

Sermon or Lesson: 1 Timothy 6:3-4a (NIV based)
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Erroneously Self-convinced

INTRO: Can you discern and identify a teacher of false doctrines? What does he/she look like or sound like? Can you spot one if you see one? How? Currently, are there any persons in this church or in your ministry whom you suspect or contend that they are teaching false doctrine?

Let's study what else God has to say about teachers of false doctrines, particularly in order to build a typical character profile of them.

READ: 1 Timothy 6:3-4a, with vv.6:4b-5, and 1:3-4,7, and 4:1-2, and 6:20-21 for additional context

BACKGROUND: In the following previous verses in 1 Timothy, we have learned about the teachers of false doctrines, that:

in vv.1:3-7

- - The teaching of false doctrines is contrary and/or destructive to "sincere", "genuine, pure, non-hypocritical faith". (from Strong's #0505 - v.1:5; and *AHD* - 'sincere')

in vv.4:1-3

- - Some persons in the church "will abandon the faith", "departing from and deserting" genuine faith by adopting corrupt principles that in effect render their faith a false faith, even though they erroneously think their faith has been enhanced. (Strong's #0868)

- - Their false or deceptive teachings and instruction sound reasonable, attractive, appealing, and desirable to possess for oneself because they seem to produce or give the person some religious benefit or advantage.

- - But in reality and by design, the false teachings and instruction are demon-generated and they supplant the truth and/or the Word of God, effectively dissolving the foundation upon which genuine faith is based and replacing it with a false foundation upon which a false faith is based.

- - Both of the phenomena, following deceiving manifestations of spirits and following deceptive teachings, imply that someone is listening, someone is or becomes open, someone is spiritually immature and not grounded in the faith, someone is naive or gullible, someone is undiscerning, and someone is discontent and wanting something more or different.

- - In fact, the Holy Spirit says that those congregants in our church who are being used by deceiving spirits to teach false doctrines are hypocrites, deceptive, and spiritually undiscerning.

- - Even though the contents of their teaching sound satisfactory and appealing, close examination and comparison to Scriptures will reveal the falseness in their teaching and abandoning of truths of the faith.

v.6:3 - READ

[Lesson Question: Identify and list what are the means through which people today can teach false doctrines.]

SECTION POINT: People who teach false doctrines can be anyone that has a means by which they communicate religious teaching to people who listen to them.

"If anyone teaches false doctrines"

- - The topic of discussion in 1 Timothy again reverts back to those persons in the church who teach and promote false doctrines.
 - - The phrase "if anyone" suggests that having persons teaching false doctrines in the church is a common and frequent occurrence.
 - - And notice that these persons are in positions from which they are actively spreading and disseminating their false doctrines.
 - - In our churches and in cultures today, these persons of false doctrines would be holding positions or means from which they teach, such as: teachers of Bible studies, Sunday School classes, Vacation Bible School, adult or youth small groups; pastors or associate pastors; elders; directors of ministries; preachers; substitute preachers; traveling evangelists; door-to-door proselytizers; television and Internet preachers, teachers, and bloggers; authors of books and pamphlets; authors of Bible study curriculum and videos; authors of Bible translations and commentaries; supposed healers and prophets; teachers and professors in religious schools, colleges, and seminaries; singers and song writers; and etc.
 - - In other words, these persons of false doctrines can be promoting their false doctrines through any position, platform, or manner in which they have an audience, whether inside, alongside, or outside the local church.
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[Lesson Question: Analyze and describe the two accompanying characteristics of teachers of false doctrines cited here in verse 3, and explain how and why these accompanying characteristics relate to those persons who teach false doctrines.]

SECTION POINT: By their nature, teachers of false doctrines typically are un-teachable, stubbornly entrenched in their false doctrine, and oblivious to what godliness truly is.

"and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ"

- - To teach false doctrine is to actively advocate and promote false doctrine, trying to convince other people of its validity.
- - To advocate a false doctrine is by default a refusal to agree to sound instruction and sound doctrine in that regard.
- - So, teachers of false doctrine by their nature are certainly rejecting at least some of "the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ", even though they may adamantly contend that they are in agreement with it.
- - But when confronted with sound instruction directly from Scripture verses that clearly refute their false doctrine, teachers of false doctrine remain stubbornly entrenched in their false doctrine - exposing that they are essentially un-teachable.

- - So, the reality is that teachers of false doctrine either negligently or intentionally hold Scriptures in low regard - otherwise they would quickly change their doctrine to conform to Scriptures when confronted with Scripture verses that directly debunk their false doctrine.

- - Therefore, one good way to identify a teacher of false doctrine is to watch how they respond to being confronted with Scripture verses that directly debunk their false doctrine - they will "not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ" from Scriptures.

"and to godly teaching,"

- - Another way to identify a teacher of false doctrine is to examine their doctrine to discern whether or not godliness is actually being promoted.

- - Godliness is characterized by "piety" or righteous living that produces genuine reverence to God as well as devotion to living in comprehensive obedience to what God instructs in Scriptures. (Strong's #2150)

- - Teachers of false doctrine may try to redefine the term "godly teaching" to mean 'teaching that is from God', which they of course think they are a select loudspeaker for.

- - This redefining is an attempt to deflect exposure of their doctrine as being false because their doctrine is actually promoting a form of ungodliness that appears to look or is disguised to look as though it is godly.

- - And this deflection does not alter the reality that they are "teaching differently", in other words they are teaching a doctrine that is different from what is contained in the Scriptures. (Strong's #2085)

v.4a - READ

[Lesson Question: Analyze and describe the two realities for teachers of false doctrines cited here in verse 4a, and explain how and why these realities relate to those persons who teach false doctrines.]

