

1 Timothy #5

May 25, 2025

Series: Body Essentials: Imperatives for Church and Leaders

Today's Message: Tackle the Hard Things; 1 Timothy 1:19b-20

Proverbs 24:33-34 teaches, "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man." A little neglect here and a little neglect there and you wake up one day in shock, surprised that your life fell apart. If not dealt with decisively a church can become spiritually impoverished.

Today we pick up where we left off last week. Paul is teaching Timothy that he has to take responsibility in protecting the church by taking decisive action against false teachers. It is a fact that faith can be shipwrecked and when that happens there will be collateral damage. Avoiding the pitfalls of tackling these problems is paramount. Acting decisively is crucial.

I) **Shipwrecked. How faith is shipwrecked.**

- A) (1:18-19a) First, remember, Paul taught Timothy how to fight the good fight and avoid falling into error.
 - 1) Continually recollect the prophecies spoken about you. "By following them you may fight..."
 - (a) The prophecies: assurances of divine calling and qualification and authority. (1 Tim. 4:14)
 - 2) Holding on to faith (this would include clinging to the faithfulness of Christ and sound doctrine.)
 - (a) 2 Timothy 3:14-17
 - 3) And a good conscience, which is the fruit of a pure life directed by the Spirit of Christ.
- B) Shipwrecked
 - 1) "Some" and "Among them." More than just the two men mentioned. (see 1:19b and 20a).
 - 2) Marks of those in danger:
 - (a) They Reject (i.e. *thrust away and refused*) "faith" and "a good conscience."
 - (i) Because they have abandoned both their devotion to good conscience and an interest in personal holiness, they developed bad theology. Bad theology is rooted in bad morals!
 - (b) They build a theology that accommodates sinful behavior.

(i) **2 Timothy 4:3-4**

- C) Lesson: A good conscience is the rudder that steers the Christian life. And if we persist in ignoring the pangs of conscience and the Truth we put ourselves in danger of shipwrecking our faith. (MacArthur)

II) **Collateral Damage. Why we should be aware of the damaging effects of false teaching.**

- A) Some will abandon the faith; discard God's good gifts to His people (1 Tim. 4:1-4)
- B) Some have pierced themselves with many griefs having wandered away from the faith (1 Tim. 6:10).
- C) Some, having indoctrinated themselves with false knowledge have wandered away... (1 Tim. 6:21).
- D) People who adhere to their teachings will become extremely spiritually ill; destroyed (2 Tim. 2:16-18).
- E) Some will be caught in the devil's trap, having become captives to do his will (2 Tim. 2:26).

III) **Pitfalls. What pitfalls do faithful men encounter when faced with disputing with false teachers.**

- A) Pitfalls: Timothy is warned to "turn away from godless chatter" (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16); quarrelling (1 Tim. 3:3); arguing about godless myths (1 Tim. 4:7); involvement with stupid and foolish arguments and controversies (2 Tim. 2:23-24); youthful desires (2 Tim. 2:22); neglecting his gift (1 Tim. 4:14)
- B) Be diligent: in teaching sound doctrine (1 Tim. 4:6, 11); Set a godly example (1 Tim. 4:12); devotion to Scripture reading, preaching and teaching (1 Tim. 4:13); watch your life and doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16)
- C) Lesson: Learn the pitfalls and practice godliness with diligence to be effective in life and ministry.

IV) **Tackling the hard things. Taking decisive action to protect the church. Following Paul's example.**

- A) Paul turned the two men over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme. (Put out of the church.)
 - 1) The aim is twofold: To protect the church from error, and to restore the sinning brother.
 - (a) Church discipline has restoration and purging in mind: Matthew 18:15-17
- B) Examples of being turned over to Satan: Peter. But the Lord put limits on Satan (Luke 22:31-33). Paul was given a thorn in his flesh, a messenger of Satan, to teach Paul to boast in Christ (2 Cor. 12:1-10)
- C) Paul tackled a difficult situation. His action was strong but necessary for the health of the church.

