

“Preparing for Battle”

1 Timothy 1:18-20

11/7/20

WELCOME:

(1 minute)

INTRO:

(3 minutes)

- **Q:** Have you ever felt nervous going into an unknown situation?
- **Q:** Worse, have you ever felt nervous because you knew the situation was going to be difficult?
- **Illustration:** Winston Churchill – “Never Surrender!”
 - June 4, 1940
 - @ House of Commons
 - British & French fleeing Dunkirk; major loss & death
 - Nazis overtook France; coming for Britain next

“We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on 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. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing-grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender!” – Winston Churchill

RECAP & CONTEXT:

(4-5 minutes)

- **Where we started:** Timothy to correct & lead Ephesians
 - Paul instructs Timothy to lead Ephesians by example
 - Paul tells Timothy he must address False Teachers
 - Paul reminds Timothy instruction comes from love

- Paul points to God's grace in his personal testimony
- **Where we are going** (purpose for letter): Book Overview
 - False Teachers & Doctrinal importance
 - Instructions on Prayer
 - Roles/function of men and women
 - Leadership Qualifications
 - Spiritual Warfare
 - ****Pointing people to Jesus****
- **Where we are now:** Current Situation
 - Paul reminds Timothy of his calling as a spiritual leader (v.18)
 - Paul warns Timothy of the real, spiritual battles to come (v.18)
 - Paul exhorts Timothy to remain anchored to Christ (v.19)
 - Paul makes Timothy aware of casualties from spiritual warfare (v.19-20)
- **Sermon Title:** "Preparing for Battle" (*hence title*)

BIG IDEA:

(1 minute)

- **Big Idea:** Christians are called to fight the good fight!
 - There is a spiritual war waging, and as Christians, Jesus has called His followers to be his witnesses—soldiers who are aware of the war, live on mission, trust in Christ, and actively share the Gospel with others.

PRAY: (1 minute)

READ: (1 minute)

- Text: 1 Timothy 1:18-20

¹⁸ Timothy, my son, I am giving you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies previously made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the good fight, ¹⁹ having faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and have shipwrecked the faith. ²⁰ Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered to Satan, so that they may be taught not to blaspheme.

PREVIEW: (1 minute)

- Main Points:
 - 1 – Combat is inevitable in the Christian life
 - 2 – Casualties are a reality of spiritual warfare

PILLAR 1: Combat is inevitable in the Christian life (15 minutes)

(v.18)

- Paul refers to Timothy as “my son” (x2)
 - Paul reiterates an affection and love for Timothy (v.2)
 - Like a father to a son, Paul wants Timothy to head his words
 - B/c Paul cares about Timothy’s wellbeing
 - Is an example of Christ-like love
 - Paul invested his life into Timothy

- Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus as an extension of his authority & leadership
- Paul reiterates why these ***instructions*** are given
 - To explain how to lead correctly
 - To contrast correct way from wrong way
 - To emphasize purpose of Paul's writing & instructions
 - ****Stresses importance of instruction****
 - **ILLUSTRATION:** Parent → “Do this” vs. “Do **THIS!**”
 - Saying “do this,” vs. saying “LOOK AT ME! ...now, do this”
 - Emphasizes importance of details & weightiness of instructions
- To keep with the “prophecies previously made about you”
 - **CONTEXT:**
 - Timothy was called as a spiritual leader
 - The local church affirmed Timothy's calling
 - Some prophesied about his role & calling
 - **NOT** specific to Ephesus, but in general
 - **1 Timothy 4:14** (read below)

¹⁴ Don't neglect the gift that is in you; it was given to you through prophecy, with the laying on of hands by the council of elders.

- Serves as a reminder of...
 - **(1)** Who Timothy is in Christ
 - **(2)** How Timothy is to live as a Christian
 - **(3)** Why Timothy received salvation + calling
- Points to God's grace and purpose in Timothy's life

- Paul's instructions are fuel to "fight the good fight"
 - Prophecies + Paul's instructions = validation & encouragement
 - "So that by recalling them" = Reminder & morale boost
 - To remain rooted in Christ Jesus
 - To recall Christ's call on Timothy's life
 - To continue in ministry/call even when hard
 - "Fight the good fight" = Live on mission w/ purpose
 - Timothy was saved to glorify God
 - Timothy was called as a leader to lead others to Jesus
 - Reminder to keep Jesus at center of life
- "Good fight" contrasts a "bad fight"
 - Illuminates what Timothy is "fighting" for
 - Highlights what main focus of Timothy's life should be
 - **APPLICATION:** What are you fighting for in your life?
 - God's glory vs. Timothy's glory
 - God's way vs. Timothy's way
 - God's calling vs. Timothy's ambitions

(v.19)

- How to fight the Good fight
 - (1) "Have faith"
 - Faith = Belief + Action (obedience/surrender)
 - v.4,16 → God's plan operates by faith & produces a growing belief in His ways
 - ****Faith reveals an authentic heart-change****
 - (2) "Have a good Conscience"

- Conscience = what heart says is right/wrong
 - 1 Cor. 8 → Warns conscience can be seared based on heart condition
 - ****A GOOD conscience = heart focused on Jesus****
- The “Good Fight” is fought w/ Faith + Good Conscience
 - F & GC are result of focus on Christ
 - F & GC fuel desire to fight good fight (for God’s glory)
 - To acknowledge there is a fight to be fought
 - No practice squad with Christ → In the game always
 - Luke 11:23 (read below)

