

STUDIES IN 1 TIMOTHY

LAW NUMBER THREE: "To Be a Leader You've Got to Be Willing to Fight"

1 Timothy 1:18-20

Key Verse 1:18: "This charge I am entrusting to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies that were made long ago concerning you, in order that with their aid you may fight the good fight (put up a splendid fight)"

TEXT:

v.18 This charge I am entrusting to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies that were made long ago concerning you, in order that with their aid you may fight the good fight (put up a splendid fight),

v.19 holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having rejected (repudiated), have suffered shipwreck in their faith.

v.20 Among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have turned over to Satan, in order that they might be taught (disciplined) not to be blaspheming (speak profanely).

INTRODUCTION:

THE TEACHER

The story is told of a teacher named Pestalozzi who lived in a Swiss village. He was highly esteemed by his peers and deeply loved by the children, whose lives were molded by the strength of his character. After he died, a statue of him was erected in the town. When the sculpture was unveiled, everyone was amazed to see how much it resembled the old master. The teacher was shown kneeling down, with a little child looking up into his face. But those who knew him best felt the sculptor had missed the dominant desire of the teacher--to have his students look up to the challenging heights of learning, and to God--not to him. So the statue was changed, and a second unveiling revealed the child peering toward heaven rather than looking at the teacher.

A good teacher of the Bible longs to evoke a similar response from his pupils. The temptation we face when we instruct people is the tendency to draw attention to ourselves. How much more effective will be our teaching when our students look beyond us to the God of truth.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

(Over the Edge and Back by Joe White)

Early on a quiet Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, on a Navy base in a harbor on a small island in the Pacific, a young soldier looked carefully at his radar screen. He saw dots . . . hundreds of dots. He rushed to his presiding officer. The officer brushed it off: "Don't worry; those are just planes coming in from California." Forty minutes later, Pearl Harbor went up in flames. We lost eight big battleships, hundreds of airplanes, and 2,400 sailors and soldiers--all because one lieutenant was lackadaisical in the face of a real threat of war.

Our junior high, high school, and college friends are fighting hard. It's a Pearl Harbor disaster that keeps repeating itself, and we sit at the radar (now a 25-inch, full-color TV set) and see dots . . . everywhere.

oEvery 9 seconds in North America, a teenager engages in sex.

oEvery 23 seconds, one becomes pregnant.

oEvery 54 seconds, one has an abortion.

oEvery 96 seconds, a teenager contracts a sexually transmitted disease.

oEvery 14 months, the number of teenagers with AIDS doubles.

oNine out of ten high school seniors have used alcohol.

oFour million kids are full-blown alcoholics.

oEach year, one of every eight teenagers tries to kill himself.

pp. 149-50

1 Peter 5:8, 9

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

Christian leadership is warfare.

Charles Wesley spells this out in his hymn:

"Soldiers of Christ Arise"

Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And put your armor on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Thru His eternal Son;
Strong in the Lord of Hosts,
And in His might pow'r
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

Stand then in His great might,
 With all His strength endued,
 And take, to arm you for the fight,
 The panoply of God;
 That having all things done,
 And all your conflicts past,
 Ye may o'ercome thru Christ alone,
 And stand entire at last.

Leave no unguarded place,
 No weakness of the soul,
 Take ev'ry virtue, ev'ry grace,
 And fortify the whole.
 From strength to strength go on,
 Wrestle and fight and pray,
 Tread all the pow'rs of darkness down,
 And win the well-fought day.

(From The New Church Hymnal. Copyright - 1976, #265)

(Point Man by Steve Farrar)

It's 1966. You are only eighteen. You are in the absolute prime of youth. You've got a driver's license, a girlfriend, and plenty of dreams. Your entire life is ahead of you. But through a strange series of circumstances you don't fully understand, suddenly your driver's license is useless, your girlfriend's picture is in your wallet, your dreams are on hold, and you are in a country thousands of miles away from home.

Welcome to Vietnam.

On this particular day, you would give anything not to be here. For you are going out on patrol. You've been on patrol before, but today is different, and that's why there's a knot in your gut and an icy fear in your heart.

Today is different because the patrol leader has appointed you to be "point man." In essence, you're the leader. Everyone else will fall in behind you. And as you move out to encounter the enemy, you realize that the survival of those seven men stepping cautiously behind you will depend upon just one thing: your ability to lead. Your judgment may determine whether they live or die. The responsibility hangs over your head like the suffocating humidity that hangs heavy in the air.

Your senses have never been so alive, your adrenalin so surging. You can almost hear it rushing through your veins.

You know the enemy is near, maybe just hundreds of yards away. Intelligence reported heavy enemy activity in this area late last night. Your job is to confirm or deny that activity. For all you know, they're watching you right now.

Perhaps they can see you, but you don't have a clue where they are.

As you gingerly make your way through the rain forest, you've got one eye out for concealed wires in your path and another scanning the trees for snipers. Entire patrols have been lost because the point man failed to anticipate an ambush. Men have been killed or horribly maimed, all because a point lacked skill and wisdom.

You never saw it coming. The violent shock and utter surprise of gunfire momentarily paralyzes you, despite your "instant reaction" training. Before you can respond, a bullet tears through your flesh and explodes the bone in your leg. A thousand thoughts instantly flood your mind: Am I going to die? Where are those shots coming from? Is there more than one? Will I lose my leg? Where's the patrol leader?

One glance to your left tells you that the family of the patrol leader is now fatherless. In the chaos of attack, and in spite of your wounds, the radio man makes his way to you. He knows and you know that you are the most experienced man. In panic situations like this, the book goes out the window. Like it or not, you are the leader.

As a medic evaluates your wound, you're trying to determine what to do next. Just what is the situation? What are we up against? Where are they? Some good news in the midst of confusion brings a ray of hope--the bullet went through cleanly and the bleeding has stopped. You're luckier than most guys on point. Usually, they're dead before they hit the ground. You're still alive and in control of your thinking.

Two other men beside the patrol leader were hit. One is dead, the other bleeding profusely. You get on the radio and report your situation and position. You request a chopper for the hemorrhaging private. But before you can finish your request, the hidden enemy unleashes all of his firepower on your position. You're surrounded.

In your gut, you know the odds are against you. You're outnumbered, outgunned, and not in the greatest position to wage a counterattack. You've got two men dead, one dying, and four wondering if they'll make it to lunch. The worst case scenario has happened . . . and it's worse than you ever imagined.

Now is the time your leadership will make the difference. What you say and do will determine whether your men live or die. As automatic weapons blaze around you, you must accurately assess the situation, determine the critical next steps, and formulate a flawless plan. It's leadership, pure and simple. If your plan works, you may get out alive with half your men. If it doesn't, they'll be lucky to find your dogtags.

Some of you reading this didn't have to use your imaginations. You were actually there. You know what it is to see your buddy disappear forever into the zippered confines of a body bag. You know firsthand the white-hot heat of phosphorous grenades and the adrenalin rush of a firefight. You know what it's like to be disoriented by the concussion of artillery shells crashing in around you. You don't have to imagine patrolling in Vietnam . . . it's all you can do to get a night's sleep without reliving it again and again.

Let's make a critical change in the scenario. You're still in Vietnam, on patrol in the same steamy rain forest.

But something about this patrol is different. You're still the point man, but this time you're not leading a group of men.

You're leading your family.

You look over your shoulder to see your wife and your children following behind. Your little girl is trying to choke back the tears, and your little boy is trying to act brave. Your wife is holding the baby and trying to keep him quiet. On this patrol, you don't want to engage the enemy, you want to avoid him.

What would you be feeling under such conditions? The survival of each member of your family--and its survival as a whole--would completely depend upon your ability to lead through the maze of possible ambushes, unseen booby traps, invisible snipers, and all the extraordinary hazards of combat.

