

“Does the Truth Matter Anymore?”  
Dr. John MacArthur

-Part One-

**Important Quotes & Notes**

“Everywhere there is apathy. Nobody cares whether that which is preached is true or false. A sermon is a sermon whatever the subject; only the shorter it is the better.”

*Charles Spurgeon*

Pragmatism: The idea or notion that what determines the worth of something is whether or not it produces results.

- Relativistic
- Roots in Darwinism & Secularism
- William James, John Dewey, George Santyana

Pragmatism in Preaching/Church Ministry

- Values comfortable, entertained, congregations
- Bad doctrine is tolerable. Long sermons are not tolerable.
- Church growth methods counseling technique, etc. replaces Biblical precepts

“7 And you shall speak my words to them, *whether they hear or refuse to hear*, for they are a rebellious house.”  
But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Be not rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you?

- Preach God’s Word, even if it is refused. Pragmatism demands stop preaching. God commands “speak my words” regardless. “Audience” or “congregation” is not to govern ministry.

“These proposals that we should preach less, and do various other things more, are of course not new at all. People seem to think that all of this is quite new and that it is the hallmark of BEING CURRENT AND MODERN to decry or to depreciate preaching & to put your emphasis on these other things. The simple answer to that is that there is nothing new about it. The actual form may be new, but the principle is certainly not a new one at all; indeed it has been the particular emphasis of the present century?”

~Martyn Lloyd-Jones

***Is Pragmatism a Serious Threat?***

Modernism: A Lesson from History

Modernism:

- Initially seemed harmless
- Objectives
  - Unity in the church
  - Less conflict
  - Add more peace & more love to the church
- Embraced “higher criticism” (denies the divinity of Scripture)
- Laced with Liberal Theology (denies supernatural)
- Pnmar~ Concern Interdenom5naLonal Unty (a k a “ecumenism”)

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:16

- Fear? Church seen as irrelevant
- Downplay of doctrine
- As a theology, stressed “brotherhood” and “experience”

### **Luther’s Example**

- “My conscience is captive to the word of God ... Here I stand...”

***Modernism:  
Peace & Love  
over Truth***

### **John Murray’s definition of a modernist:**

One concerned with living & loving” over “teaching & learning?”

Question: *What* was the effect of “harmless” modernism in Europe?

*Will the church kern from her mistakes? Or are we destined to repeat them?*

### **Danger: Inside the church.**

SGBC’s Goal: Not crowds; true converts & disciples.

Statistics: The Results of Pragmatism in the Church

- What is the most important goal of a true convert?

***“...PREACH THE WORD...”***

## **-Part Two-**

### **Important Quotes & Notes**

Worldliness is “allowing one’s appetites, ambitions, or conduct to be fashioned according to earthly values.”  
John MacArthur

“The reason men worship God in a casual way is because they do not see God, in His glory. If a man had ever had Isaiah’s vision of the Holiness of God, he would be changed in an instant. But until men have seen God as He truly is (as ‘the High and Lofty One’) they will be forever guilty of the very same rebuke God gave to the wicked in Psalm 50:21; ‘you thought I was just like you.’”  
Jeremiah Burroughs

“Our Lord attracted sinners because He was different. They drew near to Him because they felt that there was something different about Him. And the world should see us to be different. This idea that you are going to win people to the Christian faith by showing them that after all you are remarkable like them, is theologically and psychologically a profound blunder.”  
Martin Lloyd Jones

“God is trying to tell us that our current popular version of Christianity – comfortable, humorous, superficial, entertaining, worldly-wise is exposed (by the lack of power to transform lives) for the irreverent presentation of the Gospel of Christ that it really is. A preacher is commissioned to give people not what they want but what they need. No man has any business walking into the pulpit to entertain. He is there (instead) to present Calvary in all its fullness of hope and glory”.

Alan Redpath

#1) Preach the Word and leave nothing out

#2) Pray to God for Him to bless it

#3) Repeat steps 1 – 2

“Doth that man love His Lord who would be willing to see Jesus wearing a crown of thorns, while for himself he craves a “crown of flowers? Shall Jesus ascend to His throne by the cross, and do we expect to be carried there on the shoulders of applauding crowds? Be not so vain in your imagination. Count you the cost, and if you are not willing to bear Christ’s cross, go away to your farm and to your merchandise, and make the most of them...only let me whisper this in your ear, ‘What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?’”

