

(1 Timothy) Waging the Good Warfare

by Brian Brodersen

Waging the good warfare means to fight against evil and to stand for the truth, even in the face of opposition and adversity.

Duration: 48:38

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 13:2, 1 Timothy 1:18-19, 1 Timothy 6:12, Hebrews 12:1, Hebrews 12:4

Topics: "Faith And Obedience", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of staying committed to the fight of faith. He uses the analogy of a shipwrecked vessel to illustrate how people can lose their way and drift away from serving God. The speaker encourages the audience to stand on the word of God and any specific prophecies they have received. He also shares a personal story of someone who started off strong in their faith but allowed worldly desires to lead them astray. The sermon concludes with a reminder that the Christian life is a battle and leaders in particular will face intense opposition.

Transcript

Okay, we're picking up in verse 18 of 1st Timothy chapter 1. And just a quick reminder for some of you that maybe are just joining us for the first time in our study. Paul is writing to Timothy, a young man whom he considers his son in the faith, a young man that he led to the Lord and a young man that he discipled. And Timothy's really become his partner in ministry.

And so Paul is writing this epistle and these what we call pastoral epistles. We study Titus already. We'll study 2nd Timothy.

But he's writing these pastoral epistles to instruct these young men on how to lead the church. And Paul, of course, is getting up in age at this point. Paul is not sure about how much more time he has left in his ministry.

So he's wanting to encourage these young men and wanting to instill in them an understanding of how to conduct themselves in the church and how to lead and how to carry things on once he is passed off the scene. And so Paul had left Timothy in Ephesus and instructed him to charge some that they teach no other doctrine. And so here in verse 18, as we pick up, he said, This charge I commit to you, son, Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you that by them you may wage the good warfare.

And so Paul says this charge, this charge to to command others not to teach other doctrine, not to get caught up in fables and endless genealogies and disputes and questions and things that don't really serve to build people up. He said, Timothy, don't let that happen in the churches, and I'm committing this charge to you now when Paul says I'm committing this charge to you, he's really, in a sense, in sort of a military sense, he's commanding him as his commanding officer saying, Timothy, this is my command to you. I, as your commanding officer, I'm telling you that you're going to have to fight against these things.

Timothy is to wage, Paul says here, the good warfare, and he's to do so by the prophecies that were previously made concerning him. In case you guys haven't. Found this out yet, the Christian life is a battle and for anyone who's going to serve the Lord, anyone who's going to walk with Jesus Christ, you're going to find out sooner or later that you are in the midst of a heated conflict.

And especially for those who are in leadership, especially for those who are in the ministry, the battle is intense. And I think that we're living in a time when it's becoming extremely intense. I can just sense it.

I can feel it and and I can see it. I can see it all over the place in the churches. There is a battle that's raging.

And so Paul is saying to Timothy, Timothy, this is a good fight. And you're going to have to wage the good warfare. But again, he says, do so based on the prophecies that were given concerning you.

Now, evidently, prophecies were given concerning Timothy. Remember, we looked at how Timothy came to faith. He came to faith when Paul went into Derby and Lystra.

On his probably on his first missionary journey, but on his second missionary journey, Timothy was then sort of ready to step out and become a helper to Paul. And evidently, at some point, as as they were praying for him, perhaps as they were praying to send him out with Paul to assist Paul, there were prophecies that were given. There were prophetic words that were spoken concerning the call of God upon Timothy's life.

And so Paul is saying to Timothy, Timothy, in the heat of the battle, as you're contending, as you're fighting against those things that are going to come in and try to destroy the church, he says, Timothy, remember what God has said about you. Remember what God has told you, remember the word that God spoke regarding his mission for you. We find this in the book of Acts, we find that there were these moments where prophetic words would come concerning certain people in the 13th chapter of Acts.

We find that the church was gathered together there in Antioch and Barnabas was there. And Saul, who became Paul, was there and Simeon and Menean and these different men, they were gathered together. And it says, as they ministered to the Lord, the Holy Spirit spoke and said, separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

That was a prophetic utterance. And so Barnabas and Saul understood at that point that God was calling them to go out on these missionary endeavors. God was calling them.