Would you be motivated? Would your senses and adrenalin be working overtime? Of course they would! You would know in your gut that the survival of your family is up to you. It's all on your shoulders . . . because you are the leader.

Gentlemen, this is no imaginary situation. It is reality. If you are a husband/father, then you are in a war. War has been declared upon the family, on your family and mine. Leading a family through the chaos of American culture is like leading a small patrol through enemy-occupied territory. And the casualties in this war are as real as the names etched on the Vietnam Memorial.

pp. 14-17

LAW #3: "To Be a Leader You've Got to Be Willing to Fight"

The Bible Knowledge Commentary calls these 3 verses:

. . . Paul's charge to Timothy. Paul is returning from his brief personal digression in verses 12-17. Paul now goes back to the specific matters before Timothy in Ephesus resuming the charge begun in verse 3.

Hiebert, in his commentaries, calls this section:

The renewal of the charge to Timothy:

In this closing paragraph of the first division Paul again turns directly to Timothy with his charge. He points out the duty of Timothy (vv. 18, 19a) and by contrast speaks of the shipwreck of certain men (vv. 19b, 20).
p. 45

Lock paraphrases the 3 verses in the following way:

This charge, then, I now in my absence place in your care, my own son Timothy; recalling to mind the words of the Christian prophets which led me to choose you to help me in my work, that in the strength of these words you may carry on God's true campaign, holding fast yourself faith and a good conscience, for remember how some refused to listen to their conscience and so made shipwreck of their faith: of such are Hymenaeus and Alexander on whom I formally passed sentence, that they may learn under discipline not to speak against the truth.
p. 17

(Splashes of Joy in the Cesspools of Life
by Barbara Johnson)

As Helen Keller said:

LIFE IS EITHER A DARING ADVENTURE
OR NOTHING.

p. 84

v.18 This charge I am entrusting to you, Timothy, my son,
in accordance with the prophecies that were made long
ago concerning you, in order that with their aid you may
fight the good fight (put up a splendid fight),

"THIS CHARGE I AM ENTRUSTING TO YOU, TIMOTHY, MY SON."

Lock expands this 1ST PHRASE by paraphrasing it:

"That I may be faithful to my trust, I choose one whom I can
trust," . . .
p. 18

Hiebert says:

"This charge" is the one named by the verb in verse 3 and
the noun in verse 5. The verb translated "commit" means "to
place alongside of, to set before," and in the middle voice,
as here, means "to deposit, to intrust" as with a treasure
that must be guarded. The terms of the direct address
indicate a tender concern for Timothy.
p. 45

1 Timothy 1:3

Even as I urged you to remain longer in Ephesus when I
was going to Macedonia, in order that you might instruct
certain ones not to teach a different (heretical)
doctrine,

1 Timothy 1:5

Now the goal of our instruction is (divine) love out of
a pure heart and a good conscience and a genuine faith
(without hypocrisy).

Barnes says:

It is, that Paul was committing to him an important trust, and one that required great wisdom and fidelity; and that in doing it he was acting in conformity with the hopes which had been cherished respecting Timothy, and with certain expressed anticipations about his influence in the church. From early life the hope had been entertained that he would be a man to whom important trusts might be committed; and it had been predicted that he would be distinguished as a friend of religion.
p. 125

Hendriksen brings definition to this "CHARGE" when he says:

It is the "mandate" or "instruction" that Timothy stay on at Ephesus in order that he may teach certain individuals not to make misuse of the law but to use it lawfully, unto conversion to Christ, the sinners' Savior.
p. 84

Guthrie points out:

Timothy is solemnly reminded that the ministry is not a matter to be trifled with, but an order from the commander-in-chief.
p. 67

Wiersbe says:

. . . the word "charge" means "an urgent command handed down from a superior officer."
p. 20

The word "CHARGE" could be translated:

"order,"

"command,"

"precept,"

"advice."

The word occurs in:

Acts 5:28, 29

saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men."

1 Thessalonians 4:2

For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

"THIS CHARGE I AM ENTRUSTING TO YOU."

2 Timothy 1:12

For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

2 Timothy 2:2

And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

Luke 12:48

but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

Luke 23:46

And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit." And having said this, He breathed His last.

"THIS CHARGE I AM ENTRUSTING TO YOU, TIMOTHY, MY SON."

Lock raises the question:

Is there a play on Timothy's name, "You whose name commits you to giving honour to God"?
p. 18

Barclay touches on this when he says:

So Paul says to Timothy: "You have been chosen; you cannot let down God and man." To every one of us there comes God's choosing; and when we are summoned to some work for Him, we dare not refuse it.

It may be that Paul was saying to Timothy: "Timothy, be true to your name." The name Timothy--its full form is Timotheos--is composed of two Greek words, time which means honour, and theos which means God. The very name Timothy means honour to God. It is as if Paul said to Timothy: "Timothy, live up to your name." We are called by the name Christian, one of Christ's folk, and to that name we must be true.
pp. 57-58

Hendriksen says:

This expression of endearment is not strange if the following three facts are borne in mind: a. under God, Timothy owed his conversion to Paul, who was therefore his spiritual father; b. the disciple was the apostle's junior by several years; c. he was amiable, dependable, and co-operative even to the extent of performing tasks that ran counter to his natural disposition.
p. 84

Barclay says further:

"You are a man to whom a task has been entrusted." "I entrust this charge to you," says Paul. The word which Paul uses for to entrust is paratithesai. That word is used of entrusting something valuable and precious to someone's safe keeping. It is used, for instance, of making a deposit in a bank, of entrusting some person to another person's care. It always implies that a trust has been reposed in someone, and that for that trust that person will be called to account. So Paul says to Timothy: "Timothy, into your hands I am placing a sacred trust. See that you do not fail."
p. 58

"THIS CHARGE I AM ENTRUSTING TO YOU, TIMOTHY, MY SON, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROPHECIES THAT WERE MADE LONG AGO CONCERNING YOU."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

These prophecies were Timothy's call and fitness for service in Ephesus. They reinforce Paul's conviction that Timothy was a fit soldier to conduct the battle against error in the Ephesian church. Timothy was to remember these prophecies and be inspired by them in the struggle.

Demarest says:

We'll probably never know exactly what Paul meant by "the prophecies previously made concerning you." It's likely that there had been some formal act of commissioning or ordaining with the laying on of hands, setting Timothy apart for his particular ministry. I like to think that this happened in his home church in Lystra as he accepted Paul's invitation to the missionary partnership. Prophecy was regarded as a gift of the Holy Spirit in which a person was given a word for the community or for an individual.
p. 164

We must not think of prophecy here primarily as a prediction. Though we tend to use the word in that sense, prophecy was more commonly an exhortation or an encouragement, which would have certain consequences for obedience or rejection. To some degree, then, prophecy was predictive. Do this, and you will live. Do that, and you will suffer. But to prophesy was not a matter of forecasting the future, certainly not with regard to the return of Christ.