“Biblical truth is like the pinnacle of a steep, slippery mountain. One step away and you find yourself on the downgrade. Once a church or individual Christian gets on the downgrade, momentum takes over and the downslide gets worse.”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Worldliness and false doctrine go hand-in-hand (*it begins with worldliness*) MacArthur

### **10 Steps to Becoming a Pragmatic Church:**

- 1) Preach the gospel in such a way that the emphasis is NOT on counting the cost (where Jesus placed it)...but rather on “how easy” it is to believe.
- 2) Before someone’s salvation, emphasize something they must “do”, in order to be saved (like “coming forward” at an “alter call”, or “praying a sinners prayer”, or making the “decision for Christ”) vs. placing the emphasis on their sin and the need for approaching a loving, but Holy God for DIVINE MERCY.
- 3) Teach half-truths as if they were the WHOLE truths... (which makes them untruths).
- 4) Misinterpret Scripture by teaching that grace REPLACES holiness...instead of PRODUCES holiness.
- 5) Teach (or at least imply to the congregation) that grace and law, love and truth, and faith and works are OPPOSITE one another...and teach (or imply) that (to

the Christian) the law is no longer relevant or “necessary”...and that strict obedience to the commands of God is “legalism” or “for more ‘serious’ disciples”.

- 6) Use fleshly worldly things (like lavish cafes, and book stores, and dramas, and big screen TV’s and excessive humour and entertainment to “attract” unbelievers so that you can “evangelize” them BEFORE they profess Christ...and then teach them that carnal, worldly lifestyles are acceptable AFTER they profess Christ.
- 7) Downplay, avoid or OUTRIGHT IGNORE the biblical teachings that create humility in man and that EXALT God, like: ‘The Sovereignty of God, holiness, election, the TOTAL depravity of man, etc.’
- 8) Teach the “means of grace” (prayer, bible study, fellowship, communion, etc.) as if they’re not necessary. Make them “optional” and only when we feel led.” And imply that any real work or effort, or time put into those areas is “legalism.”
- 9) Be “seeker friendly” - that means minimize, dilute, or add humour to ANY preaching that might be perceived as “offensive” or “judgmental.” Don’t go “overboard” on preaching about holiness, fear, sin or worldliness, and ONLY discuss HELL whenever NECESSARY. And when you do preach on those subjects, mix in a good amount of humour and light stories...and avoid (at all costs) sending people away feeling “condemned” or “guilty.”
- 10) Place ease of understanding, practical application and being “relatable” ABOVE biblical accuracy...because people (these days) don’t like to be “preached at.”

**FROM I & II TIMOTHY:**

	<b><u>Today’s mindset</u></b>	<b><u>Truth from the Word</u></b>
Point #1)	Don’t judge anyone	1 Cor. 5:12-13
	It is unloving to judge anyone’s doctrine	1 Timothy 1:3

Point #2)	Unloving?	1 Timothy 1:5
Point #3)	Unity over doctrine	Titus 1:7a, 9
	Don't name individuals	1 Tim. 1:18-20
Point #4)	Gently suggest;	
	don't directly command	1 Tim. 4:6, 11
Point #5)	Minimize preaching and	
	teaching?	1 Tim. 4:13

**Directions to Timothy (and to the Church):**

1 Timothy 5:24 – 6:6

1 Timothy 6:12

1 Timothy 6:13-16

1 Timothy 6:20-21

II Timothy 1:12-14

II Timothy 2:3-7

II Timothy 3:16-17

II Timothy 4:1-2

**Paul's instruction to Timothy:**

1. To be faithful in his preaching of biblical truth; no matter what the cost and no matter what the response.

2. To be bold in exposing and refuting error.
3. To be an example of godliness to the flock.
4. To be diligent and work hard in the ministry.
5. To be willing to suffer hardship and persecution in his service for the Lord.