“Anyone who is not with me is against me, and anyone who does not gather with me scatters.” – Jesus

- **ILLUSTRATION:** “We Were Soldiers” speech before battle

“So, let us understand the situation. We are going into battle against a tough and determined enemy. I can't promise you that I will bring you all home alive. But this I swear before you and before Almighty God: That when we go into battle, I will be the first to set foot on the field, and I will be the last to stop off. And I will leave no one behind.” – LtCol Harold Moore, 7th Calvary

- Reality check and reminder for men going into battle
 - An example of leadership through warning & promise
 - **EXAMPLE:** Paul telling Timothy to buckle-up for Christian life & leadership
- **APPLICATION:**

- **Q:** Are you aware of the war waging & call God's given you?
- **Q:** Are you being intentional to "fight the good fight"?

PILLAR 2: Casualties are a reality of spiritual warfare

(12 minutes)

(v.19)

- Reality of Rejection
 - "Some have rejected these..." = Turned away from *the Gospel*
 - Deny Christianity outright
 - Listen but do **NOT** repent
 - Know but do **NOT** believe/have faith
 - Appear Christian but fade & never were
 - Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:19-23)

¹⁹ When anyone hears the word about the kingdom and doesn't understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the one sown along the path. ²⁰ And the one sown on rocky ground—this is one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy. ²¹ But he has no root and is short-lived. When distress or persecution comes because of the word, immediately he falls away. ²² Now the one sown among the thorns—this is one who hears the word, but the worries of this age and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²³ But the one sown on the good ground—this is one who hears and understands the word, who does produce fruit and yields: some a hundred, some sixty, some thirty times what was sown. — Jesus (to his disciples)

- Rejection of the Gospel results in "a shipwrecked faith"

(v.20)

- Hymenaeus & Alexander = 2 Leaders in Ephesus who fell away
 - H&A took focus off Jesus
 - H&A rejected the Gospel and Truth = *False Teachers*
 - Potentially those to be confronted (v.3-11)
- “Delivered to Satan” = Put out of the local church
 - No longer surrounded by God’s people
 - Lack healthy spiritual direction from Believers
 - Example of Church Discipline (Matthew 18:15-20)
 - **WHY:**
 - (1) Stop blaspheming (teach false doctrine)
 - (2) Produce change & repentance
- Why Paul uses such harsh language:
 - Emphasizes seriousness of teaching false doctrine
 - Black/White issue → The Gospel is **NOT** debatable
 - Teaching false doctrine impacts people & their souls
 - ****Remind Timothy of his calling (ministry) & importance of teaching the (full) Gospel****

“*Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life.*” — Dietrich Bonhoeffer

- **ILLUSTRATION:** Importance of an anchor
 - Despite evolution of ships throughout history, anchors are still used
 - Anchors ensure a boat does not drift or sway b/c of waves & storm
 - Paul points to Christ as the anchor for Christians

- “Fight the good fight” = Anchored to Jesus
 - (1) “Having Faith” = Trust in Jesus (v.14)
 - (2) “Good Conscience” = Focus on Jesus (v.5)
- Waves & storms will come—WE ARE IN A WAR!—but we are safe & won’t drift if anchored to Jesus
- **APPLICATION:**
 - **Q:** Are you anchored to Christ, so you don’t drift and become spiritually shipwrecked?
 - **A:** No one desires to be shipwrecked, but it happens!
 - **HOW:** Taking eyes off Christ
 - Result of “living in the flesh” (Romans 8:7-8)

READ: ⁷ *The mindset of the flesh is **hostile** to God because it does **not submit** to God’s law. Indeed, it is **unable** to do so. ⁸ *Those who are in the flesh, **cannot** please God.**

- ****Not necessarily evil, but lukewarm****
- **Q:** What have you set your mind on & chasing?
 - **EXAMPLES:** Career, salary, house, degrees, relationships, peace...?
- **Q:** Are you living for God and resting in Jesus, or “living in the flesh”?
 - Christ vs. World
 - God’s call vs. Your ambitions/goals

REITERATE MAIN POINTS:

(1 minute)

- 1 – Combat is inevitable in the Christian life
- 2 – Casualties are a reality of spiritual warfare

CLOSE:

(2 minutes)

- Paul warns Timothy that “ignorance is **NOT** bliss”
 - Paul is upfront about battles in Christian life
 - ****To be *Christian* = to be called to *leadership*****
 - Clear that Christians must be aware of spiritual warfare
 - **BUT** → Christians can/should have confidence to “fight the good fight”
 - **ENABLED** → When focused on & anchored to Jesus!
- Therefore...
 - **Q:** Are you aware of this spiritual war?
 - **Q:** Are you in the fight or avoiding the battles?
 - **Q:** Are you “fighting the good fight” as a saved, called, set-apart person?
- **-- Present Gospel --**

“If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him... How could I spend the best years of my life in living for the honors of this world, when thousands of souls are perishing every day? Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bells; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell.” — C.T. Studd, in the 1880s

PRAY:

(1 minute)