He was separating them to go out and spread the gospel to plant churches all over Asia and then into Europe. Now, you can be absolutely certain that when they went out and did that and in the course of doing that encountered much opposition, which, of course, they did. We know from the history you can be certain that many times they would fall back on that prophetic word.

They would fall back on it and say, OK, Lord, you told us to do this. You were the one that said separate to me, Barnabas and Saul. Lord, this wasn't our idea.

We didn't come up with this plan, but Lord, this was your plan. Therefore, we take heart. We're encouraged.

We believe that you're with us. And, you know, that's what happens in ministry. In ministry, you come up against opposition.

You come up against difficulty. You you enter into conflict. It's just the nature of what you do.

You know, years ago, and I don't know if it's the same today, I think it might have changed to some extent. But years ago, when the church was somewhat different and the denominational churches were sort of the rule of the day and the country was relatively Christianized, the ministry was seen as a no risk kind of a job. And as a matter of fact, insurance companies love to insure ministers because they were the least likely people to incur any kind of, you know, harm in the course of their job and the least kind of person that your insurance company was going to have to, you know, put a whole lot of money into helping.

Well, that kind of gives you an idea of the pathetic state that the church was in during that period, because that's certainly not the picture you get of ministry from the New Testament. It's certainly not the picture you get of ministry from the history of of missions and the gospel going out. That's not the picture you get of ministry when you live in it as a reality.

It's a battle. It's a it's a full blown war. And I know myself personally, that there have been many times that I have had to fall back on those things that God has spoken to me prophetically.

And what I mean by spoken to me prophetically, those words that have come from the Lord that I've just been absolutely certain this is from God for me at this time. You ever have those kinds of experiences? I'm sure you have. And I certainly hope you have.

And and if you don't, I'm going to pray that you do, because we all need those times. We need those times when God just speaks right to us loud and clear. And there have been times in my life that I can remember like they were yesterday.

Some of them have happened somewhat recently. Some have happened years and years ago. And I look back and I remember what God said to me, and that helps me to persevere.

That helps me to go on in the midst of the conflict, in the midst of the opposition. I just think back on those prophecies and say, all right, I can do it. Lord, you spoke this to me.

This is what you told me. This is what I know. And I'm going to stand on that.

I'm going to rest in that. You know, many years ago, we had been doing ministry in Eastern Europe for quite a few years at this point, and I had traveled over many times, taken teams and planted churches and and done a lot. But Cheryl had never gone on any of those trips with me.

She had always stayed home and just, you know, taking care of the family and so forth. And there was a trip that was coming up. And I felt really, really strongly that Cheryl was supposed to go on this trip with us.

And I just had a sense from the Lord that this was a critical kind of a thing and that she absolutely needed to go on this trip. And so we decided that probably six months or so before we actually went on the trip and we were planning for it and talking about it and thinking about it and excited about it. I was so glad that my wife was finally going to get to go and actually experience the things that I had been experiencing for a while.

But just a couple of months or maybe six weeks or so before we actually went on the trip, I had one of these episodes, one of these attacks that I've had periodically over the years to do with this chronic viral condition that I have. And all of a sudden I found myself just completely flattened. I couldn't get out of bed.

I couldn't think straight. I was just in this horrible, horrible condition. And the last thing that I wanted to even dream of doing at that point was go on this particular trip.

And so I started just thinking, oh, I've got to get out of this somehow. There's no way I can do this. And it was really a struggle.

It was really a difficult time. And I remember saying to Cheryl at one point, just, honey, we're not going to be able to go on this trip. Now, she was so excited and she was so convinced God was calling us.

She just looked at me and said, listen, we're going on this trip. And if you don't go, I'm going without you. Like, oh, no, this isn't working.

And I'll never forget the one day I was lying in bed and I mean, I was just in a total state of fatigue and depression and I'm lying there. And then the Lord just in an instant just spoke to me and reminded me of something that he told me some years earlier. And it was that reminder of that word that he had given me that caused me just to bolt up in my bed and say, I'm going on this trip.

I don't care what happens. I'm not going to let my body dictate to me or my mind dictate to me what I'm going to do. I know what God has called me to do and I'm going to act upon it.