The prophecies that had been given to Timothy were affirmed by Paul as a source of strength. Probably the closest thing that we have to this comes in the charge to the candidate in our service of ordination.
pp. 164-65

Hendriksen says:

These previous prophetic utterances had probably been of the following nature. They singled out Timothy for special service in God's kingdom, summarized his duties, predicted his suffering, and strengthened him with the promise of divine help in all his trials. At least, such were the prophetic utterances in connection with Paul's own call to duty.
p. 85

Hiebert says:

The reference doubtless takes us into the assembly of the believers where the Holy Spirit, speaking through His prophets, singled out Timothy for special duty. These prophecies, previous to his ordination, marked him out for his office and sanctioned the laying on of hands. Thus in Acts 13 the Spirit's message, marking out Barnabas and Saul, came before they were publicly set aside for the work. So doubtless it was also in the case of Timothy.
p. 45

Lenski says:

Like troops, these prophecies and true teachings come to Timothy in advance so as to enable him to make a good campaign in his new field. He is Paul's lieutenant-general who is re-enforced by his general-in-chief.
p. 530

"THIS CHARGE I AM ENTRUSTING TO YOU, TIMOTHY, MY SON, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROPHECIES THAT WERE MADE LONG AGO CONCERNING YOU, IN ORDER THAT WITH THEIR AID YOU MAY FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT (PUT UP A SPLENDID FIGHT)."

Now the apostle concludes this 18th verse with a PURPOSE CLAUSE.

Barnes says:

The meaning here is, that he should contend with earnestness as a Christian and a minister in that holy service in which he was engaged, and endeavour to secure the victory. He "wars a good warfare" who is engaged in a righteous cause; who is faithful to his commander and to his post; who is unslumbering in observing the motions of the enemy, and fearless in courage in meeting them; who never forsakes his standard, and who continues thus faithful till the period of his enlistment has expired, or till death. Such a soldier the Christian minister should be.
p. 126

Wiersbe says:

It was not easy to serve God in pagan Ephesus, but Timothy was a man under orders, and he had to obey. The soldier's task is to "please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim. 2:4), and not to please himself. Furthermore, Timothy was there by divine appointment: God has chosen him and sent him. It was this fact that could give him assurance in difficult days. If you are God's servant, called by the Spirit, obeying His will, then you can "stay with it" and finish the work. These assurances enabled Timothy to war the good warfare.
p. 20

Hiebert says:

He must continue (present tense) to "war the good warfare." This is the personal aspect of Timothy's duty at Ephesus. The military figure has reference not to a single battle but to the whole campaign. Paul, that doughty veteran in spiritual conflict, well knew that the Christian life is a continuing warfare under the banner of the King of kings. But here the special reference is to Timothy's task of contending with the false teachers.
p. 46

Demarest says:

In a military metaphor, Paul's command is given to his young lieutenant. No glorification of militarism need be drawn from this command, but the simple fact is that those who choose to take Christ seriously in the common rounds and relationships of daily life will readily discover that there is an enemy, and there is a battle.
pp. 165-66

While preoccupation with the enemy can lead to despair, to ignore the enemy is to invite disaster.
p. 166

Barclay says:

The picture of life as a campaign is one which has always fascinated men's thoughts. Maximus of Tyre said: "God is the general; life is the campaign; man is the soldier." Seneca said: "For me to live, my dear Lucilius, is to be a soldier."
p. 58

Barclay goes on to say:

It is not to a battle that we are summoned; it is to a campaign. Life is one long campaign; life is a service from which there is no release. Life is not a short, sharp struggle after which a man can lay aside his arms and rest in peace; to the end of the day life is an unceasing campaign. To change the metaphor, life is not a sprint; it is a marathon race. It is there that the danger of life enters in. It is necessary to be for ever on guard and on the watch. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." The temptations of life, the wrong things of life, never cease their attack and their search for a chink in the armour of the Christian. There are no periods of relaxation in the Christian life. It is one of the commonest dangers in life that we proceed in a series of spasms. We have a period of real effort and of real campaign, and then a period when we let things slide. We must remember that we are summoned to a campaign which goes on as long as life goes on.
pp. 58-59

Lange, in his commentary, says:

Our spiritual strife does not cease, but lasts as long as we live, for our spiritual enemies never die.--What the eye is to the head, and the heart to the body, the conscience is to faith and to a complete Christianity.--It is very tender, and must therefore be well guarded.
p. 27

HANDLING THE ROUGH

The game of golf teaches us, among other things, that we can't always take the easy way out of a difficult situation. When a ball rolls off the fairway and into the rough, for instance, the golfer has a problem. He isn't permitted to pick it up and place it where it will be easier to play. The ball must be hit from the rough.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

This is our KEY VERSE to LAW #3: "To Be a Leader You've Got to Be Willing to Fight."

One of the commentators titled this section:

"Know Your Mission."

John 16:33

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.

2 Corinthians 2:14

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.

You can count on it; life is going to be a battle all the way to the barn.

Swindoll calls it:

"The lonely whine of the top dog."

When the Christian is following the 4 "C'S" OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP, he is going to have a fight on his hands:

1. COMPASSION
2. CONVICTIONS
3. CHARACTER
4. COURAGE

1 Peter 4:19

Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

Ephesians 6:10-17

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

2 Timothy 2:3, 4

Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

Exodus 14:13, 14

Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

1 Samuel 4:9

Be strong, Philistines! Be men, or you will be subject to the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Be men, and fight!"

1 Samuel 17:47

All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands.

2 Chronicles 20:17

You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.

2 Chronicles 32:8

"With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles." And the people gained confidence from what Hezekiah the king of Judah said.

Nehemiah 4:20

Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us there. Our God will fight for us!

1 Corinthians 9:26

Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

Hebrews 10:32

But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,

Hebrews 11:34

quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

2 Corinthians 7:5

For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within.

There is a possibility that this could be AN ATHLETIC METAPHOR rather than military. This is true in:

1 Corinthians 9,

and 2 Corinthians 4.

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

According to a recent survey, the books selling in Christian bookstores are the "touchy-feely" ones that focus on self-esteem, self-fulfillment, and self-analysis while "devotionals and missionary biographies gather dust on the shelves. So do books encouraging self-sacrifice."
p. 42

Spiritual consumers are interested not in what the church stands for but in the fulfillment it can deliver. Thus the under-forty-five generation, 60 percent of whom define themselves as independent spiritual seekers, reject the notion that one should be limited to a single faith. The result is "an age of mix 'em, match 'em, salad bar spirituality." And it really doesn't matter whether it is orthodox or New Age; a majority of Christians believe all religions worship the same God.
p. 43

(Temptations Men Face by Tom L. Eisenman)

In a letter to a struggling friend C. S. Lewis wrote:

I know all about the despair of overcoming chronic temptations. It is not serious, provided self-offended petulance, annoyance at breaking records, impatience etc. don't get the upper hand. No amount of falls will really undo us if we keep on picking ourselves up each time. We shall of course be v. muddy and tattered children by the time we reach home. But the bathrooms are all ready, the towels put out, and the clean clothes in the airing cupboard. The only fatal thing is to lose one's temper and give it up. It is when we notice the dirt that God is most present in us; it is the v. sign of his presence.
p. 28

(Bold Love by Dan B. Allender & Tremper Longman, III)

It is imperative to know that a great deal of the harm that will come our way in the war against the Evil One will be at the hands of fellow Christians--so-called "friendly fire." In fact, I would suggest that it is unusual for those in ministry to be attacked by the "unbeliever." The typical agent of war will be those who share the name of Christ who direct their missiles against those who are on the same side. The Evil One is at his finest when he uses the damage of friendly fire to inflict abuse. Satan, however, is not picky; he will be delighted to use any person or situation to achieve his destructive ends.
p. 93

At a recent seminar, I asked some folks who were talking in a church lobby if they could speak more quietly, because they were disturbing the presentation. One man glared with cool disdain and retorted, "You can ask, but this is our church, not yours." I smiled and walked away, cursing my odd calling of involvement with Christians.
p. 94

(The Leadership Style of Jesus by Michael Youssef)

One leader said, "Leaders choose their battles. They can't win every one. They may even lose a few along the way. But they can win the war."

