

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

These notes are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye, mistakes can possibly be found. Therefore, he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at pastorpat@waukeshabible.org.

Date: **October 1, 2017**

Sermon Title: **The Tale of Two Teachings**

Sermon Series: First Timothy

Text: 1 Tim. 1:18-20

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

Date: October 1, 2017
Title: The Tale of Two Teachings
Text: 1 Timothy 1:18-20
Theme: Choosing well enables one to finish well. "Consequences are bound to the choices you make. You can have your choice, but you cannot choose your consequence."
Ravi Zacharias

Introduction:

I was recently hiking the Harrison Hills section of the Ice Age Trail northeast of Merrill, Wisconsin. While on the trail, I lost sight of the yellow tags and had to backtrack. When backtracking I found my yellow tags and I came to a fork in the path and I did not know if I was coming or going! I was completely disoriented. I was only about a mile from finishing, but I was deep enough into the woods that I could not figure it out, and I had already walked for about 4½ hours. I finally pulled out Map Quest on my phone and saw where I was, but it still was not helping me. I then pulled out my compass and saw I was going northeast, which was the direction I needed to be heading.

The compass kept me from becoming entirely lost. Fortunately, for me, my hikes are micros of life and are not life and death. However, on the macro level when we lose our compass and ability to read true north, we end up making shipwreck of our lives. This is what happened to Hymaenus and Alexander.

They lost their ability to read true north. Paul is emphatic. The gospel establishes true north and the gospel is JESUS CHRIST. The gospel keeps us from making shipwreck of our lives. The gospel enables faith and conscience.

THE BIG PICTURE:

This text shows us the outcome of strange teaching. When we abandon the gospel, we reject faith and end up in spiritual ruin.

What can YOU DO? Stick to the GOSPEL.

"The nature of the charge which he committed to Timothy must be gathered from the solemn words and thoughts of the foregoing passage—1Timothy 1:15-16. The sum of it was that men should put their whole trust in Him who came into the world to save sinners, and who alone was able to lead them into everlasting life. There is something very solemn in St. Paul's pressing home this charge to Timothy, and invoking the memory of the prophecies which went before on him. The charge was the last precious heritage, the priceless treasure which the old master, feeling that for him the end was not far distant, would leave to his favourite disciple—his own dear son in the faith."¹

Outline:

Three metaphors occur to describe the contrast between sound teaching and strange teaching.

I. A serious charge – Warfare / fighting (v. 18)

The battle between strange and sound is between the seed of the woman and that of the serpent. The battle is real, thus the imperative “fight the good fight.”

- “This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you **fight the good fight**” (1 Tim. 1:18).

“This charge refers to the task Paul described to Timothy in vv. 3-7 above.”²

“The prophecies once spoken about you were apparently spoken at Timothy’s ordination (cf. 1 Tim 4:14) and perhaps spoke of what God would do through him. Thus they can encourage him in his work, as the next clause says.”³

“The war imagery here used St. Paul employs again and again: the good warfare. (Comp. 1 Timothy 6:12.) To the old, tried Apostle a Christian’s life is a warfare in the truest sense of the word: to every believer it is a weary, painful campaign. In the case of the professed teachers a sleepless vigilance was especially demanded.”⁴

- “And the **soldiers** likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages” (Luke 3:14).
- “Who goeth a **warfare** any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?” (1 Cor. 9:7).
- “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not **war** after the flesh” (2 Cor. 10:3).
- “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**” (2 Tim. 2:4).
- “From whence come **wars and fightings** among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that **war** in your members?” (James 4:1).
- “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which **war** against the soul” (1 Pet. 2:11).

It is impossible to draw any other conclusion than this, “The Christian life is one of open warfare.”

What Paul received, he passed to faithful men who would be able to teacher others. Timothy was set aside by his “elders” for the task before him.

Paul's word choice is WAR.

"I didn't see that coming."