Supplemental notes:

V) Shipwrecked. How faith is shipwrecked.

- A) Is Timothy at risk for shipwrecking his faith? Not if Paul has anything to do with it. Remember Paul's considered Timothy his *son* in the faith. Considering the numerous words of encouragement Paul gives Timothy and the clear instructions it would be doubtful that Timothy would succumb to unbelief and a bad conscience. (For examples of encouragement see 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 3:14-17.)
- B) Shipwrecked:
 - 1) "Some," "Among them." Definitely a rising number; more than just Hymenaeus and Alexander. In fact we know from 2 Tim. 2:18 that a certain Philetus conspired with Hymenaeus to contradict the apostles' teaching concerning a future resurrection and day of the Lord. These false teachers were saying that the resurrection had already occurred. Paul dealt with this heresy in 2 Thessalonians 2:2. He warned the believers to "not become easily unsettled or alarmed by some report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come." All through church history the Truth has been undermined by false teachers and false teaching. There will always be "some" who become tools of Satan to lead others away from these three essential truths: the truth about God, the truth about man, and the truth about Jesus Christ.
- C) Lesson. It is a good saying, "The conscience is the rudder that steers the Christian life." And, if you are a parent, or would like to be some day, or if you have an influence in the lives of children, it is wise to consider that you play a big role in forming a good conscience in those children. It is much easier to "train up a child" because all that is needed in directing them is a little nudge of the rudder here, and a nudge of the rudder there.
 - 1) Lack of godliness among Christians in our society has a terrible effect on the next generations. We see this in Judges 2:10. The ripple effect of cold spirituality comes to rest on the second generation of Israelites living in the promised land. It says, "After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord nor what He had done for Israel.
 - 2) Thankfully, Timothy was raised by his mother and grandmother whose faith was robust and their lives were pure. The heat of their spiritual lives contributed to the flaming gifts God had given Timothy (2 Tim. 1:6). Timothy's conscience was prepared by his godly mother and grandmother. And when the Spirit gave him new birth, his heart was set aflame for Christ!

VI) Collateral Damage. Why we should be aware of the damaging effects of false teaching.

- A) It is of value to consider that ripple effect when people shipwreck their faith. It hurts the whole church. In recent years it has been popular for celebrity preachers and church leaders to "deconstruct" their faith along with the basic orthodoxy. And as they jettison the faith it becomes apparent that they were in moral failure as well. Nevertheless, the shipwreck of their faith has led many of that generation to embark on a spiritual journey of "deconstruction," leaving them without a working rudder, and quickly approaching the shallow shoals of *enlightenment*, where they eventually shipwreck their faith. So, you and I must heed Paul's counsel to Timothy in these two letters.

VII) Pitfalls. What pitfalls do faithful men encounter when faced with disputing with false teachers.

- A) I think it is very helpful to us as the modern reader to be able to contrast the pitfalls with the acts of diligence prescribed for Timothy. The lesson is simple: Learn the pitfalls and practice godliness with diligence to be effective in your Christian life and ministry.

VIII) Tackling the hard things. Taking decisive action to protect the church. Following Paul's example.

- A) Notice Paul's aim in turning these men over to Satan: to protect the church and restore the sinner.
 - 1) See 1 Cor. 5:4-5. A Christian was handed over to Satan both to purge him and the church of the sin of gross sexual immorality, but also with the aim of restoration. See also 2 Cor. 2:4-11!
- B) Also Paul turned the church member in Corinth over to Satan so that his "flesh might be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord." (1 Cor. 5:4-5). Obviously, the purpose of turning him over to Satan was to put him out of the church. In doing this he would be removed from the blessing of association that comes from being involved with God's people. This putting out had a three fold purpose: To purge the church, to break the grip of sin, and also, apparently to bring him to true saving faith.