**Welcome everyone and good to see you today in God’s house!**

* Intro: God is warning us of the things to come so we won’t be off guard!
* God is the Best Coach and His Word is the Best Game Plan.
* Last week was about Satan’s attacks on God’s People.
* Preparation with the Word of God and using the Holy Spirit’s Discernment with our Spirit is how we are going to be God’s People in this time and age.
* We can be holy and righteous in this World if we are Obeying the Bible.
* God is pleased with His people when we listen and trust Him no matter what is going on around us. God is in control.
* Today we will see a good offense is needed just as much a good defense.

Chapter 4 of 1 Timothy outline:

A disciplined servant, Preaches [proclaims] the Word [1 Tim. 4:1-6] / Practices the Word [1Tim. 4:7-12] will Progress in the Word [1Tim. 4:13-16]

**8 Keys to being a faithful Servant**

1. **Watch out for the their Strengths [v7] “refuse profane old wives fables”**

* When I think of Strengths I am thinking of a false hope and lie others are believing that isn’t in the Bible.
* What are some “Strengths” today that unbelievers are saying?
* What are some “Strengths” today that some weak church have adapted?
* 2 Tim 4:4 – Some have turned from the truth to these “strengths”
* This is a tricky and crafty work of Satan.
* Satan has tricks - 2 Cor\_2:11  Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.
* Satan is sneaky - 2 Cor\_11:14  And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.
* Satan has won many to his team. 1 Tim\_5:15  For some are already turned aside after Satan.
* Where have you seen Satan and avoided it in your life?
* Will you be willing call sin what God calls sin?

1. **Stick with the play that is always working [v8] “godliness profits unto all things”**

* God’s ways are always the best.
* Do it God’s way and God’s way only.
* Happy is the One that Looks to God- Pro\_3:13  Happy *is* the man *that* finds God’s wisdom, and the man *that* gets God’s understanding.
* Happy is the One that waits on the Lord - James\_5:11  Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.
* Don’t do it your way!
* What have you stopped doing your way and start doing God’s way?
* Will you be willing to stop anything for the Lord?

1. **Don’t be afraid of being hit [v10] “labor and suffer reproach”**

* When the world hits you, you hit back harder.
* Don’t quit but make your life count more for Jesus.
* Quote “ Joy is not necessarily the absence of suffering, it is the presence of God.” Unknown
* “Those times when you feel like quitting can be times of great opportunity, for God uses your troubles to help you grow. Warren Wiersbe
* What suffering have you endure and seen the Lord do great things for you?
* Will you be willing to suffer anything for the Lord?

1. **You will always need a good coach [v11] “these things command and teach”**

* God is looking for some Gideons in this world.
* Spiritual Leadership is lacking more and more. Why?
* Why do we command and teach?
* Quote” A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and because He is listening to God rather than man.
* Will you be willing to stand alone for God and His Word?

1. **Don’t worry about the outward, worry about the inward [v12a] “Let no man despise…, But be an example ”**

* Satan hates all of God’s people and will despise you if you stand for God!
* Don’t be surprised God is preparing us. Joh\_7:7  The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.
* Joh\_7:7  The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.
* Will you be willing to be hated for standing with God and His Word?

1. **Don’t act dumb, be a righteous person [v12b] example of the believers in ….”**

* Satan knows how to twist the Bible and make bad seem good. Be careful.
* How are we acting? How are we different from the world? What is God asking you to change for His Honor? Are you willing to be God’s righteous person?

1. **Don’t forget who you are [14] “Neglect not the gift that is in thee”**

* Remember this. When people choose to withdraw far from a fire, the fire continues to give warmth, but they grow cold. When people choose to withdraw far from light, the light continues to be bright in itself but they are in darkness. This is also the case when people withdraw from God.— Augustine

1. **Practice, Practice, Practice [15-16] “Meditate and Take Heed”**

* Are we willing to put in the time and effort to grow and learn about God?
* What are we doing now that is making us stronger for God? Helping us to know God?