

October 1, 2023
The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Pastor Matt Duerr

“The King of Glory is Coming Pt. II”

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God, our Father from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, men. As you know, last week we began a two-part sermon series on the L.W.M.L. That stands for Lutheran Women's Missionary League. Their theme for this year is “The King is Coming!” It comes from Psalm 24, where King David talks about God being the King of Glory, the Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. And we saw that there is a battle and that it's a battle that is within God's church. A battle between, shall we say, expert opinions and God's Word. And we saw last week that we as individuals, as well as the Church, and as well as the subsidiary missions, or ministries are called to be a royal of the King. A royal priesthood. Our job is to preserve the knowledge of God's word, and to share that word.

This week I'd like to focus on someone who saw himself as a part of that royal priesthood. A young man named Timothy. In our New Testament reading, we see Paul talking to Timothy or writing to Timothy. First of all, a little bit of background on this young man. We first read of him and Acts 16, verse one. Paul came to Lystra and there was a disciple there named Timothy. He was the son of a Jewish woman, and that woman was a believer, and as a result so was Timothy. But his father was a Greek and he did not believe.

But Timothy was well spoken of, we read, by the brothers at Lystra and the neighboring town Iconium. Paul wanted Timothy to join him in his missionary journeys, but something was required first. Timothy wasn't circumcised and so he would need to be circumcised because of the Jews who knew his dad. You see they wouldn't listen to Timothy unless he was one of them and young Timothy probably in his late teens agreed to this and Please remember they didn't have Novocain back then.

In first Timothy chapter one Paul describes his ministry and it sets the stage for Timothy's. Paul says that he was quote, “appointed to

service by Christ.” He continues, this is what he taught. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the foremost. When Paul preached, we also read in the book of Acts that he used the scriptures proving that Jesus was the Christ, the promised Messiah. Now the only way Paul could do that is if he had taken the Old Testament scriptures and gone through all the prophecies and seeing how Jesus fulfilled them all. Which by the way, is still a powerful way of presenting the gospel of Jesus. It does take a fair amount of work. But Paul also says this about Jesus. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible the only God, be honor and glory forever, and ever, amen. Now you know why we sang that sermon hymn. It's Paul's words of praise of God, of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. They are the only God. Yes they, One, the Trinity. But he holds them up this is the way of salvation and God is the King.

Now if you can imagine, when you have someone like Paul preaching and preaching very boldly there that there is only one way. It sometimes caused a little bit of a stir. And so, we do read that when Paul was in Ephesus, his preaching almost started a riot. Why? It's real simple, because Paul was bad for business. Ephesus was the home to the temple of Artemis. Artemis was the goddess of fertility. We have some of the silver idols from the 1st century that were made of her and let's just say that she was well endowed and could nurse many children, hence fertility. But someone had to make those silver idols, and that was the silversmiths. And when people came to Ephesus, to worship at the temple, they would buy these silver idols. And so when Paul is preaching there is only one way, guess what that did the business of the silversmiths? They kind of had their own, shall we say, union and they kind of had a strike at the temple. They have the people all whipped up to kick Paul out because he was bad for business; and Ephesus relied on these shall we say, tourism dollars.

So, he left, but he sent Timothy. Yes, probably a teenager, in his late teens, to fill the role of Bishop or head elder in Ephesus. Paul wrote him then a letter, actually two. We call these pastoral letters because they are equipping letters. And in his first letter to Timothy, Paul goes

to great lengths to describe or define the role of a Bishop, an Elder, a Deacon, the leadership of the church, and the order of the church. Because as Paul tells us in first Corinthians, God is of God of order and not disorder. Therefore, His church is also to be orderly and efficient. In chapter six, he charges Timothy to teach and to urge these things. What things? God is a God of order, and that His church should be orderly. And then He is one God. He also tells Timothy to flee from harmful desires and he follows that up with: for, let's see if you've heard this quote before. "The love of money is the root of all sorts of evil." Oh, wait, no all sorts of evils. We often hear that misquoted as 'money is the root of all sorts of evil.' The love of money is the root of all sorts of evils, plural. It's the love of money that leads people to do all sorts of terrible things. He urges Timothy to pursue righteousness, gentleness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and he follows it up with 'fight the good fight.'

About now, you might be saying, wait a second! Fight the good fight? I'm sorry Pastor Matt, I thought you just said Paul urged him to be gentle, loving, righteous. These things are opposed, they don't intertwine. Yes, they do. When you're in a battle. When we go to second Timothy Paul's second letter to Timothy. He opens up about what he is to preach and to do so lovingly, patiently. But also, because you're in a battle, he writes in second Timothy 4. I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus. Number one, preach the Word. Number two, be ready in season and out of season. In other words, Timothy, prepare. Know what you know. Know why you know it. Know what you believe. Know why you believe it. Put on the armor of God. Be prepared to teach the Word.

And as you do that, be ready to do this: reprove. What is reproof? To show that something is wrong and then show what is correct. It's a teaching. You know you've been doing this, and that's not right, what you need to do is this. But if they don't listen to you, he charges Timothy to rebuke. You're wrong, you're going against God, and it has eternal consequences. Rebuking isn't much fun; it usually doesn't go over too well.

But he also tells them to exhort; charges him to exhort. Commend what is right. So, if someone's doing what's right to begin with, commend them. If someone's doing wrong and you reprove them and they correct themselves, they start doing right, commend them, exhort them.

And he is to do this with, I quote, “complete patience.” Don't get frustrated. This is going to be hard. And with, again I quote, “complete teaching.” The Law reveals our sin. The Gospel reveals our Savior. What he is describing here is a priest in the royal priesthood. And why is Timothy to do this? Listen carefully, see if maybe Ephesus and the United States are similar. The time is coming when, number one people will not endure sound teaching. And since he is an Elder, or the Bishop of the church, he's talking about people in the church. They're not going to endure sound teaching. They won't like Timothy because Timothy is going to be teaching Bible based sermons. Paul just encouraged him, charged him, to do this. They're not going to like the idea of Bible study because it reveals the truth.

People will not endure sound teaching, instead having itching ears, they want something different. They will accumulate for themselves teachers or experts or going back to last week, Doctors of Theology and Doctors of Divinity individuals, who will suit their own passions. What is passion? A Greek word is lust, love, desires. We want you to preach what we want you to preach that tickles our ears. People will turn away, Paul says, turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths. What is a myth? Fanciful, untrue, deceitful, teachings that claim to be true. This is what he charges Timothy to do – teach. The time is coming when people aren't going to put up with good teaching. You've got to prepare the people for that.

And then he gives them a four-step plan for being a priest in the royal priesthood. He starts it with the word always. Always be sober minded, know what you believe and why you believe it. And know that you are a priesthood in the service of God. Number two, endure suffering. Your teaching is going to cause some problems because people have itching ears, and they don't want to hear the truth. Always do, notice this isn't ‘please consider this’? Always do the work of an evangelist. The

work of an evangelist is to take the gospel to all, even the enemy or those who are causing problems. Always fulfill your ministry.

Yes, Timothy you've been called. Members of Zion, you've been called. And we're not to go part way, we are called to fulfill the ministry we are called to. Now, why is that important? I think it's pretty obvious, because the King of Glory is coming. That's not a myth. He is coming and He will judge. Some will go to heaven, and some will not. We are called to do everything that we can to increase the number who are. Be that royal priesthood. In our Saviors' Name, Amen.