**Jeremiah 23:16-32**

“Beware of flatterers. Turn away from all those who have honey on their tongues, because of the poison that is under it. If we were wise we would draw closest to those who rebuke and censure us, and we would always keep at arms length those who praise us...because those who rebuke us to our face cannot possibly be trying to falsely gain our affections, so they can take advantage of us.” C. H. Spurgeon

## -Part 3-

### Important Quotes and Notes

“We have come to a place in time where we measure the correctness of our plans simply by their seeming to contribute to our favorite aim. We estimate the soundness of our doctrine, not from its tendency to exalt and glorify God...but entirely by the apparent facility with which it enables us to get sinners to turn from their ways.”

~Horatius Bonar

### The “seeker-friendly” church

The goal is no longer clear plain biblical exposition of all of Holy Scripture; the new goal of the modern church is to provide non-Christians with an agreeable, inoffensive environment – give them freedom, tolerance and anonymity – always be positive and benevolent. If you must have a sermon keep it brief and amusing – don’t be preachy or authoritative – **above all** keep everybody interested and entertained – and the churches following this pattern, we are being told, will see numerical growth.

Those that ignore it are doomed to decline.

~John MacArthur

Emphasis – non-churched (*unbelievers*)

De-emphasis – church (*believers*)

New rules:

- ⊕ be clever
- ⊕ informal
- ⊕ positive
- ⊕ brief
- ⊕ friendly
- ⊕ never loosen neck tie (*if you are silly enough to wear one*)
- ⊕ never let them see you sweat
- ⊕ never, never use the ‘H’ word

You cannot have both (for they are competing goals):

1) Teaching ALL of Scripture (including many offensive passages and doctrines)

and

2) NEVER offend anyone

### **The customer is sovereign**

- Pastors are “appealing” to the felt-needs of people (like loneliness, fear of failure, co-dependence, poor self-image, depression, anger, resentment – *inward focused inadequacy*).
- They are man-pleasers.
- They are stroking sinful behaviors that should be rebuked.

The root of all “syndromes” is **human depravity**.

*The Purpose Driven Church* – “Figure out what mood you want your service to project and then create it (p. 264); we start positive and end positive (p. 271); we use humor in our services...it is not a sin to help people feel good (p. 272); cultivate an informal, relaxed, and friendly atmosphere (p.272); we made a strategic decision to stop singing hymns in our seeker services (p. 285); we have attracted thousands more because of our music (p. 285); [our church] now has a complete pop/rock orchestra (p. 290); use more performed music than congregational singing...(p. 291; (emphasis on entertainment); the ground we have in common with unbelievers is not the Bible, but our common needs, hurts, and interests as human beings. You cannot start with a text...(p. 295); make your members feel special...they need to feel special (p. 320, 323). We have put a lot of time and thought into what non-churched people want from a Sunday morning service. And we have concluded that they basically want four things: (1) anonymity; (2) truth presented at an introductory level; (3) time to ‘make a decision’; (4) excellence in programming, creativity, humor, contemporary [worship], relevancy, etc. How tragic it is when we become more concerned with being “right” than being loving. I would rather have the wrong facts and a right attitude, than right facts and a wrong attitude.”

Ezekiel 2:3-8

### **Turning church-growth theory upside down**

Acts 17:5

The world is turning the church upside down.

- God is Sovereign (not “un-churched” Harry)
- The Bible (not a marketing plan) is supposed to be the sole blue-print and final authority for all church ministry.

Ministry should meet peoples’ real needs NOT coddle their selfish desires.

The Lord of the Church is Christ NOT the carnal whims of the majority opinion.

Acts 5:1-14 – Ananias & Sapphira

- Sin was dealt with swiftly and severely (NOT tolerated and accepted)
- Confronting sin - not a judgmental attitude but in love Peter eradicated sin

### **God’s judgment**

Acts 5:5

- consequences for sin were severe and immediate
- effect: great fear on all who heard
- Ananias was an example

**GOD IS SERIOUS ABOUT THE PURITY OF THE CHURCH**

God was saying in essence:

- ◆ I am not interested in “playing church”
- ◆ I will not trifle with sinners
- ◆ I am not interested in “user-friendliness”
- ◆ I desire righteousness, truth and sincere hearts and the plain clear preaching of My Word (all of it).

**HE IS DEADLY SERIOUS!**

- ◆ God was purifying His church.
- ◆ God wanted His people to take sin seriously.
- ◆ He wanted to discourage shallow commitment.
- ◆ He wanted the people to have a healthy fear of Him.

Church is to meet in order to worship God corporately – that demands the confrontation of sin.

