

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

This morning we are going to continue our study through 1 Timothy –

So turn your bibles to 1 Timothy.

One of the most inspirational movies I ever saw and arguably the best sports movie of all time was a movie back in the 80's, "Chariots of Fire"

If you have never seen it, I highly recommend it - it is going to make you cry.

It is based on a true story of an Olympic athlete who went on to become a missionary in China.

His name was Eric Liddell – and he was known as the "Flying Scotsman"

Now, Eric was a committed Christian and when he gets to the Olympic Games in Paris in 1924, he finds out that they scheduled his strongest event – the 100 meters – on a Sunday and because of his convictions and because he wanted to honor God in all that he did, he withdrew from the event and registered to run the 400 meters instead.

When Eric described his race plan –

"The secret of my success over the 400 meters is that I run the first 200 meters as fast as I can. Then, for the second 200 meters, with God's help, I run faster."

Just moments before the race, an American, knowing what had occurred with him withdrawing from the race, handed him a piece of paper with words from 1 Samuel 2:30, which reads, "Those who honor me I will honor."

Liddell ran the race with the paper crumpled in his hand and claimed Olympic gold and a new world record with a time of 47.6 seconds.

One of the greatest quotes in the movie occurs as he is running in slow motion as he approaches the finish line –

He says -

"I believe God made me for a purpose. But He also made me fast! And when I run, I feel His pleasure!"

After winning Olympic gold, he went to China as a missionary and spent the rest of his life serving the Lord until he died of a brain tumor in 1945 in a Japanese camp.

Eric died serving the Lord and he dedicated his life to obeying God's will and teaching other's to live in accordance to God's word.

It is the same message that Apostle Paul is going to give Timothy and the church in our study today.

Timothy – turn on Netflix and watch the movie –

Fulfill your purpose.

Honor Him with your life

Feel His pleasure as He pushes you past the finish line.

Let's pray...

In our study last week, we began to look at this letter that Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy –

His faithful understudy who he appointed as the overseer of the churches in Ephesus.

And the reason for Paul writing this letter is twofold.

First of all, there were things that needed to be corrected in the church in Ephesus.

Some of the leaders were too busy teaching things that were not edifying the church.

Instead of teaching on God's love, grace and mercy and on the importance of surrendering to Him and drawing closer to Him, they babbled about meaningless things.

They started teaching about Gnosticism – that salvation was all about knowledge.

And the result of that was that there was no spiritual growth.

The second reason that Paul writes this letter was that Timothy wanted to quit.

Ministry was simply too hard for Timothy.

People were not listening.

He couldn't control what the elders were teaching

So, he started to question his calling and he wanted to quit.

Paul's response is – Timmy, you can't quit.

Not only are you not going to quit – I am commanding you. I am giving you an order – to stop the false teachings that are going on in the church.

So, not only does Paul give Timothy an order – he provides for him a reason why he can't quit and we will also see that he provides a way to fix the problem in Ephesus.

This is why you cannot quit Timothy –

And Paul proceeds to remind Timothy of his personal testimony.

Let's look back at verse 15

**[1Ti 1:15-16 NKJV] 15 This [is] a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. 16 However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.**

Why did God save Paul?

To keep him out of hell? Nope – that was a benefit but not the reason.

To get him into heaven? Nope – again, that was just a benefit

To have him write all of the epistles? Nope – because God could have had anyone else do that.

To preach? Nope.

“Well, why did He save Paul?”

Because God wanted to save the world’s worst Christian, the world’s worst pagan, and make him the world’s greatest Christian.

Why?

To show the power of grace, to put Himself on display.

You see, the purpose of salvation is to glorify God, to demonstrate His power and His long-suffering.

If God can take the individual that had such vile and hatred toward Him and the church, someone who persecuted the church, a blasphemer, if God can take that person and not only redeem him, but transform him, make him an apostle, use him to write thirteen books of the New Testament, then nobody else is beyond His grace.