And sure enough, by the time it came time to go, which was a couple of weeks later, although I didn't feel great, God had given me enough grace to get up and go do it. And I've had those kinds of things over the year in in my Bible, I have some dates marked. And I remember clearly a time back in the end of 1991 where I was just crying out to God for certain things and just in the midst of of crying out to the Lord, seeking the Lord, he spoke prophetic words to me and I stand on those prophetic words today.

And I go back and remind the Lord all the time, Lord, remember, you told me this, you told me this on this particular day and I wrote it right here. This is what you said. And so, God, it doesn't look like that's happening, but I believe that it is.

So I'm going to trust you. I'm going to stand upon your word. That's what Paul was saying to Timothy.

Timothy, you're going to fight and it's going to be a battle. It's going to be intense because the devil wants to wreak havoc upon the church. The devil wants to come in and he wants to scatter the sheep.

The devil wants to infiltrate from the inside and bring in false doctrine and all of these kinds of things. And Timothy, it's going to be tough for you because you're going to have to stand up and fight against this. We've got to fight today, too.

There's always the threat of false teaching, there's always the attempt by the enemy to infiltrate and to bring in incorrect doctrine and to get people swept up in these things and you've got to fight against it. You know, people say, oh, no, you know. The tone of your ministry is so negative, brother.

You need to have a positive tone. You shouldn't say those people are wrong. I mean, come on, we're supposed to just love and agree and get along with everybody.

You know, that's not the ministry, according to the Bible, the ministry, according to the Bible, is it's a fight and you've got to speak up and sometimes you've got to say, no, that's wrong. That person's wrong. That doctrine is wrong.

And it can cause you to get into trouble with certain people, but nevertheless, you've got to do it anyway. A couple of weeks ago, I mentioned the name of a person from the pulpit that I consider to be a false prophet. And, oh, the phone started ringing.

Few people walked out. How dare he say something like that? Hey, it's the truth, that's a reality. And people say, well, you shouldn't name names, you know, that's that's going overboard.

Well, look at verse 20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I deliver to Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme. Paul didn't have that philosophy that you shouldn't name names. Paul didn't have the philosophy that you ought to be so ambiguous about it and so vague that nobody ever really figures out what you're talking about or warning them concerning.

You know, what would it be like if, let's just say, I lived out in the country somewhere and there, you know, they were doing road construction and there happened to be a particular road that used to take you out of town and there was a bridge that you had to cross. But the bridge was out and that was just a huge gorge. And you came over to visit.

You didn't know anything about that. And as you were leaving my house, what if I just said, hey, you know what? You know, there's this one place along, you know, as you're going out, you might just be careful. There's this one place.

It's kind of dangerous. You know, you just kind of probably ought to watch it. And, you know, you I don't know, you just and there you go off down the road and right down the gorge.

But if I said, hey, don't go down this road right here, because at the end of this road, the bridge is out and the lights are out. And if you go down this road, you're going to kill yourself. Well, that would be the proper way to warn a person, wouldn't it? But just to give some sort of a, oh, hey, you know, I think that road is a little bit trouble on that road.

You know, you don't want to go down there. I mean, what is a little bit of trouble me could mean it's a little bit bumpy or. No, we're talking about it could mean your life if you go down there.

And so when a person insists that, oh, you should never name names, you shouldn't, you are basically saying is, you know, you should be vague and ambiguous and that doesn't help anybody. But again, I go back to the point here. We're in a battle.

It's a warfare. But notice what Paul refers to it as here, he refers to it as not a good warfare, but the good warfare that you may wage the good warfare. You know, there have been some good warfares over the

course of human history.

There's a big debate among certain people as to whether there's any such thing as what you would call a just war. There are those who say that no war is justifiable under any circumstances ever at any time. I beg to differ, the Second World War.

And the involvement of the United States in the Second World War was it was a just war, it was a noble cause, it was the right thing to do to stop the insanity of Adolf Hitler and what he was attempting to do, battling communism that was justifiable, it was good, it was right. To battle tyranny and oppression, the war against terrorism, it's the right thing to do. Because there is an ideology, a religious ideology that wants to bring a tyranny upon humanity that exceeds the tyranny of communism.

It's the right thing to do. These are good warfares in that sense. But no warfare in the human realm is the good warfare, the good warfare is the spiritual battle.

