

## A Biblical Study of 1 Timothy 4:1, 2 on Unclean Food

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### Abstract

Paul was the reliable and dependable spiritual-leadership mentor of the young minister, Timothy, whom he assigned in the church of Ephesus. He made him aware and conscious of the ongoing and possible future challenges of his ministry. His pastoral letter to Timothy warned him of iterant false teachers who wanted to become teachers of the law but knew nothing about the law. Some would be apostatized by seducing spirits and doctrine of the demons (1Tim 1:1, 3, 4, 7). This ongoing incident disturbed the Ephesian church. Paul's statement says, "For everything God created is good, and nothing to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving" (1Tim 4:4). This is the bone of contention within biblical scholarship. The apostle's declaration has been taken as blanket authority that all unclean food is no longer a biblical issue. Two questions emerge. First, does the text nullify the health and dietary laws in Deuteronomy (14) and Leviticus (11)? Second, what was the real issue why Paul made such statement and what is its contextual background? This research points out that what Paul says was the biblical standard, and cannot be used as categorical. The issue has to do with Greek and Jewish philosophies that crept into the Ephesian church considered as seduction of evil spirit and doctrine of demons. The biblical understanding of the passage has nothing to do seemingly with nullification of dietary laws.

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