- McDonalds calls frequent buyers of their food "heavy users."
- The average person spends 6 months of their lifetime waiting on a red light to turn green.
- There are more lifeforms living on your skin than there are people on the planet.
- One in every five adults believe that aliens are hiding in our planet disguised as humans.
- A human will eat on average 70 assorted insects and 10 spiders while sleeping.
- Men are 6 times more likely to be struck by lightning than women.
- Coca-Cola would be green if coloring wasn't added to it.
- You cannot snore and dream at the same time.
- It would take a sloth one month to travel one mile.
- A mole can dig a tunnel that is 300 feet long in only one night.
- A hippo's wide open mouth is big enough to fit a 4-foot-tall child in.
- Chewing gum while you cut an onion will help keep you from crying.
- There are more collect calls on Father's Day than on any other day of the year.
- Banging your head against a wall burns 150 calories an hour.
- A crocodile can't poke its tongue out.
- It is physically impossible for pigs to look up into the sky.
- Guinness Book of Records holds the record for being the book most often stolen from Public Libraries.

Our text speaks of those who have made shipwreck of faith and have been handed over to Satan in order that they might learn not to speak evil of the gospel. Whatever this might mean, "We did not see it coming."

Since the fall of humanity in the Garden of Eden, there is a tension between that of the woman's seed and that of the serpent's. That tension is WAR.

I mention how the Christian life is one of climbing up a playground slide. Friend, grace assures me that God will finish what He begins, but the call invites me to fight the good fight. Why? Because the serpent's seed is always assaulting that of the woman's. Satan and his offspring hates the woman and her seed.

"The ministry is a warfare against sin and Satan; carried on under the Lord Jesus, who is the Captain of our salvation. The good hopes others have had of us, should stir us up to duty. And let us be upright in our conduct in all things. The design of the highest censures in the primitive church, was, to prevent further sin, and to reclaim the sinner. May all who are tempted to put away a good conscience, and to abuse the gospel, remember that this is the way to make shipwreck of faith also."⁵

"In Greek this continues the same sentence from v. 18, a participle showing the means by which Timothy will accomplish his task: *Grk* 'fight the good fight, holding firmly...'"⁶

Paul speaks of two elements in this "holding": faith and conscience.

Faith occurs 18 times in 1 Timothy. Faith as used by Paul is a body of information as well as the subjective expression of belief or confidence in that body of information. Thus, faith can be the object of the gospel as well as our confidence in that gospel. Our occurrence in this text could be both. Keeping faith means keep clinging to the gospel.

Paul uses conscience four times in 1 Timothy.

- "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned" (1 Tim. 1:5).
- "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck" (1 Tim. 1:19).
- "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (1 Tim. 3:9).
- "Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:2).

It is always difficult to slice some words away from a cluster of thought. The conscience as used by Paul refers to a worldview shaped by the gospel. The gospel produces or births this conscience or compass.

In the absence of the gospel's influence, our nation has become morally bankrupt.

"Tim and Beverly LaHaye's *A Nation Without a Conscience* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, c. **1994**) cites some impressive authorities to indicate the dire straits which threaten to crush this nation. Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's National Security Advisor, says (rightly, I think) that our century must be labeled 'mankind's most bloody and hateful century' (p. 27). We are, Chuck Colson declares, surrounded by barbarians—'new barbarians' who have emerged from our own ranks--which threaten the very existence of Western Civilization. Illustrating this, even high school students, Barbara Walters says, 'have no sense of discipline. No goals. They care only for themselves. In short, they are becoming a generation of undisciplined cultural barbarians' (p. 19). At the heart of this crisis, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn saw, is this: 'Men have forgotten God' (p. 53). As one examines various sinkholes in the cultural landscape--families, schools, media, government--there's a great vacuum of transcendental awareness. Man craves a Holy Other, an ultimate reason for being which gives the here-and-now meaning and direction. When God is shoved aside, banished from classrooms and courthouses, conscience evaporates and anarchy ensues."⁷

Have things gotten better or worse over the last 13 years? Where will this lead us, what might the outcome of such a trajectory take us? Our text tells us as much.

II. A sad story – Shipwreck / sailing (v. 19)

This verse compliments and contrasts with verse 5.

- “keeping faith and a good conscience, **which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck** in regard to their faith” (1 Tim. 1:19).