Leadership is often a battle, and the fight requires courage. Having courage doesn't mean you'll never fear or tremble; it doesn't mean you'll have no inner turmoil or never ask, "God, am I doing the right thing?" Having courage means you'll do what's right, regardless of the consequences.
p. 43

What is it going to take to get the church--the body of Christ--to recognize that we are in a war, that there is no time to sit around arguing over HEALTH-WEALTH-and PROSPERITY, and all of the other secondary issues?

As brothers and sisters in Christ we need to mobilize ourselves for battle and go to war. We need to strip down our priorities and study the scriptures and be ready to "fight the good fight."

For PATRICK HENRY it was:

"Give me liberty or give me death."

For THE BELIEVER it is:

"Give me souls or I die!"

"Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus"

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
 Ye soldiers of the cross.
 Lift high His royal banner,
 It must not suffer loss:
 From vict'ry unto vict'ry
 His army shall He lead,
 Till ev'ry foe is vanquished,
 And Christ is Lord indeed.

(From The New Church Hymnal. Copyright - 1976, #206)

"Onward, Christian Soldiers"

Onward Christian soldiers,
 Marching as to war,
 With the cross of Jesus
 Going on before:
 Christ, the royal Master,
 Leads against the foe;
 Forward into battle,
 See, His banners go.

Like a might army
 Moves the Church of God;
 Brothers, we are treading
 Where the saints have trod;
 We are not divided,
 All one body we,
 One in hope and doctrine,
 One in charity.

(From The New Church Hymnal. Copyright - 1976, #205)

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

First of all, it would require a commitment to the truth--the One who says He is ultimate reality--and from this a renewed passion for what God has propositionally revealed, His inerrant Word, and the orthodox confession of faith by which the truth has been preserved and passed through the centuries.

It would mean an awakening to the fact that the church is the people of God and that the church must be the church.

Away with consumer religion, the edifice complex, slick marketing plans, and syrupy sermons. Equip the people of God with spiritual weapons so they may serve the living God in the world.

p. 273

I cannot help but see parallels here with my own military experience in Marine officers' basic training. The Marines, if you'll pardon an old leatherneck's pride, do it right, and I've never forgotten those lessons.

During the first grueling weeks we were put through intense physical training on death-defying obstacle courses.

We learned to handle and clean a rifle, and to disassemble and reassemble it blindfolded. We memorized the Marine handbook of military rules and regimen (and no one argued about whether the rules were relevant or accepted by a majority of Marines). Our hearts and minds were imprinted forever with the meaning of discipline. (I remember once cracking the slightest smile during inspection: "Fifty push-ups, Colson!")

From there it was on to the rifle range and small-unit tactics. Then field maneuvers. And while all of this was simulated warfare, no one treated it like a game. When I was in training, the Korean War was at its bloodiest; young men just out of school were leading other young men in deadly combat. Many came home in pine boxes. So we were serious not only about surviving combat, but about winning it.

It should be the same for the soldiers of the Cross. Yet rather than being well-trained, well-disciplined, functioning members of the Body, many of us act more like reserve units: weekend warriors whose real jobs occupy them during the week and who just turn out for occasional drills or to hang out in the officers' club on Sundays.

If we take our Handbook seriously, we have to conclude that the church is the basic school of discipline and training for all Christians. And shouldn't our training be at least as serious as the military? After all, we are in warfare. None of us can have any illusions about that. And the battle is not just for flesh and blood; it is for eternal souls.

p. 286

(Mentoring: The Strategy of the Master by Ron Lee Davis
with James D. Denney)

. . . Winston Churchill intrinsically motivated the people of Great Britain to dedicate themselves to the war effort during the darkest days of World War II.

I have nothing to offer you but blood, sweat, and tears [not a very motivational beginning, is it?]. Victory at all cost, victory instead of terror, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there is no survival.

We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight in the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air; we shall defend our island whatever the cost may be and we shall never surrender.

Death and sorrow will be the companions of our journey, hardship our garment, constancy and valor our only shield.

We must be united! We must be undaunted! We must never give up!

pp. 140-41

(When You Can't Come Back by Dave & Jan Dravecky
with Ken Gire)

May he give you the strength to turn your setbacks into comebacks.

And when you can't come back, may he give you the grace to put your hand in his--even if you have only one hand to give--and there may you find peace.

p. 195

(Mentoring: The Strategy of the Master by Ron Lee Davis
with James D. Denney)

To persevere means, essentially, "to hold up courageously under fire." The longer I live out my life, the more convinced I become that perseverance is the central ingredient of all successful endeavors and the most important ingredient a mentor can pass on to a learner. It is an ingredient in all too short a supply in the human race.

The average person folds up and runs away when things get difficult. You and I must learn to persevere and to teach perseverance to those we seek to influence. The average person quits after two or three attempts. You and I must learn to try and try and try again until we reach the goal. And we must teach this same quality to those we seek to influence.

p. 155

Let me ask you a hard question: What does it take to stop you? An unkind word? A little unfair treatment? A little smudge on your reputation? A voice raised in anger? A threat against your job? A threat against your life? Where on that continuum of opposition do you run out of persistence and courage? At what point do you throw in the towel and give up? At what point do you just say, "Jesus, I give up. This is just too hard for me."

What does it take to stop you?

The difference between success and failure, between achievement and collapse, between having an impact on others for Christ and having no influence at all comes down to just one word: perseverance.

p. 163

(You Can Make a Difference by Gary R. Collins)

Real heroes and effective difference makers don't walk away from life. Instead they confront it, with all its terrors and ambiguities, and make positive changes.

p. 37

(Where Does a Mother Go to Resign? by Barbara Johnson)

Think about this: "In love's service, only the wounded can serve, for they alone understand the cry of the bleeding heart."

p. 136

LET'S KEEP FLYING!

Just before winter sets in, geese from northern Canada begin their journey south, migrating to the lakes and ponds of North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Perhaps you have seen the majestic flight of those birds--whose wingspan can reach 5 to 6 1/2 feet--as they traverse the sky in their characteristic flight pattern. According to Lamar Dodd's Mark Trail, some authorities believe that "Canada geese fly in a V-formation to take advantage of the air currents stirred up by the birds flying ahead. The lead goose does most of the hard work, overcoming air resistance." The trailing birds benefit from the ones in front.

All of us are indebted to godly men and women who have gone before us.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

v.19 holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having rejected (repudiated), have suffered shipwreck in their faith.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary points out:

In the Ephesians passage Paul lists several pieces of equipment for the good fight, and here he just speaks of 2:

1. "FAITH,"
2. "AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE."

1 Timothy 1:5

Now the goal of our instruction is (divine) love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and a genuine faith (without hypocrisy).

1 Timothy 3:9

holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

Strength in the one is always combined with strength in the other--so also is failure in the one correlated with failure in the other.

We are "HOLDING FAITH" by the choices we make.

