

CROSSWINDS
WHAT IS THE CHURCH?
 1 TIMOTHY 4:1-5



Maxime Qavtaradze is a 59-year-old monk that lives in virtual solitude on top of the Katskhi Pillar. He has lived on top of the rock for the last 20 years only venturing down the 131 foot ladder once or twice a week. He prays 7 hours a day. He began living on top of the rock after spending time in prison for drinking and selling drugs. He felt isolation and self-depravation was the best way to beat the temptations of this world. After reading 1 Timothy 4:1-5 and hearing today's sermon, would you say his extreme self-deprivation is the best way to please God? Is it the best way to beat the sinful impulses of his heart?

Read 1 Timothy 4:1-2. Paul says this false teaching is demonic. How does this differ from our traditional understanding of demonic teaching?

Read Jude 4 and 18. What does this tell us about the way false teachers work? How were they using these techniques in Ephesus?

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Read Genesis 1:31; 2:9, 20-25; 9:3. What do these verses teach us about creation and sexuality? How should these truths influence the way we view God's creation, marriage and sexuality today?

Read Colossians 2:16-23. Paul talks to a group in the city of Colossae that thought avoiding certain foods and following certain rituals made them more pleasing to God. What does Paul say asceticism and self-made religion can't do when it comes to facing our sinful desires? What does Paul say people let go of when they focus on self-made religion with rules and regulations?

Read Mark 8:34-36. How do we balance Paul's words about enjoying God's creation with Jesus' words?

Name three good God-given gifts you plan to savor this week.