expressly, that in latter times some shall apostatise from the faith, giving their mind to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, cauterised as to their own conscience.

1 Tim 4:1-2 (NIV) The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

1 Tim 4:1-2 (NKJV) Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron

Cross references:

John 1:24 (ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

1 Peter 1:20 (KJV) Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

4. How will some people depart from the faith in later times?

5. Verse 2 speaks of liars and hypocrites having seared consciences. The image is of cauterizing, where a hot iron is used to seal open wounds and blood vessels. How does this figure apply to the conscience?

6. What two examples of evil teaching are presented here?

7. Can you think of any teachers or groups that promote these false ideas?

Cross references:

2 Thess 2:10 (KJV) When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

2 Tim 3:1 (NIV) But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.

1 John 4:1 (ESV) Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Matt 7:15 (ESV) Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Col 2:16 (NIV) Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.

Gen 1:29 ... 31 (KJV) And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. ...And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.

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