Demarest raises the question:

And how is the battle waged? Not with physical might, but with "faith and a good conscience." Had Paul not previously written Ephesians 6:10-20, he probably would have inscribed it here. Ours is a spiritual battle and the weapons are spiritual. We go forth with faith in God. Faith in His grace, his goodness, His redemptive love for the world. Living by that faith sets us free from the guilt of a cluttered conscience, for by His grace we are forgiven, and nothing need be hidden.

p. 166

Hiebert points out:

In his campaigning Timothy must possess the subjective conditions for victory, "holding faith and a good conscience." He must continue to hold to, and not renounce, "faith and a good conscience." "In the conflict which we wage outwardly against the enemy, our chief concern is with the inner state and disposition of the heart" (Van Oosterzee). The Christian leader must personally possess the spiritual qualities he would enforce.
p. 46

Wiersbe says:

A good conscience is important to a good warfare and a good ministry. The magazine editor H.L. Mencken defined conscience as "the inner voice which warns us that somebody may be looking." But a man with a good conscience will do the will of God in spite of who is watching or what people may say. Like Martin Luther, he will say, "Here I stand, I can do no other, so help me God!"
p. 20

Barnes says:

Fidelity to the cause in which you are enlisted--as a good soldier should do. This does not mean, as it seems to me, that Timothy should hold to the system of doctrines revealed in the gospel, but that he should have that fidelity which a good soldier should have. He should not betray his trust. He should adhere to the cause of his master with unwavering steadfastness.
p. 126

Lenski says:

. . . this is faith in the prophecies he is to use as his victorious forces in this campaign and thus a good conscience that is due to relying only on these prophecies and apostolic teachings even as only "in connection with them" he is to do the campaigning. Apart from them Timothy's conscience would be in a sad plight indeed.
p. 531

Hendriksen says:

The manner in which this warfare must be carried on is now set forth: holding on to faith and a good conscience.
p. 86

Guthrie rightly observes:

Faith and a good conscience are three times conjoined in this Epistle, showing the inseparable connection between faith and morals.
p. 68

Guy King says:

Two things will help "son Timothy " in this spiritual soldiering--a taking firm hold of "faith", an unshakable trust in his Commanding Officer; and of "a good conscience", a seeing that he has no consciousness of having played fast and loose with King's Regulations.
p. 40

J. Vernon McGee points out:

Living the Christian life is not as simple as some would like us to believe. It is more complex than walking when the light is green and not walking when the light turns red. We have intricate personalities, and Paul is saying there is real danger for us in our human inconsistencies and failures. I assume you are not living in some ivory tower somewhere. Some Christians feel they are, that they are above the landscape and the smog and are way up yonder. But for those of us today who are walking on the sidewalks of our cities and rubbing shoulders with rough humanity and the problems of the world, we find that there are inconsistencies and failures in our lives. The danger we face is that of accommodating our faith to our failure.
p. 435

TEND THE FIRE!

On one occasion General Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, called together a few of his fellow workers and said to them, "Young men, take heed to the fire in your own hearts, for it has a tendency to go out." Reflecting on these words, one of them said later, "Yes, fire will go out unless the drafts are open, the ashes are shaken out, and more fuel is put on."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

"THIS IS A FOOTBALL!"

Vince Lombardi, who was the head football coach of the Green Bay Packers for many years, produced one NFL champion after another. He motivated his men to play every moment of every game to the best of their ability. No matter what the circumstances, the Packers were as strong and tough in the last 2 minutes of the game as they were at the opening kickoff. They never quit. That was their secret? We're told that Lombardi began each practice session by holding up a football and saying, "This is a football!" Then he drilled his men in the basics of conditioning, blocking, tackling, and playmaking. This thorough training in the basics stood them in good stead when the pressure was really on. It kept them from giving up.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

(Temptations Men Face by Tom L. Eisenman)

Somerset Maugham has written a fascinating short story entitled "Rain." In it a ship is forced by continual driving rain to remain docked in a small native village for about two weeks. The passengers take lodging at a boarding house. One of the men, Pastor Davidson, a missionary, takes it upon himself to convert the local prostitute who has a room at the house. At the end of the story there is a shocking twist. When the boat is finally ready to leave, Pastor Davidson cannot be found. Even his wife has no idea where he might be. Then they hear the report that a local native has found a body on the beach. It was Davidson. He had cut his own throat with a razor. It is clear what has happened. The prostitute converted the minister.

p. 245

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

The Barna poll that revealed that two-thirds of the American people believe there is no such thing as absolute truth also revealed a shocking response from believers: 53 percent of those claiming to be Bible-believing, conservative Christians said there is no such thing as absolute truth. A majority of those who follow the One who says, "I am the truth," profess not to believe in truth.

Equally chilling were Gallup's findings: Although 70 percent of all Americans believe it is important to do what the Bible teaches, two-thirds of this same group reject moral absolutes. Schizophrenic.

p. 184

"I ask you, Martin--answer candidly and without horns--do you or do you not repudiate your books and the errors which they contain?"

Luther was sweating again, his legs trembling, as he spoke with the resignation of a man who has counted the cost and is ready to pay.

"Since then your majesty and your lordships desire a simple reply, I will answer without horns and without teeth.

Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason--I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other--my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. Amen."

p. 259

(Customers for Life: How to Turn That One-Time Buyer into a Lifetime Customer by Carl Sewell & Paul B. Brown)

As Peter Drucker says, "Leadership is performance."

If you're the boss, you can't fake it. You either believe in the goals you've set or you don't, and if you don't you're going to get found out. First, it takes too much effort to pretend. Second, employees watch their leaders too closely for them to be able to fake anything.

Once people catch you not caring about a goal you've set--you said we always have to treat customers honestly, and they watch while you deliberately short-change someone--it's all over. They'll stop caring because they see you don't.

Even when people know what they are supposed to do, sometimes they forget. That's why they hold church every Sunday.

It's also why you--through both word and deed--have to constantly remind people what your values are.

p. 107

(Prayer Summits: Seeking God's Agenda for Your Community
by Joe Aldrich)

As Francis Frangipane says, "Before God moves in power, it seems, he moves in holiness."
p. 55

It's a shame that often we must wear the Ephesians 6 armor to protect us from other members of the Body of Christ.
p. 77

"HOLDING FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE, WHICH SOME, HAVING REJECTED (REPUDIATED), HAVE SUFFERED SHIPWRECK IN THEIR FAITH."

Lock says of the word that I have translated "REJECTED" or "REPUDIATED" that:

The word implies violent effort, a kicking against the pricks; . . .
p. 19

What they have "REJECTED" or "REPUDIATED" is their own conscience as it is pricked by things that are happening. They have ceased to be sensitive to the still, small voice.

1 Timothy 4:2

by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,

Guy King says:

Let us all take warning, that we treat the dictates of conscience with uttermost care, lest we sear it, and stultify it, and eventually Silence it. It is a very delicate instrument--not itself the voice of GOD, but one of His chief means of guiding His children; it is, as Milton puts it, "the umpire of the soul", giving the "yea" or "nay" to this or that. And, that this inner voice shall give right decisions, it needs to be assiduously trained and educated by constant assimilating of the Word.
p. 40

(Topical Memory System: Life Issues compiled
by The Navigators)

Happy are we to have God's Word always to guide us! What is the mariner without his compass? And what is the Christian without the Bible? This is the unerring chart, the map in which every shoal is described, and all the channels from the quicksands of destruction to the haven of salvation mapped and marked by One who knows all the way.

--C. H. Spurgeon

p. 19

"HOLDING FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE, WHICH SOME, HAVING REJECTED (REPUDIATED), HAVE SUFFERED SHIPWRECK IN THEIR FAITH."

Paul changes his illustration from the ARMY to the NAVY here in this 19th verse.

Paul knew a lot about SHIPWRECK:

2 Corinthians 11:25

Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.

Acts 27:41

But striking a reef where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern began to be broken up by the force of the waves.

Lock says:

The Christian teacher must be good soldier and good sailor too.

p. 19

Hendriksen says:

A Christian must be both a good soldier and a good sailor. Now a good sailor does not thrust away or discard the rudder of the ship. The good conscience--one that obeys the dictates of the Word as applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit--is the rudder, guiding the believer's vessel into the safe harbor of everlasting rest.
p. 86

Lenski says:

When they thrust aside their conscience which tried to hold them to the prophecies they had learned from faithful teachers they made shipwreck of their very faith. One cannot keep his faith while he plays fast and loose with the prophecies (Word). He will have to silence his conscience, make it cease crying out against such practice, and then his faith is wrecked whether he admits it or not.

