

November 15, 2020 - I Timothy 4:2- 6 / I John 2:18-22- “Being a Good Minister”

## Introduction:

In September of 2019, Jason Lanning 49, of Depew, NY claimed to be a State Trooper in order to gain the trust and personal information of another person. Although Lanning previously did work for the New York State Police, he had been terminated from his position for ten years. Among other very serious charges Mr. Lanning, was indicted on two counts of Criminal Impersonation in the Second Degree, which is a Class “A” misdemeanors. While he was under investigation for alleged criminal impersonation, prosecutors said three other people came forward with accusations against him for lying to gain information from another person.

Impersonation fraud in the United States is on the rise. In fact it is alarming over 3.2 million identity theft and fraud reports were received in 2019. Internet impersonation is another Class A’ misdemeanor and carries a maximum penalty of a \$1,000 fine and a one-year term of imprisonment for each violation or act of impersonation. This is overwhelming on the rise.

I got to thinking about this kind of fraud and this is really the spirit of anti-Christ. There will never be a greater fraud and liar than the anti-Christ. This is who the anti-Christ and the spirit of anti-Christ are; they all about being frauds, liars and thieves. – **II Thess. 2:4, 8-9** - The Apostle Paul continues in verse 2-5 and speaks to...

## II. The Characteristics of Seducing Spirits. Vv. 2- 5.

1. These false teachers are liars and hypocrites they preach one thing and practice another. They tell their disciples what to do, but don’t practice it themselves. This sounds like many government leaders whom covid rules are for you but not for them. These false teachers have no conscience. Their conscience has been turned into scar tissue, and no longer do they feel a thing. The nerves are dead; they are burned. I remember when I played the guitar as a youth my fingers became so cautious I had no feeling in the tip. The term “seared” or “burned” is the technical medical term used by Hippocrates that we now call “cauterizing.”

It is the verb *kaustēriazō*, (cause stir e os-o) and it means “to cauterize,” “to burn,” “to scar.” They have been scarred to the point where they can carry on their lie and their hypocrisy and having no scruples. It does not faze them, it as if they are harden to the truth of their own deceit. This also refers to those who *claim* to be teaching the Bible, while just using it as a prop for their own selfish gain.

2. As we move to verse three Paul here refers to false teaching going on in the church of Ephesus. They taught that an unmarried life was more spiritual than a married life, which is contrary to scriptures. **Gen 2:18 “And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”** Jesus put His approval on marriage (Mt. 19:1-9), though He said that not everyone was to marry.

3. Paul affirmed the biblical basis of marriage (1 Cor. 7:1-24) Beware of any religious teaching that tampers with God's institution of marriage! They taught that certain foods were taboo; if you ate them you were not spiritual. The fact that God called His creation "good" didn't affect them. Those who know the truth know that Jesus stated that all foods are clean (Mk. 7:14-23). We just taught this lesson in Acts 10. A person may not be able to eat certain foods for physical reasons such as allergies, but no food is to be rejected for spiritual reasons.

4. In the early centuries of the church, there were monks who went out to desolate desert places to show how spiritual they were by torturing themselves. One never ate cooked food. Another stood all night leaning on a sharp rock so that it was impossible for him to sleep. Another neglected his own body and allowed it to become so dirty that bugs literally dropped dead off his body. They did this because they thought it would win favor with God and show everyone how spiritual they were. Some people think that if they sacrifice something for God (such as the right to marry or to eat certain foods then they are in with God and he owes them. --gospel

5. It is good and proper for us to pray before eating a meal but it should not be done in a ritualistic, superstitious way. Nor should it be done to show others how spiritual we are – which is imitating the prayer practices of the Pharisees. This is legalism at its worst. The food we eat is sanctified when we pray and give thanks to God. Paul states the conclusion and affirmation of this truth in verse five.

### III. The Characteristics of a Good Minister. vv. 6

1. Paul in this verse is mentoring Timothy these are important issues. The key phrase is "You shall be a good minister of Jesus Christ." That's what Paul wanted Timothy to be, and this is how he told him to be that. So remind the brethren of these things. The things he is writing about above and as he precedes to comment. If you do, then you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ. The word "minister" here is actually the word for "deacon" or servant. It is the word *diakonos*.

So this admonition applies to all who would be good servants of Jesus Christ. It is used of those who are called deacons in chapter 3, verses 8 and following. There, it has to do with a specific office in the church called deacon. Here, it has to do with the fact that one who is a pastor-teacher, must see himself as a servant of Jesus Christ. Anyone who leads in any ministry in His behalf serves Him.

2. The emphasis here is on Timothy's duty to make himself an excellent minister of Jesus Christ, and by setting forth a model and standard of faith, devotion, and conduct. This will discourage people from heresy. The ministry must be a positive building up of the people of God, not always emphasizing the attacking error.

3. A godly pastor or minister will warn his people of error. The transition from the first five verses into the next part of the chapter moves on that aspect of warning. Both pivot off of verse

six. A pastor's heart is manifest in how capable a man is at protecting them from wolves. That is a pastor's heart. There are those that come among us in sheep's clothing we are to beware.

### Conclusion:

The Bible teaches that deceivers will intensify in numbers and efforts as the second coming draws closer. This means we must test every message we hear with God's written Word. In this passage Paul graphically gives us the information we need for detecting deceivers by describing the procedures of deceivers, the profile of deceivers, and the plight of deceivers.

**But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. Rev. 21:18**