

THE LAWS OF LEADERSHIP

1 Timothy 4:1-5

LAW #9 A Leader Is One of Satan's Primary Targets

Spencer Goodreds tells of an old gentleman riding on the ocean liner. When a storm blew up at sea the young woman, leaning against the ship's rail, lost her balance and was thrown overboard. Immediately another figure plunged into the waves beside her and held her up until a life-boat rescued them. To everyone's astonishment the hero was the oldest man on the voyage--an octogenarian. That evening he was given a part in honor of his bravery. "Speech! Speech!" the other passengers cried.

The old gentleman rose slowly and looked around at the enthusiastic gathering. *"There's just one thing I'd like to know,"* he said impatiently. *"Who pushed me?"*

(From *Success, Motivation, and the Scriptures* by William H. Cook)

Maybe you need to get on track or maybe you need to be pushed but we're living in a desperate day of leadership.

A leadership vacuum in so many areas.

And what we're talking about today is Law #9:

Leaders Are One of Satan's Primary Targets (chapter 4:1-5)

In part one we looked at the first three chapters and now we're going to look at the last three in 1 Timothy.

You know, when you see any of the *National Geographic* specials, especially on animals that are carnivorous, you notice how almost all of them hunt in the same way. They look for something that's wounded or they look for an animal that is straggling, or look for something that's in isolation.

Those same principles are true in the realm of leadership. Satan is busy endeavoring to isolate leaders, put them into a position of no accountability and, like a lion (1 Peter 5:8), he gets the loner and the stragglers for his cause and his purpose.

Make no mistake about it. It's very, very real. And when we isolate ourselves. When we put ourselves in a position of thinking we can go it alone, that's the time we become most vulnerable.

Abraham Lincoln was asked to explain why he relieved General John C. Fremont from his command.

Lincoln said:

“His cardinal mistake is that he isolates himself, & allows nobody to see him; and by which he does not know what is going on in the very matter he is dealing with.”

Then Lincoln went on to say:

“If they turn their backs to the fire, and get scorched in the rear, they're going to find they have to sit on a blister.”

(From *Lincoln on Leadership: Executive Strategies for Tough Times* by Donald T. Phillips)

And when you turn over in the Scripture, you see the very same thing true. All the armor is for the front. There is no armor for the back. God intends for us to stand our ground, to fight, to be accountable, to join together.

Let me remind you of the 8 laws we have just looked at and then we'll dig in.

Law #1: A statement of goal is essential to leadership.

Law #2: Never get over the privilege of being a leader.

Law #3: To be a leader you have to be willing to fight.

Law #4: A commitment to leadership is a commitment to prayer.

Law #5: Leadership is primarily a man's role.

Law #6: Character is a vital ingredient of leadership,

Law #7: There is no place in leadership for a dishonest, double-tongued drunk.

Law #8: Jesus Christ is the great model of leadership.

The difference between chapter 3 and chapter 4 is the difference between going from the sublime to the ridiculous. It's going from the beautiful neighborhood to the slums because now we're down in the ugly stuff when you get to chapter 4.

The little word "but" that forms the contrast between chapter 3 and chapter 4 shows you the difference. We're going to be skating on the landscape today that isn't very attractive but it's very real and we really need to talk about it.

Why?

When you look in the Scriptures you find Satan all the time firing his shots at key leaders.

Just stop and think about it for a minute.

Satan fired a missile of:

Temper at Moses, and he never got into the land.

Satan fired a missile of:

Lust at David, and he nearly lost the kingdom.

Satan fired a missile of:

Total devastation to Job, and the poor guy suffered incredibly.

He fired a missile of:

Fear at Peter, and he denied the Savior.

He fired a missile of:

A thorn in the flesh of Paul, and he plead that he'd be freed from it.

He fired a missile of:

Dishonesty at Abraham, and he lied right in the face of a situation where he was terribly embarrassed.

He fired a missile of:

Depression on Elijah, and he was willing to throw it in and go to the house.

He fired a missile of:

Pride at Saul, and he lost his kingdom and his life as well.

He fired a missile of:

Idolatry at Gideon, and although he made a great start he blew it in the finish.

He fired a missile of:

Greed at Judas, and he lost his opportunity and his life.