A new, graphic figure is added, but it agrees with the other figure. The one is the disturbance of war during a campaign, the other is the disturbance of a storm at sea. In both our one reliance is prophecy, the Word. It is a sad campaign, a sad wreck, if conscience is thrust aside and reliance is sought in something aside from or contrary to the prophecies or Word.
p. 532

Barnes says:

The truth thus taught is, that men 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. Men 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 men would keep a good conscience, the way to a steady belief in the gospel would be easy. If men will not, they must expect sooner or later to be landed in infidelity.
pp. 126-27

Hiebert says:

"Which" has reference to "a good conscience." These false teachers treated the matter of maintaining their spiritual integrity as a minor matter as they played fast and loose with the Scriptures. When their conscience goaded them they "thrust" from them their good conscience. The word implies the violence of the act required. The result was that they "made shipwreck concerning the faith." "The faith" may mean that their own personal faith was wrecked. "The Christian teacher who does not practice what he preaches will find his faith fail him" (Lock). But more probably "the faith" is objective and means the true doctrine of the Gospel. "The yielding to sin dulls the perception of truth, and opens the way for the influx of error" (Harvey). In reality both things actually occur. "Disaster falls alike on 'faith' and 'the faith,' when a good conscience is rejected, or rather ejected" (Pope). Paul switches from the picture of a military campaign to that of a shipwreck. The picture of a shipwreck implies severe and unrecoverable loss.
pp. 46-47

WHY SHIPS RUN AGROUND

The author compares the fall of the Christian leader to the tanker that contaminated the Alaskan shorelines. The Greek word commonly translated "minister" is "hyperetes." It can also be translated "servant, helper." It literally means "under rower" on a boat. Another Greek word used to describe the gift of administration is "kybernesis," coming from the verb that means "to guide" or "to steer." Some principles that will help the leader guide to safe passage: 1) The wise helmsman is always a learner. He never loses awe at handling the things of God. 2) A wise helmsman is never a loner. The key to keeping the ship off the rocks is constant interaction and relationship with a multitude of counselors.

"Why ships run aground" by Robert Tauber. Ministries Today, Sep/Oct 1989. Pages 96-103.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

Barclay says:

Paul has three complaints against these men.

(i) They had rejected the guidance of conscience. They had allowed their own wishes and desires to speak with more power and persuasiveness than the voice of God. They had made their will, not God's will, the dictator of their lives.

(ii) Inevitably they had relapsed into evil practices. Once they had abandoned God, life had become soiled and debased and unworthy. When God went from life, beauty went from life along with Him.

(iii) They had taken to false teaching. Again it is almost inevitable. When a man takes the wrong way, his first instinct is to find justifications and excuses for himself. He takes the Christian teaching and twists and distorts it to suit himself. Out of the right he finds subtle and perverted arguments to justify the wrong. He finds arguments in the words of Christ to justify the ways of the devil. The moment a man disobeys the voice of conscience, his conduct becomes debased and his thinking becomes twisted.

pp. 60-61

(What Makes a Man? by Bill McCartney)

Ignoring Warning Signals
Jay Carty

I have a friend who was a fighter pilot in World War II. During his training, he flew planes that didn't have radios. That's the way it was in those days. Signal men on the ground communicated with the young flyers by waving flags.

Bill was the best in his class and had a chance to prove it during the graduation exercises. With the grandstands full of top brass, sweet William set out to make a mark for himself. He won the touch-and-go competition easily, captured first place in the dog fight event, and thereby won the right to land first.

Bill was feeling fine. Top Gun, that's who he was. And he was leading the parade. As he was enjoying his victory, he thought of making a perfect landing just to cap off a perfect day of flying. He thought about the applause awaiting him as he climbed out of his plane.

My friend lowered his flaps as he started his approach. A buzzer went off in the cockpit. Bill knew what it meant but was so caught up in the moment that it didn't register.

He could see the men in the tower waving with both hands. "Hi, guys," he yelled knowing they couldn't hear him. How nice of them to welcome the conquering hero. Then a red flare sailed across his vision. Fireworks for the winner. They had thought of everything.

Concentrate, concentrate. Focus on making both wheels touch at the same time.

As the plane settled to the ground Bill noticed the propeller stop. This phenomenon was followed by the screech of metal. The propeller had stopped because it had hit the ground. The ear-piercing sound was caused by the body of the plane doing the same thing. As a cloud of dust enveloped the plane, Bill remembered, "I forgot to put down the landing gear; I didn't lower the wheels!"

Bill thought he was a winner. He thought everything was just fine . . . until it was too late.

Oh, he'd been warned. The buzzer was installed as a reminder to the pilot to put his gear down when the flaps were lowered. The guys in the tower tried to wave him off.

The red flare was an attempt to keep him from landing.

But Bill crashed. And now it was too late. Nothing more could be done. This book is a friend in the tower trying to wave you off. It's a final flare. It just might be your last warning buzzer. Get your wheels down. Don't crash.

pp. 220-21

(Prayer Summits: Seeking God's Agenda for Your Community
by Joe Aldrich)

"There is no finish line," says Nike.

Nike is wrong. One divine puff and Israel's flame was out. An entire nation crossed one line too many, a divine "finish line," and God said, "I've had it, you're finished!"

They'd stoned one too many prophets, built one too many pagan temples, listened to one too many apostate priests, offered one too many sons on a pagan altar.

The defection was virtually complete. With few exceptions, everyone abandoned Yahweh and the temple in Jerusalem.

All twelve tribes defected. Both parts of the divided kingdom, Judah and Israel, became apostate. The priests and Levites became false shepherds. The kings built altars to pagan gods. It's no wonder God shut down the carnival.

Unhappily, spiritual defection is not an Old Testament phenomenon, a quirk of interest only to theologians and historians. Paul uses Israel's ancient defection as a warning for the church. In 1 Corinthians 10 he maintains that Israel's flame-outs are instructive for today. Spiritual decline is followed by judgment--a judgment which often results in the removal of God's presence and blessing.
p. 137

"A GOOD CONSCIENCE" is necessary for sound doctrine.

"FAITH" is a pure liquid, and a "A GOOD CONSCIENCE" is the glass that holds it.

What does it mean when Paul says:

"HAVE SUFFERED SHIPWRECK IN THEIR FAITH"?

"SHIPWRECK" can come through:

DOCTRINAL means,
 DECEPTION,
 DISQUALIFICATION,
 DEEDS that are done,
 DESIRES that get out of hand,
 a lack of DISCIPLINE.

Thinking through the biblical characters, you think of men like MOSES who struck the rock instead of speaking to it as the Lord had said.

You think of:

PETER,
 JOHN MARK,
 DEMAS,
 DIOTREPHES,
 DAVID,
 SOLOMON,
 SAMSON,
 GIDEON,
 SAUL,
 and the list goes on.

Matthew 7:24-27

Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

The Donahueite world-view is of a linear life. When a certain number of years have elapsed, it's over. Period. It's a pathetic picture, and one people seldom look at unless it is forced upon them--as it was with poignancy and wit in City Slickers. While this movie may not rank among the great morality plays of all time (and some would find parts of the film offensive), it certainly drives the point home, along with the cattle.

Comedian Billy Crystal plays the part of a bored baby boomer who sells radio advertising time. On the day he visits his son's school to tell about his work along with other fathers, he suddenly lets loose a deadpan monologue to the bewildered youngsters in the class:

Value this time in your life, kids, because this is the time in your life when you still have your choices. It goes by so fast.

When you're a teenager, you think you can do anything and you do. Your twenties are a blur.

Thirties you raise your family, you make a little money, and you think to yourself, "What happened to my twenties?"

Forties, you grow a little pot belly, you grow another chin. The music starts to get too loud, one of your old girlfriends from high school becomes a grandmother.