“Having put away.—The simile in St. Paul’s mind is a nautical one. The “good conscience” represents the ballast, or cargo, of the ship. When this is put away—tossed overboard—the vessel becomes unmanageable and is tossed about, the plaything of the waves, and in the end is wrecked.”⁸

“Indeed, none can make shipwreck of faith who never had faith. The persons here spoken of, therefore, were once true believers; yet they fell, not only foully, but finally. For ships once wrecked cannot be afterward saved. ‘In this metaphorical passage the apostle insinuates that a good conscience is the pilot, who must guide us in our voyage through the stormy sea of this life into the harbour of heaven.’”⁹

“We are not justified in interpreting suffered shipwreck as though it meant that they were lost beyond hope of recovery. St. Paul himself had suffered shipwreck at least four times (2 Corinthians 11:25) when he wrote this epistle. He had on each occasion lost everything except himself.”¹⁰

“Which some having put away - That is, which good conscience some have put from them, or in other words, have not followed its dictates. The truth thus taught is, that people make shipwreck of their faith by not keeping a good conscience. They love sin. They follow the leadings of passion. They choose to indulge in carnal propensities. As a matter of course, they must, if they will do this, reject and renounce the gospel. People become infidels because they wish to indulge in sin. No man can be a sensualist, and yet love that gospel which enjoins purity of life. If people would keep a good conscience, the way to a steady belief in the gospel would be easy. If people will not, they must expect sooner or later to be landed in infidelity.”¹¹

Timothy and Paul are examples of those who have kept the gospel central and what follows are two individuals who have abandoned the gospel.

“Rejected” means “to push off or away.” These two individuals have pushed away the gospel. They were inside of the church, now they pushed the gospel away. As a consequence of their actions, the church was pushing them away.

“Shipwreck”

- “Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep” (2 Cor. 11:25).
- “Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck” (1 Tim. 1:19).

Because they rejected the gospel, they became shipwreck.

“‘The faith’ here is quite independent of ‘faith’ above, and means rather what we mean by “the Catholic faith,” the creed; so in 1 Timothy 3:9 ‘holding the mystery of the faith,’ 1 Timothy 4:1 ‘some shall fall away from the faith,’ 1 Timothy 6:10 ‘have been led away from the faith.’”¹²

III. A solemn Warning – Parenting / training (v. 20)

This is the sad story and a solemn warning. No matter how much we might celebrate the grace of God there are those occasions when we must corporately push people away **for the sake of the gospel and their souls.**

- “Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. 15 Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching” (2 Tim. 4:14, 15).

“Having thrust from them (apôsamanoi). First aorist indirect middle participle of apôtheô, to push away from one.”¹³ It wasn’t that they were having a bad day emotionally. They openly and consistently rejected the gospel.

The sad story of Bart Ehrman: “Ehrman grew up in Lawrence, Kansas, and attended Lawrence High School, where he was on the state champion debate team in 1973. He began studying the Bible and the Biblical languages at Moody Bible Institute, where he earned the school's three-year diploma in 1976. He is a 1978 graduate of Wheaton College in Illinois, where he received his bachelor's degree. He received his PhD and M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary, where he studied under Bruce Metzger. He received *magna cum laude* for both his BA in 1978 and PhD in 1985. In *Misquoting Jesus* Ehrman recounts becoming a born-again, fundamentalist Christian as a teenager. He recounts being certain in his youthful enthusiasm that God had inspired the wording of the Bible and protected its texts from all error. His desire to understand the original words of the Bible led him to the study of ancient languages and also textual criticism. During his graduate studies, however, he became convinced that there are contradictions and discrepancies in the biblical manuscripts that could not be harmonized or reconciled. He remained a liberal Christian for 15 years but later became an agnostic atheist after struggling with the philosophical problems of evil and suffering.”¹⁴

“**Agnostic atheism** is a philosophical position that encompasses both **atheism** and **agnosticism**. **Agnostic atheists** are **atheistic** because they do not hold a belief in the existence of an¹⁵y deity and **agnostic** because they claim that the existence of a deity is either unknowable in principle or currently unknown in fact.”