And that is the whole point –

“Timothy, those false teachers that are giving you a hard time – even though they are teaching false doctrine - if they are doing it out of ignorance, God can save them and transform them just like he did to me.”

And as Paul is writing this, as he recounts how bad he was and how great the salvation of God was and how great the love of God was – he responds to grace with spontaneous praise.

**[1Ti 1:17-20 NKJV] 17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, [be] honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**

King eternal = God is the eternal King. That means that He is always King. There was never a time when God wasn't king.

Immortal = or incorruptible = means that God doesn't perish; He doesn't grow old or decay.

Invisible = God cannot be seen by the human eye. Yet His eternal power and divine character are known and clearly seen by the things He has made.

Alone is wise = as believers, we struggle when we don't understand the circumstances around us –

Why did God allow this to happen to me?

Why hasn't God answered my prayer?

Whenever we consider what God does, we must remember that we are looking at our circumstance from a very limited perspective.

Being finite, we do not know all that God knows.

Therefore, we should be careful not to question God's character by accusing Him of being unwise in His dealings with us.

Everything God does is perfect.

There is nothing that He does that can be improved.

**[Ecc 3:14 NKJV] 14 I know that whatever God does, It shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, And nothing taken from it. God does [it], that men should fear before Him.**

Think about how this could encourage Timothy – remember he wanted to quit – he was questioning his calling.

So Paul reminds Timothy of the greatness of the God he serves.

This would encourage Timothy

Knowing that -

This great God was worthy of his sacrifice.

And that this great God could empower his services in Ephesus.

**18 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,**

Once again, Paul uses a military term here in his orders to Timothy.

This charge = I am ordering you Timothy in a way a commanding officer would give an order to one of his soldiers.

I am ordering you to fulfill what God has called you to do.

Now, we don't know when these prophecies were made, nor their content, but they helped set the course for Timothy's life.

They might have been made when Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to pastor the church.

They might have been from an earlier time, perhaps even when Timothy received some of his spiritual gifts.

**(2 Timothy 1:6 NKJV) Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.**

**Turn with me to Ephesians 2,**

**[Eph 2:10 NKJV] 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**



Now, this doesn't mean that God has called each and every one of us into full time ministry –

It does mean that He has calling for each of us and expects us to fulfill the calling with His help.

Again, He is not asking us to do it on our own,

He is simply asking us to make ourselves available to His calling.

So the question always comes up – how do I know what my calling is?

And the answer is, we ask and then we serve –

and He will guide us to and through our calling and help us when we face difficulties and attacks.

So the reason that Paul is ordering Timothy to fulfill God's calling in his life was because there was a job to do.

**Wage the good warfare –**

Once again, we have a military term.

What did Timothy want to do?

He wanted to quit!

Timothy, you are in the middle of a battle – and a faithful soldier doesn't abandon his post – and neither should you.

Paul uses the same terminology when he speaks to the church regarding the battles that we endure day after day.

We fight battles against the flesh -

**[2 Corinthians 10:3-6 NKJV] 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.**

Sometimes our battle is with forces in the spiritual realm. Paul wrote to the Ephesians: **(Ephesians 6:10–13 NKJV) —10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

We need to be prepared to face spiritual attacks.

James tells us that we have battles against our inner thoughts and lusts

**[Jas 4:1-2 NKJV] 1 Where do wars and fights [come] from among you? Do [they] not [come] from your [desires for] pleasure that war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.**

The point is that as believers, sometimes we only focus on one of these conflicts when there are many that we need to be aware of.

**19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,**

The word “faith” is used twice in this verse, once without the definite article (“the”), and the other with the definite article.

When you add the word “the” to faith, it’s talking about the things that we believe in. It’s talking about correct doctrine.

But the first time (in our current phrase) is without “the”, and it refers to our trust in the Lord.

When we are facing these spiritual battles, we need to fight them in “faith”, from a place of trusting God for our help.

