

LET THE BIBLE SPEAK SERIES

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THINGS TO AVOID

Prov. 4:14-15 "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, and pass away."

Avoid--"to turn away from, to turn aside" Vine

The church must be warned of certain things from which we need to turn away.

The course of the wicked must be avoided at all costs

The only path to enter is the one that is narrow and leads to life. Mt.7:13-14

Those who have already entered the way of evil men must be told to "go not in the way of evil men." In other words "get out, do not continue in the road that leads to ruin."

Let us notice certain things the people of God are told to avoid:

I. Avoid Profane and Vain Babblings.

1. "Oh Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings." 1Tim. 6:20.

NASB: "avoiding worldly and empty chatter."

Weymouth: "shunning irreligious and frivolous talk."

The word "babblings" literally means "empty sounds"

Some people get worked up over discussions pertaining to things useless and meaningless. Foolish to argue pointless subjects.

2. Timothy is commanded to "keep or guard that which has been committed to thy trust." What had been committed? Or to keep what had been "deposited" (Robertson), a banking term. This included the gospel and all that it embraced: The virgin birth of Christ, His miracles His life, death, resurrection, the establishment of the church, entrance into that Kingdom, godly living the judgment to come etc.

3. Timothy was not to get sidetracked into talking about subjects that were hollow, useless, and ridiculous. Neither should we.

4. We are to avoid or turn away from not only the teaching but those who teach such. To argue with such persons is to give dignity to their teaching, which it does not deserve.

5. Generally people who become hobby riders, are not benefited by discussion.

II. Avoid Oppositions of Science Falsely So Called.

1. Science is knowledge. Much that is labeled knowledge is not that in fact. The Jerusalem Bible translates this passage: "Have nothing to do with the pointless philosophical discussions and antagonistic beliefs of the knowledge which is not knowledge at all."
2. Modern men who call themselves "scientists", often teach unsupported theories. Evolution, the origin of the earth, the age of the earth, etc. etc.
3. Our time is one of utmost arrogance, pride and conceit on the part of haughty boasters who shout in deafening tones from every cultural center on earth what they think they know. But what they profess to know is a lie, man did not evolve from lower life forms. It still does not lie within man to direct his own steps.
4. Christians are to avoid this foolishness.

III. Avoid Foolish and Unlearned Questions.

"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes."
(2Tim.2:23)

"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain." (Titus 3:9)

1. Unlearned questions are those that are trifling, and do not tend to edification. They are stupid. The Greeks and Hebrews were greatly given to controversies of various kinds, and many of the questions pertained to points which would not be settled, or which, if settled, were of no importance.
2. Timothy is told to shun or avoid them for-----they gender strifes. That is they cause trouble.
Strifes means "a combat, fight, or quarrel." Thayer.
3. All questions that lead to endless speculation are harmful. We should not entertain questions that are asked purely for the purpose of gratifying someone's love of attention or relish for argument. Such does not edify.

Deut. 29:29 "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

IV. Avoid Fornication

1. Our society is promiscuous. Fornication is not only committed on a regular basis by many, it is also encouraged by loose and evil men.
2. There is a provoked and commercialized spread of sensuality. It is marketed by the media.
It produces corruption on stage and screen-- in book and magazine. The profits are astronomical, the bankruptcy is eternal.
3. Young people are bombarded by the media with vulgar and inviting ad campaigns, and pressured by their peers to participate in activities that are both wrong and dangerous.
4. Many older people sanction pre-marital relationships.
5. More and more couples are living together without the benefit of marriage.

6. The scriptures speak to these topics in plain and unequivocal terms.
7. 1Cor.7:2 "Nevertheless to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife and let every woman have her own husband."
8. The clear teaching is: any sexual union between a man and a woman who are not husband and wife is sinful and wrong. Such a union is called fornication by the bible. Call it what you may, the bible calls it what it is.
9. No matter who---no matter where.
10. We must impress upon people that all kinds of fornication are wrong and are to be avoided. "flee fornication" (1Cor.6:18).
11. 1Thess.4: 3-5 "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality: that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who know not God.

Paul affirms that there are three things which enter into sanctification:

- (1) abstaining from fornication,
- (2) possessing one's vessel in a state of honor, and
- (3) refraining from defrauding a brother in this matter.

The idea is that we should abstain from all forms of sexual immorality, by knowing how to control own body. One who prostitutes his body to uncleanness covers it with infamy and disgrace.

Such actions cause us to sin against others. God will avenge "Be not deceived God is not mocked..." Gal. 6:7-8.

V. Avoid Suspicious Conduct

1. Paul urged brethren in churches that were largely made up of gentiles to send relief to the needy saints at Jerusalem. Titus went to Corinth to plead with the brethren to do their part in this work of love.
 2. Paul sent with Titus a highly respected brother who had been chosen by some of the churches to travel with Paul to witness the delivery of the gift to Jerusalem, "avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2Cor.8:18-21).
 3. Paul took precautions to avoid any suspicions of dishonesty.
 4. All who are involved in the handling of church finances need to be very cautious. (Counting the money is not a job for children)
 5. Wisdom and prudence are preferable to shadiness and scandal. We should avoid questionable conduct in all areas of our life.
 6. If you run with the world, don't be surprised when brethren assume you are of the world.
- If you spend more of your time with worldly people and stay away from Christians, don't be surprised when people think you are getting weak.

If you court, and fellowship with those who digress from the bible in the work and worship of the church, don't be alarmed when brethren want to know where you stand on those matters.

7. You put yourself in a questionable light by your own actions.

8. When you read the loose, liberal-minded views of denominational preachers and subscribe to the theories of the "change agents" in the church, look out---you will soon be parroting their language and actions.

VI. Avoid Agents of Divisions and Offences.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." (Rom. 16:17)

1. Division is wrong, a work of the flesh, a sin, and must be avoided.

2. "Where we, by our own errors of teaching or conduct, produce divisions among the children of God, we sin against Christ. Nor is it a less offense to countenance or defend divisions, than it is to cause them. They must be utterly disfavored by the Christian. He is not at liberty even to feel indifferent toward them." Lard

3. The division in Romans 16:17 was neither schisms nor apostasies, but rather consisted of little factions or parties in the congregation (Lard). Such is contrary to the teaching of the bible.

People in congregations or people who go into congregations and seek to sow discord thus creating factions or parties are to be marked and avoided.

4. Some people have attitudes, and pursue agendas that lead to this very thing.

They produce strife, which ultimately ends in division. That includes preachers.

5. Anyone who goes about the country promoting ideas that create problems among brethren, advancing doctrines that tend to divide and cause trouble in churches, ought to be marked and avoided by the brotherhood.

6. On the other hand there are those who promote peace. They strive to bring people closer together. They do not delight in always preaching or suggesting "some new thing" but are content with a "thus saith the Lord."

7. 1Cor. 11:18-19 "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also factions among you, that they that are approved may be made manifest among you"

The division spoken of existed within the Corinthian congregation. Perhaps an extension of that condemned in Chapter 1.

The carnal spirit tends to division.

The divisive spirit in the perverse and carnal, manifests, by contrast, the loving united spirit, of the obedient and spiritual, which is approved. Approved is the opposite of rejected.

The word division used in v. 18 is a milder term than "factions" found in verse 19.

The former (divisions) represented parties separated by present or at least very recent dissensions, while the latter (factions) described matured separations and looked toward

permanent organizations. (McGarvey) The end result would be separate independent groups.

We as the people of God, must avoid such divisions and ultimate separations.

Concl. If we are to stay right in heaven's sight, we must turn away from those things God tells us to avoid.