That's the good battle, that's that's the ultimate good fight. It's the good warfare for three reasons. Number one, it's a warfare against evil.

Evil is evil, evil is wicked. Evil is destructive, and so to fight against it is definitely the right thing to do. And that's what happens as we are brought into the Christian church and as we are made disciples of Jesus Christ, we are also enlisted in to his army.

And we're fighting the good fight, we're waging the good warfare, we're waging the war against evil manifested in the world and in the flesh and in the devil. We're fighting against those things, it's a good warfare because it is for the good of man. Now, some of these other conflicts I just mentioned, of course, they were good, they were for the good of men as well, they were to liberate people from tyranny, from suffering, from murderous.

Dictators and so forth, and if they were good, how much better is this spiritual warfare that we're in, because we are fighting for the ultimate good of man, not just the temporal good, not just for his immediate physical deliverance from oppression, but we are fighting for man's eternal deliverance. We're fighting for man's good in the eternal sense. It's worth the fight.

It's the good warfare because it's for the glory of God. We're fighting for the glory of God. My friend Dave Sylvester is pastoring in northern England, in the city of York, and.

He's gone through some rough times recently, and as is the case when you're going through hard times, you get discouraged and times you kind of begin to question, why am I doing this? And sometimes we have a tendency to sort of forget that there is this militaristic aspect to the Christian life, you know, it would be better to be on perpetual leave in our minds, you know, I want to go home, I want to go back to civilian life. I want to you know, I want to get out of these fatigues and out of this trench and I want to get as far away from this enemy as I possibly can. I want to just go back home and relax and go out in the backyard and jump in the hammock and fire up the barbecue and all of that sort of thing.

And sometimes you think that way. And here's Dave, he's been in Britain now for 10 years and but he lived in Southern California, he grew up in the southwest here, Arizona and Southern California, and he knows about all the pleasures of life and all the kinds of, you know, wonderful things that are at our disposal here. And so as he's going through this whole huge conflict and people are coming against him and the enemies basically trying to destroy the work that he's been doing and all of this, you know, there's a certain point

where I understand what he's feeling.

He just sort of throws his hands up and says, what am I doing this for? Why am I here? Why don't I just pack it in, head back to California, go to Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, I can lead worship there and live happily ever after. And he was telling me that as all of this was going through his mind, he was sensing the Lord was saying to him, fight, fight, fight, keep fighting. And he's thinking, why, why bother to keep fighting at this point? And then all of a sudden this came to his mind because it's a good fight.

And he told me that I thought, you know, you're right, it's a good fight. In other words, it's a fight that's worth fighting. It's worth it.

And so we've got to keep doing it because it's worth it, because in the end, we're going to see. The glory of God. And, you know, I like to think about this, too, I like to think about the fact that we are.

We are just one generation. In a long, long history of previous generations of men and women who fought the good fight, who finished the course, who kept the faith. And then I love to think of being connected to those people historically, I love to think of that.

That encourages me sometimes. I just think, man, I'm connected to Paul. Or I'm connected to Peter or I'm connected back to David.

I'm connected to Moses, I'm connected to Abraham or, you know, going back the other way, I'm connected to these different great men in the history of the church. Cheryl and I just spent a day or a couple of days in Oxford, England, when we were visiting and right in the center of the city, there's a monument there to. Two men.

Their names are Latimer and Ridley. And Latimer and Ridley, they were men that came out of the existing church and embraced biblical Christianity back in the time of the Reformation. They were very prominent men within the existing church, but they came out and they embraced biblical New Testament Christianity.

And ultimately, they paid the price of their lives. And right there in the center of town, it stands this monument that. Gives just a little history of what occurred on that day back in the late 1500s when they were burned at the stake.

And as they were being consumed by the flames, Latimer cried out and he said, be of good cheer, Master Ridley. For this day. We are lighting such a candle in England that I trust it will never be put out.

You think, man, those are the words, the very last words of these guys who fought the good fight, they gave their lives, they were burned at the stake. And to think about that, I was thinking about William Tyndale and I was thinking about here's a man who. He labors ceaselessly.

