

# Membership Covenant

The 5 G's  
Groups  
Giving  
Gifts  
Grace  
Growth

## A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: 1 Timothy 4:1-16

Message for the Week: Diligent Devotion

Sunday, May 19

### Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week?  
Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

What is the craziest myth or wives' tale that you heard and believed?

### Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

### Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [1 Timothy 4:1-16](#) out loud.

[Clicking the link will bring you to multiple translations.]

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

## **Respond / Reflect:**

Am I/are you abandoning the faith and following deceiving spirits and things taught by demons? How would you know?

What are the godless myths and wives' tales of our day? What is the connection between godless myths and wives' tales and training for godliness?

Why does Paul want Timothy to devote (himself) to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching? Why does Paul want Timothy to give himself wholly to these matters? Why are they so important?

Why does godliness have value for ALL things whereas other things in our lives only have some value?

How are you training yourself to be godly? What matters are you diligent with? What are you giving yourself wholly to? What disciplines are you engaging in that no one else sees?

What is your spiritual gift(s)? Are you neglecting it or using it? How?

## **Try It:**

Is there a spiritual discipline or practice that you've thought about trying or practicing? What might you need to give up in order to try it? Try it this week and see what happens.

## **Prayer:**

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Father, help me to devote my attention to You in all areas of my life. Forgive me for turning my itching ears to what I want to hear. Help me listen to the Word made flesh and set my life to follow Him alone. AMEN

## **Missional/Spiritual Practice: Growth**

I commit to deepen my faith in Jesus Christ through regular Scripture reading and prayer.

I commit to having and pursuing a personal rule of life (a plan for intentionally growing my relationship with Jesus Christ) and living it out in my community, my church, and His Kingdom.

## 1 Timothy 4:1-16

### New International Version

**4** The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. **2** Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. **3** They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. **4** For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, **5** because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

**6** If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. **7** Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. **8** For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. **9** This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. **10** That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.

**11** Command and teach these things. **12** Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. **13** Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. **14** Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

**15** Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. **16** Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

a. 1 Timothy 4:6 The Greek word for *brothers and sisters (adelphoi)* refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God's

## The Message

**4** <sup>1-5</sup> The Spirit makes it clear that as time goes on, some are going to give up on the faith and chase after demonic illusions put forth by professional liars. These liars have lied so well and for so long that they've lost their capacity for truth. They will tell you not to get married. They'll tell you not to eat this or that food—perfectly good food God created to be eaten heartily and with thanksgiving by believers who know better! Everything God created is good, and to be received with thanks. Nothing is to be sneered at and thrown out. God's Word and our prayers make every item in creation holy.

**6-10** You've been raised on the Message of the faith and have followed sound teaching. Now pass on this counsel to the followers of Jesus there, and you'll be a good servant of Jesus. Stay clear of silly stories that get dressed up as religion. Exercise daily in God—no spiritual flabbiness, please! Workouts in the gymnasium are useful, but a disciplined life in God is far more so, making you fit both today and forever. You can count on this. Take it to heart. This is why we've thrown ourselves into this venture so totally. We're banking on the living God, Savior of all men and women, especially believers.

**11-14** Get the word out. Teach all these things. And don't let anyone put you down because you're young. Teach believers with your life: by word, by demeanor, by love, by faith, by integrity. Stay at your post reading Scripture, giving counsel, teaching. And that special gift of ministry you were given when the leaders of the church laid hands on you and prayed—keep that dusted off and in use.

**15-16** Cultivate these things. Immerse yourself in them. The people will all see you mature right before their eyes! Keep a firm grasp on both your character and your teaching. Don't be diverted. Just keep at it. Both you and those who hear you will experience salvation.