You know, Satan is interested in firing shots at our feet when we're in our 20's and 30's because he's concerned about where we're walking and he likes to see us dance.

But when we get into our 40's he seems to fire his shots at our loins because he is consumed with our passions and the direction of our passions.

In our 50's he fires his shots at our heart because he wants to get us in our marriage and in our family.

And in our 60's he seems to want to blow our brains out by telling us that we deserve the right to sit around on our duff and piddle and play for awhile until we finish.

To me, I believe retirement is a lie of the devil. Because if you're still here, you're supposed to be on assignment as a believer. And until you're there with Him, while you're here, you ought to be involved in some kind of constructive ministry for the glory of God.

So it just seems that he starts at the bottom and he just moves up in using his shots.

Now when it comes to the realm of leadership we need to contend with one other verse that sets the suppositions for what I'm getting ready to present you.

In James 3:1 when he gets ready to talk about the tongue he says:

“Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment.”

In other words, there's a great responsibility when you pick up the Bible or you begin to serve the Lord. Because you're going to have a stricter judgment.

And I would also say that you are going to have a bigger war. You're going to have a bigger battle on your hands as a result of being a leader because Satan is going to fire his shots at you.

Pick up with me at verse 1. (1 Timothy 4:1)

V. 1 “But the Spirit explicitly is saying that in latter times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and to teachings of demons (demonic teachings),”

See what happens.

From the glorious picture of Christ in chapter 3 we now have just the opposite. Here Paul is warning Timothy about the fact that the Spirit says something that in later times is going to happen. Now let's break this down by phrases.

Where does the Spirit say anything about this?

Well Matthew 24 and 25 in the Olivette discourse speaks of it often. Also in 2 Thessalonians Chapter 2.

Listen to Mark 13:22:

“for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order, if possible, to lead the very elect astray.”

Paul felt that when he was leaving the church at Ephesus in Acts 20:29 he says:

“I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;”

What does it mean when we translate those words

“the Spirit explicitly is saying?” It means **“clearly.”**

It means **“you don't mistake it, it's unmistakably clear.”**

It's **“in express terms.”**

The Word of God tells us that this is going to happen.

It is *“the Spirit of God explicitly saying”* and what's He saying?

“In latter times”

(now don't confuse that with the last times)

"Latter times" means "toward the end."

I think we're living in that time. Now maybe we're not living in the LAST times but we're certainly a long ways down the pike from where we were when this was said and it certainly the "*latter times*" in view of a lot of things we're seeing.

v. 1b "In latter times some will fall away from the faith."

Matthew 24:11:

(Jesus said) "*And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.*"

We had a graphic illustration of this with Mt. Carmel in Waco and Jim Jones in the People's Temple where 900 people perished.

Paul says, "*The Spirit explicitly is saying that in latter times some will (do 2 things):*"

**#1: "*they'll fall away from the faith*"
and**

#2: *"they'll pay attention to deceitful spirits or to the teachings of demons"* (or demonic teachings, that which is ironious).

Now are there any illustrations in Scripture of people who ran their faith on the rocks?

Remember back in 1 Timothy 1:19?

(Paul says) *"holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having rejected, have suffered shipwreck in their faith."*

Peter realized in 2 Peter 2:22:

It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A dog returns to its own vomit," and, "A sow, after being washed, returns to wallowing in the mire."

They fall away from the faith and they begin paying attention to that which is in error, that which is erroneous rather than that which is truthful.

Paul speaks of this in 1 Corinthians 10:20-21 he says:

“No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot drink the cup of Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.”

The Scripture recognizes the fact that Satan is very much alive and well.

2 Corinthians 2:11

“In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

2 Corinthians 4:4

“in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them.”

2 Corinthians 6:15

“What harmony was Christ with Satan, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?”

2 Corinthians 11:3

“I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.”

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.”

2 Corinthians 12:7

“And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me—to keep me from exalting myself!”

You know, Jesus saw it too. He was talking to Peter just before Peter blew it and denied the Lord.

In Luke 22:31-32, He turns to him and says:

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, once you have turned again, may strengthen your brethren.”

In other words, Peter you're going to get it.

You're going to face it.

It's very real.

And may I ask you to recognize the fact that Satan is alive and well today.