Turn with me to 2 Kings 19

In 2 Kings 19 –

The Assyrians were the big dogs during this time –

The Northern Kingdom (Israel) had already been conquered by them.

And King Hezekiah gets word that the Southern Kingdom (Judah) is next.

Now, King Hezekiah was one of the good kings – meaning that he put God first in everything that he did – and because of this, the Lord was with him in everything that he did.

**[2Ki 19:14-19 NKJV] 14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15 Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: "O LORD God of Israel, [the One] who dwells [between] the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 16 "Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. 17 "Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, 18 "and have cast their gods into the fire; for they [were] not gods, but the work of men's hands--wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. 19 "Now**

**therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You [are] the LORD God, You alone."**

Hezekiah prayed.

He trusted.

He counted on God helping him.

And God delivered.

**[2Ki 19:35 NKJV] 35 And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when [people] arose early in the morning, there were the corpses--all dead.**

Timothy had to have faith that God was in control, and would guide him as Timothy continued to seek him – just like Hezekiah.

Not only did he have to have faith, he had to have a good conscience.

The ability to make good moral decisions.

You will see that Paul uses the word shipwrecked here for those that reject a good conscience and the faith (good doctrine)

They are a like boat without a rudder –

They have lost the ability to steer.

In chapter four, Paul is going to speak about false teachers that are going to have their conscience seared – meaning that they will no longer care about right and wrong.

What is the key to a good conscience?

Understanding and embracing what Jesus Christ did on the cross on Calvary.

**20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.**

Here Paul provides Timothy with two of the names of the ones that were causing trouble in Ephesus

These were two individuals that were rudderless and therefore had veered off course.

Turn with me to 2 Timothy 2

**[2Ti 2:14-18 NKJV] 14 Remind [them] of these things, charging [them] before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. 15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane [and] idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. 17 And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, 18 who have**

strayed concerning the truth, **saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.**

One of the heresies that Hymenaeus was teaching was the Jesus Christ had already come back.

And this was causing many in the church to lose faith and resort to ungodliness.

People started to do go back to what they were doing before they got saved.

Alexander, was a common name during this time period and Paul does speak about multiple Alexanders that were giving him trouble.

And we also find someone by the name of Alexander in 2 Timothy who was teaching false doctrine.

Now, I asked you to make a note of where Paul says that he delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Paul is kicking them out of the church.

He is cutting these men off from the fellowship of the church.

**Church, there is spiritual protection when we are connected to one another in church.**

**Removing someone from the church exposes them to the spiritual attacks of Satan.**

Turn to 1 Corinthians 5 -

**[1Co 5:1-5 NKJV] 1 It is actually reported [that there is] sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles--that a man has his father's wife! 2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

Here in the church in Corinth – there was a man that was having sexual relations with his step mom and everyone knew.

Not only was he doing it – he was flaunting it – he was unrepentant. This wasn't a one night stand -

The other problem was that the church was looking the other way instead of addressing the issue.

They were proud that they were accepting of his lifestyle.

And Paul rebukes them for it and tells them to kick him out.

Let Satan have his way with him.

Church, this is not done as punishment.



This is done for correction.

The goal for Hymenaeus and Alexander was that they would learn a lesson and turn from their bad doctrine.

When Paul excommunicated the fellow in Corinth, the goal was that “his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”.

Our goal should always be to see bad doctrine corrected, and ungodly lives straightened out.

We start out with confronting in gentleness, and if that doesn't work, there is an eventual cutting off from fellowship.

As I was being disciple, my former pastor told me, “If I ever find out that you are preaching heresies – I will do whatever I can to stop you –

And once you repent, I will do whatever I can to welcome you back with open arms.

Paul at one time - was a blasphemer like Hymenaeus and Alexander but, praise God, he testified that “the grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (verse 14).

Paul's desire for the shipwrecked Hymenaeus and Alexander is that they would also learn not to blaspheme and come to know the grace and mercy of the Lord.

“Timothy – this is why you cannot quit.”

Let's pray -