To get the scriptures in to the language of the common people and into the hands of the common people, and he's hunted down. He's ruthlessly hunted down by the authorities. And they finally catch up with him and they murder him, and then they publicly burned him.

All because he. Sought to give the people the Bible in the common language, the English language, and when I think about guys like that, I think, Lord, I am so. Blessed to be connected to those men.

To be part of what they were part of, to be this generation of your servants, it's a great thing, it's a glorious thing, it's a good fight, it's a fight that is worth fighting. And so, Paul, he says to Timothy. He says, having

faith.

And a good conscience, which some having rejected concerning the faith, have suffered shipwreck. So now Paul here gives us some insight into how we are to fight this battle. Now, there are several times in Paul's letters where he refers to the Christian life and the Christian ministry as a battle, as a warfare, and in each of those places, he also refers to the spiritual weaponry that God has given to us.

And so here, as he states, having faith and a good conscience, this obviously is not exhaustive in regard to the weapons that God has given us. If we turn over to Ephesians, chapter six, we'll find a whole list there of things that God has provided for us, referred to by Paul as the armor of God. If we turn to Second Corinthians, chapter 10.

We'll find there Paul says, although we we walk in the flesh, we live in the flesh, we're still. In our flesh and blood bodies, he said, we do not war after the flesh for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal or merely human, but they're mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down imaginations and so forth. And so there he goes on and he gives another sort of a of a listing or a summary of the spiritual weapons.

And here again, Paul is just sort of in summary form describing the weapons that we have. But. First of all, he says faith.

We wage this warfare by faith, we believe God, like I was saying earlier, we take him at his word, we stand upon his word, we obey his word, we move forward because he says to move forward. We advance at his call. And by faith, we wage this good warfare as we trust in him, we depend on him, we believe him, we believe what he said about the bigger picture of what's going on on planet Earth and what it's ultimately going to lead to.

We believe what he said about the smaller picture of our lives individually and the plan and the purpose that he has for each one of us individually. We believe what he what he says in regard to the local situation with our church, with our fellowship. I believe that God wants to work through this fellowship, we believe that God wants to do great things, and by faith, we step out and we trust him to do those things.

And so faith is the one thing. But secondly, he says a good conscience, a good conscience, a pure conscience, a clean conscience. What he's really referring to here is.

A purity within. In contrast to a defiled conscience, an impure conscience, a guilty conscience, a conscience that's affected by sin. And basically what Paul is saying to us simply is that our weapons are trusting God, believing God and living holy lives, living the kind of lives that God wants us to be living.

A holy life goes a long ways in. Spreading the gospel, impacting the world for Christ, it's a holy life that impacts people, not a compromised life. There was a man.

In Scotland, many years ago, his name was Robert Murray McShane. And he was just a very gifted man, and the spirit of God was powerfully upon him, God used him in an extraordinary way. He only lived to be 29 years old, but he had a tremendous impact in the brief period of time that he spent in the ministry.

But one thing he said, one of his quotes that's come down to us today is that a holy minister is an awesome thing in the hand of God. And then he said, the best thing I could possibly do for my congregation is to be holy, is to be godly. And how right he is, a holy person, a godly person, a person who

is living truly, sincerely, honestly for the Lord, that's the person that God is going to be able to work through.

In a powerful way, in extraordinary ways, God is not going to be able to work through the compromise life because all of those compromises and the sin that's been let in, all of that is going to block and hinder what God wants to do. So we have got to make sure that we have what Paul was referring to here. We've got to have faith and a good conscience.

I've got to be honest before the Lord. I've got to be pure before the Lord. I've got to be living a holy life.

Now, when I say living a holy life, I don't know what that looks like in your way of thinking, you know, because there have been a variety of different sort of models or interpretations of what it means to be holy. But I'm not talking about something that you could necessarily visualize purely externally. You know, there are some churches that they equate holiness with the way you do your hair or whether or not as a woman you wear makeup or you don't wear makeup or what kind of clothing you wear as a as a person.

And I'm not talking about anything remotely like that. But when we're talking about holiness, we're talking about a life that's basically just sold out to Jesus, a life that's not dabbling in sin, a life that's not torn between. God's kingdom and the kingdom of man, we're talking about a person who's not straddling the fence, you know, trying to live in both worlds, trying to please man and himself, and at the same time somehow trying to please God.