**Verse one is our key verse. And
a Leader Is One of Satan's Primary Targets.**

You're thinking, OK you've revealed all the evils now tell me what to do.

I'm glad you asked that because that's what I'm getting ready to do.

There are 6 ways to victory in our Christian life over satanic opposition. If you'll write these 6 things down and you'll make this your battle plan, you'll be okay.

First of all, wear your armor at all times.

#1: Wear your armor at all times. And if you want to know what your armor is, it's Ephesians 6:10-17.

#2: Pray. Don't talk about it. Pray. Ephesians 6:18

“With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit.”

#3: Study the Word of God. 2 Timothy 2:15

“Be diligent to study the Word of God.”

#4: Memorize the Word of God. Jeremiah 15:16

***“Thy words were found, and I did eat them;
and Thy word was the joy and rejoicing of my
heart,”***

#4: Focus on obedience.

**Just tell the Lord, *“Lord, I want to be obedient to you
as You reveal it to me in Your Word.”***

“Be doers of the word, and not just hearers only.” James 1:22

“Don't let the Book depart out of your mouth; be an obedient individual.” Joshua 1:8

#6: Accountability.

Find somebody you can link up with. And say hold my fat to the fire, you know, I want to be accountable to you.

Psalm 26:2, 3

***“Test me, O Lord, and try me,
examine my heart and my mind;”***

Let's go to verse 2, (how did Satan do this?)

v. 2 *“by the hypocritical preaching of liars, seared (with a red hot branding iron) in their own consciences,”*

The little word "by" is instrumental.

It tells you how Satan does it. He does it with somebody who isn't telling the truth. A hypocritical preaching that's not the truth. That goes with Matthew 7:15:

“Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.” They are fake and they are phony.

v. 2 *"By the hypocritical preaching of liars, seared (with a red hot branding iron) in their consciences."*

This is the only place in the Greek New Testament that this word occurs. *"Seared in their consciences."*

That is literally what it means to put your brand on somebody. And the place where it is seared is literally cauterized. It no longer is able to feel.

Sin cauterizes the conscience.

Now you understand it when you have a leader that can look you straight in the face and tell you a lie without even knowing he's a liar.

This is because his conscience is cauterized.

Have you ever had someone stand there and look you straight in the face and say, *"I'm not a drunk, I just drink regularly."*

Sin brands or cauterizes the conscience.

And then what happens? A person is totally open to do what Satan wants him to do. Because they don't have any feeling anymore.

They don't have any responsibility for anybody but themselves.

It was George Gilder who says:

Men lust, but they don't know what for;

They wander, and lose track of the goal;

They fight and compete, but they forget the prize;

They spread seed, but spurn the seasons of growth;

They chase power and glory, but miss the meaning of life.

(From *Temptations Men Face* by Tom L. Eisenman)

Isn't it sad. What Satan is doing to destroy people.

One guy said, "*You know, the world drinks to forget; and we drink to remember.*"

(From *The Body* by Charles Colson)

We take the cup to remember what Jesus did for us.

And Satan in all of his ugliness provides the beverage so the world can forget.

The conscience is a vital part of the apostle Paul's teaching

**When a person has fallen prey to a cauterized conscience,
he doesn't even know he is lying.**

He doesn't even know he's a drunk.

He doesn't even know he is living an immoral lifestyle.

He doesn't even know he's greedy.

And he doesn't even know he's selfish.

**When you have a cauterized conscience,
you've also crucified character and kissed Christianity
goodbye.**

**That's what we have today. We have people in leadership
who have cauterized their conscience and as a result they
don't have any character.**

**Let me put it this way,
Charisma without character is the surest way to chaos.**

**And it all starts with a cauterized conscience and Satan
knows that.**

**Let's go to verse 3, (How did these guys manifest
themselves?)**

v. 3 “forbidding to marry, to abstain from foods, which God created for reception with thanksgiving by those who believe and who have experiential knowledge of the truth.”

You can always tell when Satan gets involved in religion because he'll deal with your marriage and your menu. You'll find it every time.

There's legalistic requirements with regard to food and he'll mess up your marriage.

Just look at Jim Jones, look at David Koresh, then go look at Son Mung Yung and all the rest of the cults.

They'll get you in a mess on the marriage relationship and then they'll mess on your menu.