The issue isn't what professing Christians and unbelievers think about such severity...the issue is: **What does God think about such iniquity?**

### **Can the church avoid God's judgment?**

1 Cor. 11:31

When God's Word is preached plainly and boldly and sin is confronted loudly and clearly it lets the unbeliever know that the church is made up of a holy people. And that it is not for unrepentant sinners but for the redeemed ones who love righteousness.

How does the church purify herself?

Matt. 18:15-17 –

- ◆ Biblical Christianity refers to that process as church discipline
- ◆ “seeker-friendly church” refers to it as judgmental and intolerant.

His goal for His church is not to become a place where anyone and everyone feels the warm fuzzies when they step through the doors and where unrepentant sinners can thrive and flourish.

His design is to purify the church. When a faithful minister yields to God's desires to purify the church, he ends up blessing and protecting his people from God's judgment.

1 Cor. 11:32; Matt. 18:18-20

When believers are obedient to Christ's command to confront sin amongst believers:

- ◆ repentant believers are restored (their sin is loosed from them)
- ◆ hard-hearted sinners are exposed and ousted from fellowship (their sin is bound to them).
- ◆

This is God's way of purging the church and removing unrepentant sinners so that the church can move forward in power and purity and strength.

The “seeker-friendly” church weakens this process and sin spreads like yeast.

### **Knowing the terror of the Lord – we persuade men**

Acts 5:11

- unbelievers did not even dare associate with them.
- God used fear to keep them away

James 4:9-10; Isaiah 66:2

- ◆ Salvation does not come from wanting to join the fun and end emotional pain.
- ◆ Salvation comes when the heart cries out for deliverance from sin.

Matt. 5:3; Heb. 10:26-31; 1 Peter 4:17; II Cor. 5:11

### **Where is user-friendliness taking the church?**

Rev. 20:10; Luke 16:23-24; Mark 9:47-48; Rev. 14:11

The most prolific teacher on hell was the Lord Jesus Christ

Preaching that downplays God’s wrath does not advance evangelism; it undermines it. The gospel is subverted and undermined.

### **STATISTICS:**

- ◆ Nearly half – 46% (of seminary students polled) felt preaching about hell to unbelievers is in ‘poor taste’.
- ◆ 3 out of every 10 self-professed ‘born again’ people surveyed believe ‘good’ people will go to heaven when they die even if they’ve never trusted Christ.
- ◆ 1 in every 10 evangelicals say they believe the concept of sin is outmoded.

God's blessing will be on any fellowship who honor His Word and His ways without compromise. Because that is what He ordained the church to be like. He will add to the church as He promised.

### **What's the solution?**

PREACH THE WORD
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Say what you mean and mean what you say!

Preach the whole council of God and leave nothing out – that includes:

- ◆ law not just grace
- ◆ repentance and works not just faith
- ◆ (so called) harsh or difficult topics like election, sovereignty, hell and damnation

“Ah Sirs! There may have been a time when Christians were too precise, but it has not been in my day. There may have been such a dreadful thing as Puritanic rigidity; but I have never seen it. We are quite free from that evil now; if it ever existed. We have gone from liberty to libertinism. We have passed beyond the dubious into the dangerous and none can prophesy where we shall stop. Where is the holiness of the church of God today? Now she is dim as smoking flax, and rather the object of ridicule rather than reverence. May not the measure of the influence of a Church be estimated by its holiness? If the great host of professing Christians were, in domestic life and in business life, sanctified by the Spirit, the Church would become a great power in the world. God's saints may well mourn with Jerusalem when they see spirituality and holiness at so low an ebb as it is today! Others may regard this as a matter of non-consequence; but we view it as nothing less than the breaking forth of a leprosy”.

~Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Romans 13:11-12

## - Part 4 -

### Important Quotes and Notes

“Wherever the true message of the cross is abolished; the anger of hypocrites and heretics ceases...and all things are in peace. This is a sure token that the devil is guarding the entry of that house, and the PURE doctrine of God’s Word has been taken away. The church, then, is in the BEST state, when Satan assaileth it on every side...both with subtle sleights, and outright violence. And (likewise) it is in the WORST state, when it is most at peace! This is why the apostle Paul (in Galatians) taketh it for a most certain sign that whatever is preached in peace IS NOT THE GOSPEL. By contrast, the WORLD takes it for a most certain sign that a doctrine is heretical and dangerous whenever it sees great uproars, tumults, and people who are offended and creating divisions and sects after it is preached.