“paideuo from país = child) refers primarily to the training or discipline of children (whether in the schools of men - Acts 7:22, Acts 22:3 or in the school of God, Titus 2:12, et al), at one end of the spectrum training by teaching, instructing, educating or nurturing and at the other end of the spectrum utilizing correction and punishment if necessary (which it usually is for children)

as a part of the training or child rearing process bringing them to maturity (this end of the spectrum conveyed by English words like chastise or chasten - see below - as morally disciplining an adult, correcting them and giving them guidance)."¹⁶

This verse stands in contrast to the apostle Paul who is a type of those who receive sound teaching (v. 16)

- "Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:20).

Putting someone outside the authority of the church is to hand them over to Satan. It is putting them into the realm of Satan versus the protection of the church.

- "I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:5).

N.T. Wright notes, "As in 1 Corinthians 5, this seems to mean that such people are to be put out of the Christian assembly, forbidden to meet with, and eat with, the rest of the church. Paul saw the fellowship of the church as the place above all where the power of God was active to heal, guide, lead and direct individual Christians. To forbid people access to it was therefore tantamount to sending them away into outer darkness, to a place where the only spiritual influence they might come under would be that of 'the accuser', the satan. The aim, of course, is that after a very short time in such a condition they would realize their mistake and come back with sorrow and penitence, ready to learn wisdom. That is what probably happened in the other case, as 2 Corinthians 2 seems to indicate."¹⁷

Here is what I find interesting. Church discipline involves the involuntary removal of an individual from the believing community. Yet, we live in a day and age when Christians voluntarily remove themselves from participating in the local church. We act as if the gathering does not matter. What we fail to realize is that our absence places us in a position of danger. I agree with N.T. Wright concerning the importance of the local church and the nature of church discipline.

We think we are okay spiritual even though we voluntarily absent ourselves from the gathering on a regularly / weekly basis. I believe we are putting ourselves in harms way.

We might assume these two individuals were Elders within the local church. Because they rejected the gospel, they became shipwreck. Moreover, their "cause" had this "effect."

"Hymenaeus and Alexander were the ringleaders of those who had suffered shipwreck. There is no sufficient reason to suppose that this Hymenaeus is different from the heretic of the same name in 2 Timothy 2:17, where his error is more precisely defined. The identification of Alexander with Alexander the smith of 2 Timothy 4:14 is more precarious."¹⁸

Here is what Paul [i.e. the church] did: "Handed over to Satan." Why? So that they would learn [educate] not to speak evil of the gospel.

"The expression *handed over to Satan* refers to an act of discipline mentioned by Paul here and in 1 Cor 5:5, with a remedial goal, not a punitive one. The Greek word translated *taught* in this verse is used of "discipline, training of children" to lead them to correct behavior."¹⁹

"The true end and purpose of this, as of all divine punishments, was not revenge for the sin, but the ultimate recovery of the sinner."²⁰

Shepherding the Sheep: (What is the NEXT STEP?)

1. If you are a Christian, learn to cling tenaciously to Jesus every moment of every day.
2. If you reject the faith, know you will make shipwreck of your soul.
3. Take the teaching of God and believe in Jesus anew.

¹ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on 1 Tim. 1:18.

² <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/1+Timothy+1:12>

³ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/1+Timothy+1:12>

⁴ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on 1 Tim. 1:18.

⁵ Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary on 1 Tim. 1:18-20.

⁶ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/1+Timothy+1:12>

⁷ <https://www.amazon.com/Nation-Without-Conscience-Tim-LaHaye/dp/0842350187>

⁸ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on 1 Tim. 1:19.

⁹ Benson Commentary on 1 Tim. 1:18-20.

¹⁰ Expositor's Greek Testament on 1 Tim. 1:19.

¹¹ Barnes' Notes on the Bible on 1 Tim. 1:19.

¹² Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges on 1 Tim. 1:19.

¹³ A.T. Robertson's Word Pictures on 1 Timothy 1:20.

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bart_D._Ehrman

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnostic_atheism

¹⁶ <http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?view=article&aid=33881>

¹⁷ N.T. Wright, Paul the Pastoral Letters, For Everyone

¹⁸ Expositor's Greek Testament on 1 Tim. 1:19.

¹⁹ <https://net.bible.org/#!/bible/1+Timothy+1:12>

²⁰ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on 1 Tim. 1:20.