Fifties, you have a minor surgery--you'll call it a procedure, but it's a surgery.

Sixties, you'll have a major surgery, the music is still loud, but it doesn't matter because you can't hear it anyway.

Seventies, you and the wife retire to Fort Lauderdale. You start eating dinner at 2:00 in the afternoon, you have lunch around 10:00, breakfast the night before, spend most of your time wandering around malls looking for the ultimate soft yogurt and muttering, "How come the kids don't call? How come the kids don't call?"

The eighties, you'll have a major stroke, and you end up babbling with some Jamaican nurse who your wife can't stand, but who you call mama.

Any questions?

pp. 168-69

1 Chronicles 4:10

Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, "Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain." And God granted his request.

1 Corinthians 9:27

but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

One of my all-time favorite pictures while growing up was of a young man at the wheel of a ship in the midst of a storm.

The Lord Jesus is standing behind him with His hand on his shoulder and with His other hand pointing the direction. I took the words of this poetic piece and put them beneath that picture:

And now I have a Captain;
He'll guide, I know He will.
I've given Jesus full command
Since He said, "Peace, be still."

He whispered, "Peace, be still," to me;
My heart obeyed His will.
His word made calm the rolling sea
When He said, "Peace, be still."

v.20 Among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have turned over to Satan, in order that they might be taught (disciplined) not to be blaspheming (speak profanely).

Among those who "have suffered shipwreck in their faith" are 2 that Paul mentions here now in the 20th verse:

1. "HYMENAEUS,"
2. and "ALEXANDER."

Lenski says:

Paul himself had dealt with two of them, and when he held up to them the prophecies, the apostolic gospel teaching, and thereby tried to reach their conscience he found that they had actually thrust all good conscience away and had thereby lost their faith altogether. The true gospel teaching no longer made an impression on them, it had been smothered by their myths, etc.
pp. 532-33

Hendriksen says:

The Hymenaeus and Alexander to whom Paul refers here in I Tim. 1:20 were leaders among the Ephesian heretics. They were self-righteous persons who yearned to be law-teachers, although they understood neither the words which they were speaking nor the themes on which they were harping with such confidence (see verse 7). As has been indicated (see verse 4), they specialized in myths and fanciful stories about family-trees.
p. 87

Galatians 1:6, 7

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

2 Timothy 2:16, 17

But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,

"AMONG WHOM ARE HYMENAEUS AND ALEXANDER, WHOM I HAVE TURNED OVER TO SATAN."

Hiebert says:

The aorist refers to a past act. This difficult statement had caused much discussion. What is implied by that fearful term "delivered unto Satan"? It is generally understood as meaning "an act of excommunication, by which they were placed outside of the visible kingdom of God and, so to speak, replaced within the realm of Satan. . . . This general representation of Scripture, that outside of the visible kingdom of God on earth is the kingdom of Satan, is here probably the underlying conception" (Harvey). In the light of I Corinthians 5:5 it seems also to include the judicial infliction of bodily sickness or calamity by apostolic authority. That the expression includes more than simple exclusion from the fellowship of the church is plain.
p. 47

Lenski says:

In I Cor. 5:3-5, Paul writes as though he himself were present at the meeting of the congregation in Corinth and were offering the formal resolution to expel the man (v. 4, 5), which was to be formally adopted by the congregation, "to deliver such a one over to Satan." The same words are here used. There the case was one of incest and impenitence, here it was one of blasphemy. In both instances excommunication must needs follow.
p. 534

The Bible Knowledge Commentary explains it as follows:

Excommunication from a congregation like 1 Cor. 5:1-5 meant abandonment to realms controlled by Satan (2 Cor. 4:4). The congregation is a haven and protection for believers without which they would suffer painful disadvantage.

We have the experience of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5.

Acts 13:11

"And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time." And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand.

Luke 22:31, 32

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.

2 Timothy 2:24-26

And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

"AMONG WHOM ARE HYMENAEUS AND ALEXANDER, WHOM I HAVE TURNED OVER TO SATAN, IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT BE TAUGHT (DISCIPLINED) NOT TO BE BLASPHEMING (SPEAK PROFANELY)."

Now Paul gives us the PURPOSE for the previous action.

Lenski says:

These two cases are like that of Judas whose heart Satan had filled. They are cases not merely of some false doctrine or other, whose proponent must also be expelled, but not by at once giving him over to Satan, for a doctrinal error may not mean that all faith has already been lost. Impenitence in the case of open sin, likewise blasphemy, does mean that. When Paul says "I gave over," in the light of I Cor. 5:3-5 this cannot mean that Paul did this alone, without the congregation, by his apostolic authority alone, but must be understood as it is in I Cor. 5:5. When the cases were brought before the congregation, Paul made the motion indicated, and the congregation adopted the motion. The New Testament knows of no hierarchical excommunication.
p. 534

Hiebert says:

Paul's statement shows that he has not finally abandoned them. "That they might be taught not to blaspheme" reveals that the discipline was not merely punitive but remedial in its intention. The intention was that thereby they might be "taught" or "disciplined" so as to be led to repentance.
p. 47

Hendriksen agrees with this supposition by saying:

The apostle is earnestly desirous that the discipline--the divine pedagogy--imposed may have a salutary effect on Hymenaeus and Alexander. He is hoping and praying that by means of this dire affliction these false teachers may come to see themselves as grievous sinners and may be brought to genuine repentance, so that they will no longer rail at the truth and thereby revile its Author.
p. 87

Guthrie says:

The concluding clause that they may learn not to blaspheme shows clearly that the purpose was remedial and not punitive. However stringent the process the motive was mercy, and whenever ecclesiastical discipline has departed from this purpose of restoration, its harshness has proved a barrier to progress. But this is no reason for dispensing with discipline entirely, a failing which frequently characterizes our modern churches.
p. 69

Wiersbe says:

The verb "learn" (1 Tim. 1:20) means "to learn by discipline." When a Christian refuses to repent, the local fellowship should exercise discipline, excluding him from the protective fellowship of the saints, making him vulnerable to the attacks of Satan. The fellowship of the local church, in obedience to the will of God, gives a believer spiritual protection.
p. 21

Lange points out:

Chastisements are healing messengers of God for the recovery of men.

p. 27

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

Fellowship is more than unconditional love that wraps its arms around someone who is hurting. It is also tough love that holds one fast to the truth and the pursuit of righteousness. For most Christians, the support side of the equation comes more easily than accountability and the subsequent discipline involved. Which is one reason the behavior of Christians is often little different from the behavior of non-Christians. Maybe it's because we simply haven't taught accountability. Or maybe it's because, in today's fiercely individualistic culture, people resent being told what to do, and since we don't want to "scare them off," we succumb to cultural pressures.

p. 130

In late 1989, the bishop of San Diego refused the sacraments to a pro-choice political candidate who openly defied church teaching. The bishop was assaulted by the press and political leaders, and the candidate was elected. To this, the cleric responded calmly and correctly: "No popular vote or public opinion can change in any way the divine law that directs and guides human kind."

p. 132

Even pragmatically, no one should expect to join a church (which, after all, involves a free decision) and then refuse to accept its authority (its rules, if you will). For failing to attend a few meetings, one can be thrown out of the Rotary Club. For failing to live up to a particular dress code, one can be dismissed from most private clubs. For failing to perform the required community service, one can be thrown out of the Junior League.

Yet when the church imposes discipline--denying the benefits of membership to those who flout its standards--it is charged with everything short of (and sometimes including) fascism. But shouldn't the church have at least the same right to set its standards as the Rotary Club? People who don't like it can and should go elsewhere.

p. 133

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Paul is entrusting Timothy with the ministry in Ephesus.

