

1 Tim 3:14-4:5

Intro

A downside weekly bible preaching

Sometimes you get a section, that does not stand on it self

Like in this case

Two sections

The first section Ch 3:14-16 is a bridge

From how choose Overseers and Deacons

And a section (chapter 4) contracting right ways, over wrong ways

Of which we have read only one instance

So we have two sections that seem to cover two seperate topics

Topic 1: The Household of the congregation

△ Ch3:14-16

The need for detailed instructions

And here Paul highlights what the importance of that is

Before going into further details, Paul explains why

He hopes to visit Ephesus and Timothy himself

But he may be delayed

He did expect to be released from prison in Rome

And if he was, we do not know if he got back to Ephesus

Or carried on the Spain as was his desire

Blessing to have this written down instead of orally taught!

Household congregations

In the time of the early church, congregations met each other mainly in each others houses

Like the house church movement

Hence Paul's insistence that leaders should manage their own household well

Because their congregations are effect extended households

Household of God

Household vs House

In the OT The Temple is the House of God

But now after Christ, the physical Temple loses its meaning

The focus is on the Body of Christ being the Temple

The body of Christ are the believers

Formed in to the Household(s) of God

This / These household(s) have various functions

The Church/Ekklesia of the Living God

THE CHURCH/EKKLESIA OF THE LIVING GOD

The form the gathering of all the believers

The company of people that have been called out

Athens Ekklesia = all the citizens met the assembly

All were called

But not all came to the assembly

That the same here: all are called, but only some have accepted

It is not God that has been selective

The invitation is for all

The coming together as Church is the result of individual responses

The Pillar of Truth

Reference to the pillars in the temple of Artemis or Diana

There were many highly decorative pillars

Not to support, but to display a statue on the top

So the Church/Ekklesia is the display of the truth of the gospel

The Buttress/Bulwark/Foundation (hedraioma)

It keeps a building upright

In the same way the Church/Ekklesia holds the Christ up for all to see

Even if they don't want to see it!

Reminder of the Gospel

Paul gives a reminder of a gospel in form of a hymn

^ v16

An early Christian Hymn

Reminding us of the nature and life of Christ

Contrasting

Jesus work in all the realms

Flesh and Spirit

Angels (Heaven) and Nations (Earth)

World and glory

The individual lines

Manifested in the flesh

His coming as a human being

Vindicated by the Spirit

All the prophecies of Jesus

But also his resurrection

Seen by Angels

Jesus was already present in Heaven

Preached among the nations

And now he is proclaimed on the earth

Believed in the world

People are accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour

Taking up into glory

Now seated at the right hand of the Father

**The Gospel is less about our benefit,
but it focusses on Christ!**

On what God has done

Giving glory to him

Topic 2: Opposition in the Church/Ekklesia

△ Ch4:1-5

Here two ways are contrasted

The way of the Spirit

And the way of Devil in the form of

demons and deceitful spirits

And how these have impact on the Church/Ekklesia

Not new

Paul reminds Timothy that this is not new

The Spirit as already announced this

Matthew 24:11

¹¹ and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.

Mark 13:22

²² For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

2 Thessalonians 2:3

³ Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

These people are renouncing the faith

They influenced by these deceitful spirits and demons

As they lie and their lies is to water down the gospel

By putting additional requirements onto people, believing that otherwise they won't be saved

What that does is that people are start to believe again in what actions or work they need to do to be saved

they need to do to be saved

Instead of 'just' believing and trusting in Jesus for their salvation

This is what the Enemy tends to do: distracting us from Jesus, and giving ourselves the glory, instead of Jesus

Consciences seared by Hot Iron

Under the influence of these demons and spirits

Their natural conscience is removed

In a very drastic and imaginary way

Again this fire is not of the Holy Spirit of the Enemy

Two examples are mentioned

1. Forbidding marriage

Paul had to deal with this before

7 Now for the matters you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman."

[^] 1 Cor 7:3

But this does not seem to be the focus in this letter

2. Demand abstinence from foods

Paul had to deal with this too

4 So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that "An idol is nothing at all in the world" and that "There is no God but one.

[^] 1 Cor 8:4

It does not seem to relate to fasting

it does not seem to relate to tasting

i.e. a periodic not partaking of food

But to food that has been dedicated to idols

Or foods that we classified by the Jews as unclean foods

All foods created by God are good

But pray before you eat something

Paul has a simple remedy

Give thanks to God for the food provided

And it is sanctified by God's word and prayer

So pray for the food before you eat it

In case it is not clean

This cleanliness is not hygienic

But Spiritual

By praying over it we cleans it from its status as unclean as well as remove any idol dedication from it

This may make us think a bit more carefully about praying for our meals!

Conclusion

Although these are separate topics they are related

Paul's concern is that the Church/Ekklesia is a pillar and a bulwark that holds up the truth of the Gospel

Remembering what we are here for: the Gospel of Jesus Christ

And one of the first discussions about

the dangers that will come to the churches/ekklesias

But churches are being distracted if other things that the Gospel is taking their attention

This could be anything

Foods and marriage in Paul's time

But in our time we are distracted by

Politics

Environmental issues

Justice and Reconciliation outside of the church

taking on thoughts / ideas from society that are alien to the Bible

And you can think of more

Paul's concern for the churches was that they should be the pillar and bulwark of the Gospel

And so should our concern also be

Because that is what we are Church for: to glorify Jesus Christ and to proclaim his Name

Amen.