We're not talking about that kind of thing. We're talking about a person who's got both feet firmly planted in God's side of the fence. I'm in the kingdom and I'm living for the Lord and I'm looking for him to work in my life and anything that's interfering with that, anything that's going to hinder that, anything that in any way, shape or form is going to hold me back.

I don't even want to negotiate over it, I just want to get rid of it. The person that we're talking about is the person who's casting aside every weight and the sin that so easily besets us and is committed to running with endurance the race that is set before him. See, it's not the person who's saying, now, how much can I do this and still have God's blessing on my life over here? No, no, no, that's not it.

The person I'm talking about doesn't even think in those terms. I don't want to do those things. As Peter said, we spent enough of our past lifetime doing the will of the Gentiles.

And I spent so much time wasting my life living for myself and living for sin. The last thing I want to do now with the rest of my life is figure out how I can still do that to some degree and get away with it. No way.

Forget that. Get that as far away as possible. I want to know, Lord, how can I know you better? How can I love you in a greater way? How can I serve you? More faithfully.

Faithfully. That's what we're talking about, and that's what Paul's saying to Timothy. He says, this is the way you're going to wage a good warfare.

You're going to wage a good warfare. Remember what God said. Remember what he's called you to.

And let me just say this. Maybe you don't have a specific prophecy that you can look back on and say, well, God told me this, and so I'm going to just persevere based upon that. I guarantee that there will come a time in your life when those things will come.

But you have God's word written out clearly. That he loves you, that he saved you with a plan, that you are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, that he before ordained that you should walk in. Those are prophetic words right there.

You can stand on those. You can depend on those. You can rely on that.

That's what God has said to you. That's what God has said to every one of us. So we can stand on the fact that just in the plain statements of scripture, God has given us all promises upon which we stand and which enable us to fight on and to persevere and to be victorious because there is the possibility of shipwreck.

It's a sad and tragic thing that not everyone who sets out in their relationship with the Lord. Continues with him, it's sad, but it's true. And having been around now for a while.

I've seen so many people. Come and go. People that I never would have dreamed would go.

Yet they've gone. They're no longer walking with the Lord. And.

At one time, they were not only in church, at one time they were in ministry, they held positions, they were praying with people, they were serving the body of Christ. In some cases, they were teaching the word. In some cases, they were leading congregations or they were out evangelizing, leading people to Christ.

My heart breaks when I think of one of my dearest friends from the past. A young Hawaiian kid who came to Christ. And.

The testimony of his life was so powerful and it was some some young guys that I knew from growing up in the surf community that had led this guy to the Lord. And at a point in time, the guys that led him to the Lord backslid and I remember standing right down there one night talking to him and he's telling me, man, these guys have backslidden and it was because of them that I put my faith in Jesus and I'm going to go tell him, look, you told me this was real and that's why I believe it. And now you're falling away.

And he was so full of zeal and passion to go and win these guys back to Christ. Well, as time went on, he was serving the Lord. God was blessing great things, brought a wonderful girl into his life.

They got married and he had a business in Hawaii and the Lord was blessing and through his. Surf shop, people were coming to the Lord and just great ministry was happening all over the island. But, you know, at some point something happened.

And he began to drift away a little bit and he began to get into things and pretty soon you know, he was taking the money that he was making from the shop and he was buying things for himself and he was coming a big becoming a big celebrity. And because he had a real good personality and all of this sort of thing, pretty soon they were asking him to come on TV and to do this little character thing that he did. And, you know, tragically, the last thing I heard is just he's just completely off the deep end.

Just denying Christ. And I look back and I think I never would have dreamed, I never would have imagined that he would have gone. In that direction, I never would have looked at him back in those days and thought, you know, I sense that he's going to be shipwrecked at some point, but he has been shipwrecked.

And that's just one example. I could think of a dozen people at least with similar stories. Because like I'm saying, it's a battle.

It's a fight and we've got to fight it to the finish and we've got to fight with faith and a good conscience so that we do not become shipwrecked. Paul, he had men in his own day that were shipwrecked. And he mentioned them here.