SECTION POINT: Teachers of false doctrines typically are enabled by their serious deficiency in their knowledge of the Scriptures to erroneously convince themselves that their doctrines are sound, true, and correct.

"he is conceited"

- - In previous verse 3, the description was given that teachers of false doctrines tend to be oppositional to sound instruction from the Scriptures and oppositional to teaching that fosters genuine godliness.

- - Now in the first part of verse 4, further description is given that teachers of false doctrines tend to be "conceited", meaning they "puff themselves up" and "inflate" their opinion about themselves with "a favorable and especially unduly high opinion of their own abilities or worth". (Strong's #5187; AHD - 'conceit')

- - They are so convinced that their doctrine is thoroughly correct and true that they develop a superior attitude about themselves and their abilities to ascertain its supposed veracity. ('veracity' - AHD "adherence to the truth; truthfulness; conformity to fact or truth; accuracy or precision; reliability; correctness")

- - But God says here that in reality, the teachers of false doctrine are dead wrong - dead wrong about the veracity of their doctrine, dead wrong about their self-evaluation of their own abilities, and dead wrong about their confidence that God approves of them and their doctrine.

"and understands nothing."

- - Another reality that God states here is that the teachers of false doctrines "understand nothing".

- - Teachers of false doctrines are convinced they have substantial understanding and knowledge about God, His Word, and doctrines of the faith.

- - And when the extent of their Bible training is inquired about, the truth is typically they have little or no formal academic Bible training from a credible Bible college.

- - Instead, usually they are either self-taught in the Scriptures, or they have acquired bits and pieces of doctrines from various people they have heard or read material from.

- - Either way, the fact is the teachers of false doctrines are grossly under-prepared for the task they have chosen - teaching the Word of God.

- - A crucial mistake made here by teachers of false doctrines is that they rely on their own understanding, intuition, knowledge about God and the Scriptures instead of merely just taking God at His written Word in its entirety by extensively studying the Word using sound and proper interpretation.

- - An implication here is that the elders, pastors, and ministry leaders who direct the affairs of the church or ministry (v.5:17) must take specific steps to insure that everyone who teaches God's Word in their church or ministry is sufficiently prepared for that task, having taken enough credible formal academic Bible training to qualify them and to establish their beliefs in doctrines that are sound.

- - The leadership being lax in regard to requiring adequate credible formal academic Bible training for every one of its teachers is an approach that by default cultivates conditions conducive for the proliferation of false doctrines being taught in their church or ministry.

- - There is, however, a suitable alternative in that inadequately-trained people can be allowed to teach God's Word as long as they are given and monitored to hold closely to a credible teaching curriculum or materials that have been generated by a qualified person who has completed thorough credible formal academic Bible training and holds sound doctrines.

BIG IDEA: From their obliviousness, pride, and ignorance, teachers of false doctrines convince themselves that they are promoting sound doctrines.

APPLICATIONS:

- - Do you teach or promote or hold any doctrines that are false or that you have been questioned about as being false?

- - How did you determine and establish that those doctrines are indeed correct, true, and sound?
 - - Specifically who and/or what do you use to support the veracity of your doctrines that have been questioned as being false?
 - Compile a list of those sources you use to support the veracity of your questionable doctrines.
 - - - - Now objectively critique each individual source on your list.
 - - - - Are any of those sources weak in credible formal academic Bible training?
 - - - - Do any of those sources utilize teaching that is 'different'?
 - - - - Do any of those sources utilize teaching that ignores or rejects Scripture verses which clearly address and oppose the assertions of that source?
 - - - - Do any of those sources utilize teaching that fosters supposed godliness but which other believers have contended is in fact ungodly?

 - - How do you regard yourself in respect to the questionable doctrines you hold, teach, and promote?
 - - Do you regard yourself as being exceptionally smart, wise, and knowledgeable for finding, or determining, or establishing your questionable doctrines?
 - - How much credible formal academic Bible training from a reputable Bible college have you completed? Or instead, are you essentially self-taught in the Scriptures, from which you formulate your questionable doctrines?
 - - Do you relish or crave being esteemed by other people as having extensive and insightful knowledge of Bible doctrines when in fact you have very little or no credible formal academic Bible training?

 - - If you have less than 4 years of credible formal academic Bible training from a reputable Bible college or you do not utilize teaching materials from someone who does have this advanced credible academic training, then you should automatically and immediately start reexamining the veracity of every single questionable doctrine you hold and promote.
 - - And furthermore, in order to preclude the possibility of you receiving any additional adverse judgment from God on Judgment Day, you should immediately stop teaching, and promoting, and spreading every questionable doctrine you hold until you have completed a thorough and comprehensive reexamination of every single questionable doctrine you hold and promote.
 - Seek out people and sources who have credible advanced formal academic Bible training from a reputable Bible college.
 - - - - Get their opinion and what Scriptures they base their opinion on.
 - - - - Do not assume they are wrong because their opinion "does not agree" with your questionable doctrine.
 - - - - If your questionable doctrine is derived from "different teaching", then assume your doctrine is wrong. (v.3, Strong's #2085)
 - - - - Humble yourself and be teachable from the Scriptures, God's Word.
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[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

-- Exactly how do false doctrines get into the church - by what means or in what manner? (Hint: simplified answer - It walks in, or gets carried in, or gets piped in.)

- - - - From your answer, then logically and practically, what should be occurring in every church to prevent false doctrines from entering their church? And from gaining a foothold in their church?

- - From your personal observations, knowledge, and experiences, and without disclosing identifying information, typically what happens to teachers of false doctrines? In the short-term? In the longer-term? And what kind of results did they achieve from their teaching and promoting of false doctrines?]

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