

EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY

Finishing Well—Doing What’s Best in the Challenges of Ministry

Ministering Amidst the Crazies

1 Timothy 4:1–6



LET’S BEGIN HERE

We live in unusual times. Surrounded by a sea of cults, false doctrines, religious extremism, political polarization, and media madness, absolute truth seems like a lonely island—sparsely populated and uncharted on the cultural map. Of course where we find ourselves today should come as no surprise . . . at least not to those who’ve read their Bibles closely. Jesus and His apostles warned, more than two millennia ago, that the world would tumble down this rabbit hole, especially as the end of time draws near. Today, we live and minister amidst the *crazies*. And if you doubt it, just look around. This isn’t your father’s world anymore. So what are we to do? Bunch tightly in our holy huddles, hoping to keep the world at bay? Not on your life!



LET’S DIG DEEPER

1. A Brief Review: The Role of the Church

Paul ended 1 Timothy 3 with a concise statement about the purpose of his letter and the purpose of Christ’s church (1 Timothy 3:14–16). Paul began chapter 4 with a strong contrast to the truth the church was to preach.



Quotable

It should come as no surprise that the crazy world in which we live is exactly on schedule with God’s timetable.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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2. The “Later Times”: An Analysis of Apostasy (1 Timothy 4:1–6)

Ministry would be so much easier if everyone conducted themselves appropriately within God’s household (1 Timothy 3:15), adhering to the godliness modeled by Christ (3:16). But people—even church people—are nothing if they’re not consistently fickle and selfish. Since the beginning, lies have cropped up, threatening to choke off the truth. It happened in the garden of Eden and in the church at Ephesus, and it is happening in our churches today. These are times of hypocrisy, lies, and apostasy.

A Known Fact (4:1)

A Vivid Description (4:1–3)

A Direct Answer (4:3–5)



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LET’S LIVE IT

It’d be great to think we live in an age of faithfulness, but we don’t. We live in an age of apostasy, as did Paul and Timothy . . . and as will all Christians until Christ returns for His church. Until that day, however, there are a few lessons to learn and take to heart.

The constant threat of apostasy is a constant reminder that we live in the last days.

Satan is the source of all lies.

Satan has his spokesmen, just as God has His.

A sign of maturity is enjoying God’s provisions, not rejecting them.

A good, nourishing ministry is one that exposes heresy.

How do you detect false teaching, according to Acts 17:11?



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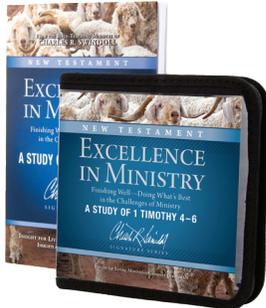
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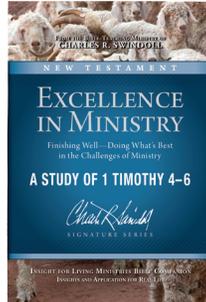
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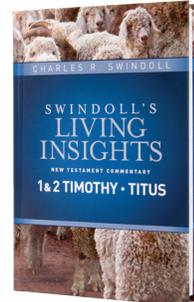
Tools for Digging Deeper



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