There's certain foods you can eat and certain foods you can't eat and it's so spiritual to be part of that.

That was true in those days and Paul tells Timothy you can see it. “*Forbid the married to abstain from foods which God created for reception.*”

After all in Genesis 1 God made it and He saw that it was very good.

And the apostle Paul says, *"I really haven't found anything that's not really good."*

And he says, *"It's with thanksgiving,"* by whom?

The two things that are true of the people who have the victory and who have the truth are those who what?

***"Who believe"* #1 in the Lord Jesus Christ;**

and #2 *"who have an experiential knowledge of the truth."*

It's not just something that you know in the head but it's gotten down in their heart.

They *"have an experiential knowledge of the truth."*

They believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and they've experienced the truth.

That's the two keys to victory over Satan.

Now verse 4

v. 4 *"Because every created thing of God is good, and nothing is to be thrown away if it is received with thanksgiving."*

They receive the things that are right and receive them in the right way with thanksgiving.

Our last verse.

v.5 *"It is consecrated through the word of God and prayer."*

Now the word "*consecrated*" is in the emphatic position.

It's set apart through the Word of God and prayer.

Why does he end this study with those two words?

Because #1 the Word teaches us.

#2 Prayer is the basis for our communion with the Father.

Do you pray?

Or do you have an 800 number?

Do you dial it when you have a need?

And you expect God to meet it.

Or maybe it's a 911 and you call upon Him

when you're in a time of trouble.

Billy Graham says there are only three things you have to do to have a revival in your city.

#1, you pray. #2, you pray. And #3, you pray.

(From *Growing More Like Jesus* by Richard L. Strauss)

Andrew Murray said:

“Christlike praying in secret will be the secret of Christlike living in public.”

(From *Growing More Like Jesus* by Richard L. Strauss)

The people who are going to have victory over the enemy are going to be people of the Word and people who pray.

There are 10 lessons that come out of this study.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: It is prophetic and pathetic what some people will be swayed to believe.

LESSON #2: Some will fall away and pay attention to seducing spirits.

LESSON #3: Satan is the mastermind behind all of these false teachers.

LESSON #4: A leader is one of Satan's primary targets.

LESSON #5: Charisma without character is the surest way to chaos.

LESSON #6: When you have cauterized the conscience and crucified character, you've kissed Christianity goodbye.

LESSON #7: A person who has cauterized his conscience does not even know when he is a liar, a drunk, immoral, greedy, or selfish.

LESSON #8: Everything God has created is good and nothing is to be thrown away.

LESSON #9: Everything is consecrated through the Word of God and prayer.

LESSON #10: The 6 keys to victory over Satan are:

- 1. Wear your armor.**
- 2. Pray.**
- 3. Study the Scriptures.**
- 4. Memorize the Scriptures.**
- 5. Focus on obedience.**
- 6. Run to accountability.**

STUDIES IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

PART II - 1 TIMOTHY 4-6

"The Laws of Leadership"

Key verse 4:12: *"Let no one look down on you (think little of) because you are young; but keep on becoming an example of the believers in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity."*

LAW NUMBER NINE - A Leader Is One of Satan's Primary Targets —

1 Timothy 4:1-5

Key verse 4:1

Notes

v. 1 But the Spirit explicitly is saying that in latter times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and to teachings of demons (demonic teachings),

v. 2 by the hypocritical preaching of liars, seared (with a red hot branding iron) in their own consciences,

v. 3 forbidding to marry, to abstain from foods, which God created for reception with thanksgiving by those who believe and who have experiential knowledge of the truth.

v. 4 Because every created thing of God is good, and nothing is to be thrown away if it is received with thanksgiving.

v. 5 For it is consecrated through the word of God and prayer.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. How does the Spirit describe the "latter times," according to verse 1?**
- 3. How does Satan accomplish his objectives, according to verse 2?**
- 4. What do you think it means when it says in verse 2 that their consciences are "seared with a red hot branding iron"?**
- 5. Summarize their teaching in verse 3.**
- 6. What does Paul say about "every created thing" in verse 4?**
- 7. How is everything to be "received," according to verse 4?**
- 8. In what two ways is it "consecrated," according to verse 5?**
- 9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?**
- 10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**