We've already mentioned them earlier, but in the context, he said concerning the faith, they have suffered shipwreck of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. The indication, though, is that at one time these guys were in the faith. They were there with Paul, probably ministering with him to some degree.

In Second Timothy, we learn about a little bit more about Hymenaeus. He was denying that there was a resurrection. Paul said Hymenaeus denying the resurrection and overthrowing the faith of some.

So here's the guy who at one time is leading people to Christ, ministering to people, discipling people. Now, Paul says he's overthrowing the faith of some. There's the danger of shipwreck and.

There are people today, far too many people that are. Becoming shipwrecked. Not holding on to the faith.

Not maintaining that good conscience. Giving up the fight. Failing to realize it's a good fight, it's the great fight, it's the ultimate, it's the best fight because it's God's fight and it's the fight that has eternal consequences.

I'd like to read something to you regarding shipwreck. Some have made shipwreck. Words sound differently to different men.

Language is a word picture and we must see the facts before we understand the word. Paul chooses a metaphor applied to character, which is so terrible when applied to disasters at sea. Many a beautiful vessel has arrested the gaze of admiring spectators as she spread her sails to the favoring breeze and breasted the waters like a thing of life.

But on another shore, her shivered timbers and her shattered prow have been washed up as the wreckage of a once gallant ship, her half defaced name, the only testimony to her fate. So Paul had seen men wrecked on the breakers of self-indulgence, vice and folly. That is quite picturesque, isn't it? A beautiful sailing vessel.

You look at it, you think, oh, magnificent, that's glorious, look at that. And then you find all that's left of it, just some timbers. Barely make out the name, the ship is wrecked.

And so it is with lives. You look at them and at one stage they were like a beautiful sailing vessel. The wind of the Holy Spirit was in their sails and all they were serving God.

God had great plans. You look at them today and they're shipwrecked. What a tragic thing.

It doesn't need to happen to anyone. But unfortunately, it does happen to people because they quit fighting. They somehow lose perspective, they no longer see that this is the good fight, this is the good warfare, this is the most important thing in life and they end up like these men that Paul refers to.

And so for us tonight as we close, God's he's given us his word for some of us, he's given us his word generally. And it's right there on the right there in black and white. We can read it.

He loves us. He saved us. He's got a plan for us.

And we need to stand on that and move ahead based on that. For others, he spoke in specific words of faith, of prophecy to you. Stand on that.

Believe that. Trust in that. Fight through the present difficulty.

Fight for your marriage. Stand on the word of God. So many Christians are just giving up.

You're supposed to fight. God's given his word, he's told us what to do. We stand on that word.

Fight for your family. Fight for your own character, your own godliness. We've got to fight for it.

Build yourself up in the faith. Keep doing what you're doing. Stay in the word.

Stay in fellowship. Pray. You know, nobody shipwrecks immediately.

What you see is that things happen over time. I was at a conference today and Pancho Juarez. We were at his church, actually, and he was teaching and he was talking about this.

And you've heard it before. And I've said it before and many others have. But the reality is he was talking about, you know, ministers falling into sin and so forth.

And what he said is so true. He said, you know, no one just wakes up one morning, says, you know, I'm going to go embezzle money from the church today. No one wakes up in the morning, says, you know, I'm going to go find a girl that I can have an affair with today so I can ruin my life in ministry.

No one wakes up just out of the clear blue and decides I'm going to go out and just shipwreck today. It doesn't happen that way. It happens slowly, sometimes imperceptibly.

Just little compromises here and there, one after another, refusing to respond to the Holy Spirit, pushing back that conviction, plugging your ears. No, no, no, Lord, I don't want to hear that. No, I want to go do this over here that and then what happens as time goes on, then that moment comes when now you're ready for the big temptation to be thrown right in front of you.

You're ready because now you're going to take the bait. But you see, we need to keep ourselves from ever even getting to the point where the bait has any attraction to us whatsoever. And that's what we do.

Faith and a good conscience. God help us. He will help us.

And let's remember looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, the cloud of witnesses, all the saints that have gone before us, those that have fought the fight. They've done the ultimate, they've given their lives. You remember there in Hebrews chapter 12, the author says, for you, not you have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

Some have done that. We haven't been called upon to do that yet, but we want to do everything less than that, of course.

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