

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

(1 Tim. 4:1 – 10)

*Open your group with a sharing time and prayer. Ask God to use your study to draw each person closer to Him.

I. In chapter 3, Paul instructs Timothy on developing leadership in the church at Ephesus. Now he turns to the area of doctrine. Read 1 Tim. 4:1 – 5. What exactly are deceiving spirits and demons? In what sense do demons teach? In what ways might Satan tempt people to abandon their faith in God? Any personal examples?

II. Read verses 2 – 3 again. Paul gives two indicators here of false teaching in verse 2. What are they? How does hypocrisy point to the devil's work? Note: (1 Tim. 1:18 – 20; 3:6 – 7; 2 Cor. 11:13 – 15)

*How do lies also point to the devil? Note: (Jn. 8:44; 2 Cor. 4:2 – 4)
What do you believe are demonic doctrines (lies) that are promoted in our society today? How do we combat these?

III. Now read 1 Tim. 4:6 – 10. Paul contrasts false doctrines with "good teaching". What is the source of our truth and good teaching in the church? According to 1 Tim. 1:8 – 11, what must sound doctrine conform to? What happens to the church that deviates from this?

IV. Contrast physical training and godliness training in verse 7 – 8. How exactly does someone train to be godly? Give examples. What does "godliness" look like when you finally get in shape?

What was Paul's motive for ministry (striving) in verse 10? Explain how God is the ultimate hope for all people. What can we personally do to better share our hope with non-Christians around us?

*Close your group by praying for a clearer sense of hope and a greater desire and determination to share our hope in Christ with others. Consider who you might invite to the Billy Graham "My Hope America" movie on Sunday night, December 6.