



ALL THINGS CREATED BY GOD ARE GOOD

Theme: Christians typically smile on some physical things and frown on others. Legalism makes lists of forbidden things, while libertinism claims salvation provides liberty to indulge. Neither extreme is Biblical. In our text, Paul provides four principles for how to enjoy creation's "good things" with a clear conscience.

Text: I Tim 4:3b-5

- 3 ...foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.
- 4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with thanksgiving.
- 5 For it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

Criteria: What things are "good" and "not to be rejected"?

1. *Created by God:* Is it in the *original* created form?
 - o Gen 1:31 – God saw everything He had made; and indeed, it was very good
 - o Titus 1:15 – To the pure, all things are pure
 - o Rom 14:14 – Nothing is unclean of itself (study entire chapter: Rom 14)
 - o Eccl 3:11 – He has made everything appropriate in its time

Discussion: what were the results of the Fall (Gen. 3) on the original goodness of creation?

2. *Received with thanksgiving:* Does it glorify God when I enjoy it?
 - o Mt 15:36 – And [Jesus] took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks
 - o 1 Thes 5:18 – In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God.
 - o I Cor 10:31 – Do all to the glory of God.
3. *Sanctified by the Word of God:* Does it not violate Scripture?
 - o I Cor 3:16-17 – Body is a temple of God, do not destroy
 - o I Cor 6:12 – All things lawful, not all things profitable
 - o I Cor 6:13 – Body is for the Lord, and Lord is for the body
 - o I Cor 6:19-20 – Body a temple of Spirit, bought with a price; glorify God
 - o I Cor 10:23 – All things lawful, but not all edify (vv. 23-31)
4. *Sanctified by prayer:* Can I ask God to bless it?
 - o Rom 14:22 – Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves
 - o Rom 14:20 – It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak
 - o Rom 14:3 – Let not him who eats despise him who does not and v.v., for God has received him

Application: In light of these criteria, evaluate various "created" things, such as food, drugs, sex, thorns, poisonous plants, alcohol, cholesterol, mosquitoes, marijuana, tobacco, meat vs vegetables, etc. Help the audience apply the principles rather than making a list of good and bad things or do's and don'ts.

Activity: Memorize the text, I Tim. 4:4-5.