



Faith Baptist Church of Cabot, Arkansas
Pastor's Mid-Week Bible Study
October 14, 2009

Lesson Five – The Good Warfare
1 Timothy 1:18-20

This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Introduction

The first chapter of this epistle is largely composed of encouragement for Timothy to remain at Ephesus and fulfill his calling. The task at hand of confronting false teachers with the truth would not be an easy one. But it was a necessary task. And it was Timothy's task. In these closing verses of chapter one, Paul encourages Timothy to fight the good fight.

Exegesis

- ❖ The Exhortation to Fidelity
 - The charge

“This charge” refers to the particular instruction Paul has given him in this letter. Namely, it is to remain in Ephesus and confront those teaching other doctrine that that which the Apostle had taught. This instruction is being committed to Timothy. The word translated “commit” means “to place alongside.” The inference is that Paul is giving the charge but that Timothy is responsible for taking it up and putting it into action. It is thus an entrustment from Paul to Timothy with the expectation that Timothy will carry it out.

- The prophecies

Timothy was destined for this moment. According to 1 Timothy 4:14, the enabling grace of God was given to Timothy for ministry through the laying on of hands by the eldership. Paul wants Timothy to recall the words of prophecy spoken that day and fulfill them now in his ministry. The task before him would be a difficult one. But Paul is reminding him that God's hand has always been upon him and that God has brought him to this moment. The God who saved him and put him into ministry would now enable him for the task at hand.

- The warfare

With those prophecies in mind, Timothy is to wage the good warfare, battling the good battle. For Timothy, the battle would necessarily ensue if he obeys Paul's charge. The enemies of the truth would not go quietly. But it is a good battle to be fought. It is worth suffering. (2 Timothy 2:3) It is worth separation from the world. (2 Timothy 2:4)

It is worth it for the sake of God's glory and the salvation of men's souls. Those clouding the Gospel must be stopped.

The good warfare is fought while holding faith and a good conscience. "Holding faith" means always believing and acting faithfully out of that belief, convinced of Christ, His word and His calling. "A good conscience" speaks of more than having no regrets. It means that the mind is continually clear before God with no admixture of evil schemes or selfish agendas. It is the mind constantly and clearly focused on Christ.

❖ The Example of Shipwrecked Faith

➤ The rejection

Some had rejected, that is pushed away from this faith and good conscience of which Paul speaks. The result? Shipwreck regarding the faith. The ship was not merely grounded on a sandbar, it was broken into pieces. Why? Their heart and mind were not set on Christ.

➤ The offenders

The Apostle Paul names two in particular: Hymenaeus and Alexander. Hymenaeus is mentioned again in 2 Timothy 2:17-18 along with Philetus as those overthrowing the faith of some by teaching that the resurrection had already occurred. Alexander is mentioned again in 2 Timothy 4:14 as having done the Apostle much harm. Alexander's particular error is not mentioned, but we may assume by his connection here to Hymenaeus that they together opposed the Apostle's teaching regarding the Gospel and the resurrection.

➤ The reaction

Paul's reaction was not personal, but rather spiritual. He gave them over to Satan. This phrase is used in 1 Corinthians 5:5 in reference to being set outside the fellowship of the church. In both instances, they were set outside the fellowship so that they might suffer the consequences of their sin and be caused to repent. Here the concept of learning is the training of a child which includes not only instruction, but also appropriate consequences designed to confirm the lesson and bring about a change of heart and action.

Application

1. The Good Warfare

- a. Is a Spiritual battle. (Ephesians 6:10-20)
- b. Is a battle with suffering. (2 Timothy 2:3)
- c. Is a battle requiring separation. (2 Timothy 2:4)
- d. Is a battle worth fighting. What was at stake in Ephesus is still at stake today, particularly the clarity of the Gospel.

2. The Good News (1 Timothy 2:3-4)

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