

Lesson 5: Paul's Charge to Timothy

Text: 1 Timothy 1:18-20 “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme...”

Summary: Paul wanted to encourage Timothy by reminding him of his responsibilities and several encouragements that would cause him to faithfully persevere in spite of the obstacles he would face.

Section 1: The contents of the charge: 1:18 “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee...”

- **Part 1: What were the specifics mentioned in this letter? 1 Timothy 1:3-7** “I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies...some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm...”
 - **Don't teach any other doctrine.**
 - **Don't allegorize the Old Testament.**
 - **Don't abuse the law.**
- **Part 2: What does he mean by the prophecy which went before on thee?**
 - **A prophecy associated with Timothy's ministry: 1 Timothy 4:14** “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery...”
 - There was some kind of prediction/prophecy associated with Timothy's ordination.
 - There was a validation of his ministerial gifts associated with Timothy's ordination.
 - There was a validation of Timothy's calling at his ordination.
 - **A prophecy associated with the church at Ephesus: Acts 20:29-31** “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears...”

Section 2: The nature of the charge: 1:18 “This charge I commit unto thee...that thou by them mightest war a good warfare... Holding faith, and a good conscience”

Fivefold description:

- The charge was **personal**: “This charge...”
- The charge was **weighty**: “I commit to thee...”
 - **1 Timothy 4:12-16** Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift

that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee...”

- The charge was **grueling**: “That thou mightest war a good warfare...”
 - **1 Timothy 6:12** “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life...” **2 Timothy 4:7** “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith...” **2 Timothy 2:3-5** “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully...”
- The charge carefully **defined**: “Holding faith...”
 - **16x in the Pastoral Epistles he refers to doctrine and the need to hold fast to, teach, call people back to, or live out sound doctrine...**
- The charge appealed to the **conscience**: “And a good conscience...”
 - **6x in the Pastoral Epistles he refers to the conscience**

Section 3: The warnings associated with the charge: 1:19-20 “Which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme...”

- **The warning was startling**: “Which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck...”
 - **Some had apostatized**: “Some having put away...”
 - **Their lives had fallen apart**: “Have made shipwreck...”
- **The warning was personal**: “Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander...”
 - **Hymenaeus**: A false teacher who had apostatized

2 Timothy 2:16-18 “Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some...”

- **Alexander**: An influential man who rejected the gospel and caused Paul considerable grief in the city
 - **Who is Alexander?** Some ideas
 - **Person 1: Acts 19:33** “And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defense unto the people...”
 - **Person 2: 2 Timothy 4:14-15** “Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works... Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words...”
- **The warning was painful**: “Whom I have delivered unto Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme...”
 - **Insider: The first instance was probably a matter of church disciplines: 1 Corinthians 5:1-5** “It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one

should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus...”

- **Situation:** A professing Christian desiring to be connected to the church body, yet leaving in a serious, public, unrepentant state of sin.
- **Burden:** The church body was responsible to remove that member from the life of the church.
- **Result of the excommunication:** The person would be delivered to Satan for the destruction of his flesh.
 - **Flesh:** physical affliction
 - **Flesh:** a self-destructive/un-restrained life
- **Motivation for this severe action:** That his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord
 - **If he is an unbeliever:** Humbled and brought to repentance and faith.
 - **If a believer:** Humbled and brought to repentance and restoration to Christian fellowship and a good Christian stewardship.
- **Outsider: The second instance was likely a matter of imprecatory prayer:**
 - **This man was likely an influential business man who created problems within the city for the advance of the gospel.**
 - **As a side note this leads logically into the next topic Paul will address: 1 Timothy 2:1-4** I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth...”

Conclusion: Six practical encouragements

- **Encouragement 1:** We must be willing to soberly function in the role God has personally assigned us in His church.
- **Encouragement 2:** A realistic perspective promotes faithfulness when ministry becomes difficult.
- **Encouragement 3:** The measured validation of God’s people serves as an extremely important encouragement during ministry struggles.
- **Encouragement 4:** We will see people we love fall away, and when we do it will be painful.
- **Encouragement 5:** A biblical response when Christians apostatize may lead to a future restoration.
- **Encouragement 6:** We need to cry out to God for vindication and deliverance when evil people threaten the church.