LESSON #2: Timothy is Paul's spiritual son by conversion.

LESSON #3: To be a leader you have got to be willing to fight.

LESSON #4: In the battle, Paul is focusing on faith and a good conscience.

LESSON #5: Have you experienced shipwreck in your faith?

LESSON #6: Satan is a master at steering us off course and onto the rocks.

LESSON #7: A good conscience is necessary for sound doctrine.

LESSON #8: Are you in the process of being disciplined by your heavenly Father?

LESSON #9: Do you know your mission, and are you fighting a good fight?

LESSON #10: To make good progress in the Christian life one must be a good soldier as well as a good sailor.

(To the End of the Race by George McDaniel Cole)

My father's best "Lead Dog" was named Scrap. Scrap could run with Morgan in any race. He had the same fine qualities of leadership that Morgan had. Scrap knew when to give voice. He knew the right kind of game and he knew that which was not. He never quit a race. He was faithful and loyal to his master. Scrap could follow just as well as he could lead.

Scrap did a good job in every race. He gave his all. On one occasion when the race was in full swing, Scrap was trailing Morgan. Some of the hunters began to joke my father about it, so he rode up close to the pack and called out to his dog, "GO ON, SCRAP, GO ON!" While Scrap was doing a good job, he was not doing his best and his master knew it. When Scrap heard his master's voice, he began to gain on Morgan, and in a little while, he led the pack.

This particular race was a wolf race. Now wolves run in pairs. Incidentally, when a wolf mates, he mates for life.

This is the only animal which has this characteristic. They have more judgement here than a lot of people who make it "trial and error." Wolves are smart. One wolf will take the pack on a long run, away from the den. When he begins to tire, he circles back toward home. The mate has been anxiously waiting, and when husband comes home, the "wife-mate" crosses the trail and leads the pack away from the den, and so both wolves escape.

On this occasion, old Scrap was all alone with a fresh wolf. As tired as Scrap was, had he caught the wolf, the wolf would have killed him. But, in the midst of it all, there was complete abandonment of self. Scrap was thinking only of the race . . . and his master.

When the other dogs had come in from the field, and the race was over, Scrap was still gone. Daddy went searching for his dog and could not find him. Scrap did not answer when Daddy blew his horn.

A good dog can find his way home. Scrap finally came home. Early in the morning my father went out and found his dog almost dead. Scrap had run until he was so stiff he could not stand. He had worn all the pads off the bottom of his feet. His feet were all bloody, strutted and swollen. His eyes were matted closed. He had cut himself on the briars in the forest. He could barely swish his tail in the sand.

At that time, my mother was living and my daddy called her to his side. As he stood beside his dog he said to his wife, "Sweetheart, I want to dedicate my life to the Lord anew today. The other day when Scrap was trailing old Morgan, he was doing a good job--but not his best. When he heard his master's voice telling him to 'GO ON' he went until he could go no more." Then my father said, "I have never gone for my master until I was bruised and torn, or until I was so tired that I could not stand. I want Him to use me from this moment on as never before in my life.

Our Needs
Charles E. Warner

A little more of patience
With the faults of other folks,
A little more of charity
When a worldly act provokes,
A little more devotion
To the ones whom we should love,
A little more reliance
On the God who rules above,
A little more forbearance
With the cross we have to bear,
A little better learning
By all that is right and fair,
A little more of giving--
Would make this world a better place
For you and me to live.

A little less of prejudice,
A little less of hate,
A little less of ridicule
About our good and great,
A little less of vanity,
A little less of show,
A little less of telling
All the scandal that we know,
A little less complaining
O'er the ills we have to bear,
A little less of grieving
O'er the burdens we must share,
A little less of wickedness,
A little less of sin--
Would make this world a pleasant spot
To be abiding in.

pp. 77-79

(The Signature of Jesus: On the Pages of Our Lives
by Brennan Manning)

It recalls the deathbed exhortation of Francis of Assisi,
"Let us begin, my brothers, for up to now we have done but
little."

p. 169

(What Makes a Man? by Bill McCartney)

Second Lt. Bobo was already over the halfway point of going home after ten months of combat duty in Vietnam. He was a platoon leader in I Company, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines. Often leading missions in the "bush," and frequently in the midst of a firefight, he had earned his men's respect. But on March 30, 1967, he would earn a nation's highest honor.

Just barely twenty-four, Bobo ducked his head and jumped out of his helicopter when it touched the ground. His objective was Hill 70, in Quang Tri Province, from which his platoon was to set up an ambush site.

For a short time, they struggled through the elephant grass toward their position without incident. But what they were experiencing was the calm before a deadly storm. A large force of front line NVA regulars had massed to pull off their own ambush. Lt. Bobo's men were about to walk right into it.

Their lead elements saw several NVA soldiers and opened fire. But all that accomplished was to pinpoint their own position and signal the enemy to open fire.

In presighted killing zones, the hidden NVA poured machine gun and mortar fire onto the men on Hill 70. Many of them died before ever firing a return shot in that first firestorm of bullets.

Lt. Bobo shouted orders above the din of battle, positioning his troops to return fire and calling in air support. Murderous fire was coming from several machine gun emplacements that were ripping his men to pieces. When a mortar round knocked out a Marine rocket team, Lt. Bobo ran forward and took over their position. He directed the firing of round after round at the enemy strongpoints, with bullets shredding the ground around him.

He was still firing when a mortar shell landed nearby, showering him with shrapnel and blowing off the lower part of his right leg. First Stg. Raymond Rogers crawled up to his commander, telling him, "You've got to go to the rear, Lieutenant. You've got to stop that bleeding. I'll cover you."

"Crawl back, Lieutenant. Please!"

But Lt. Bobo refused. "Just tie my leg off. Now! And give me all the shotgun ammo you've got. Then help me to the ridge." The sergeant did what he was commanded and pulled a web belt tightly around his commanding officer's leg as a tourniquet.

Bobo had judged correctly what was to happen next. After the first devastating machine gun and mortar attack, the enemy was preparing for a mass ground assault to overrun Bobo's position and massacre his remaining troops. From where they were, they couldn't form an effective enough defensive perimeter.

"Pull back," Bobo shouted. "Everybody back," he ordered his men--all of them--back down the hill. As Sgt. Rogers helped gather the men, a machine-gun toting NVA soldier suddenly stood over him, wounding Rogers and several others.

"Boom!" blasted Bobo's shotgun, spinning the enemy soldier around and knocking him to the ground.

"Get back," he yelled. "Get back."

But Bobo stayed put.

Those were the last orders Bobo would give his men. Dragging their wounded to safety, the remaining members of his platoon repositioned themselves farther down the hill.

Bobo raised to a half-sitting position, jamming his wounded leg into the ground to try to stop the flow of blood. As the NVA charged down the hill, Bobo met the brunt of the attack. His men heard the boom, boom, boom of his shotgun as the enemy swarmed over the hill until finally his gun fell silent.

Lt. Bobo had faced the brunt of their charge and bought the rest of his men the needed time to pull back to a more defensible position, but at the cost of his own life.

When reinforcements arrived, the Marines fought their way back up the hill. There they found their commander. Fallen . . . but not to be forgotten.

For his sacrificial courage and extreme heroism, his family received our nation's highest honor--the Congressional Medal of Honor. Lt. Bobo was a man who was willing to "stay put," no matter what the cost.

We share this story because we need more men like Lt. Bobo, particularly today, when there is such a battle raging over the lives and hearts of many families.

The ultimate mark of a man is that he is willing to "stay put" when the odds aren't good, rather than turning and running from his wife and children when the times get tough, and the cost is high.

pp. 84-85

STUDY #3 - 1 Timothy 1:18-20

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

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