Martin Luther

#### Answers for ministering in an age of itching ears

A half truth presented as if it were a whole truth is an untruth.

John 1:12, 13

The goal of much of the modern church has become an instantaneous human decision rather than radical transformation of the heart by the Almighty God through the Holy Spirit’s convicting work and the truth of His Word.

#### **How do you define success?**

1 & 11 Timothy – setting guidelines on how to set up a church.

- ◆ nothing about techniques or methods
- ◆ neither about how large
- ◆ neither about how much money
- ◆ nor about what kind of impact it was having on the community
- ◆ nor how many people were making decisions for Christ
- ◆ nothing about the world revering, esteeming or accepting Timothy
- ◆ nothing about external success of any kind

## What did he emphasize?

II Timothy 4:1-2

- ◆ commitment not success
- ◆ pleasing God not the crowds

Exterior criteria such as affluence, numbers, money, positive outward response have never been the Biblical measure of the success in ministry.

- INSTEAD -

Faithfulness, godliness and spiritual commitment are the virtues God esteems and those are qualities that should be the building blocks of any ministry philosophy, regardless of its size.

Size did not signify God's blessing. Popularity is no barometer of a ministry's success. It can be a reason for God's disgust.

Jeremiah 5:30, 31:

The weaker the message got and the more false the teaching was, the greater response it received from the people and God was certainly not pleased with the large crowds that were gathered in His name.

**Paul's warning to Timothy:** he will need to face things like suffering and hardship.

Paul was not telling Timothy how to be successful but encouraging him to just be faithful.

Even if we are getting "decisions for Christ" by the thousands and even if people being ministered to themselves insist the church or ministry in question meets and exceeds their highest expectation we can't necessarily gadge the success of that church or ministry by any of that. Real success is doing the will of God regardless of the results or consequences.

It is more to do with excellence than success!

The foundation of an excellent ministry

Anybody who is neglecting or de-emphasising these 11 duties in their ministry is on a spiritual downgrade.

**11 DUTIES:**

**Duty #1) Remember your calling**

- ◆ live and work in light of the reality of impending judgment
- ◆ concern himself with what God thought of his ministry not with what people thought
- ◆ God judges by obedience to His commands not what people think.

**Duty #2) Preach the Word**

Obedience to that simple command must be the center-piece for a truly Biblical philosophy.

- 1) PROCLAIM SCRIPTURE
- 2) GIVE THE PLAIN SENSE OF IT

1 Corinthians 1:21b (KJV)

God has chosen the foolishness of preaching to be the way He will save people.

Isaiah 46:8-10

Men are saved by the power of God. Only God through the truth can cause a human heart to be born again.

**Duty #3) Don't be ashamed of the gospel**

- ◆ the message is offensive to many people
- ◆ Christ Himself is called the Stone of Stumbling and the Rock of Offence
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 1:23
- ◆ only God's Spirit can draw and transform a man's soul

John 6:37

John 3:36

2 Timothy 3:16

- ◆ guard God's doctrines
- ◆ study them
- ◆ proclaim them boldly

1 Cor. 1:18-20

**Duty #4) Be faithful in and out of season**

Timothy was to preach the word regardless of the climate of opinion around him.

“In many ways it is the departure of the church from preaching that is responsible (in a large measure) for the state of the modern society...the church, having abandoned her real task, has left humanity more or less to its own devices.”

Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

This is certainly no time for weak men, weak messages and weak ministries.

What is needed is moral strength and courage and uncompromising proclamation of the truth that can set people free.

Jeremiah 20:9-10

AMEN

## - Part Five -

### Important Quotes and Notes

“The battle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent began with these words: “Did God really say...?” From that day forward, the Word of God has been attached, maligned, distorted, and suppressed. The assault comes both from **inside** and **outside** the church, as those outside claim the SCRIPTURE is not the Word of God and those inside fail to handle the WORD rightly.”

#### **Duty #5) Reprove, rebuke and exhort**

Far from helping people we actually harm them by avoiding topics like sin and repentance. Because people’s most common and deepest need is to confess and overcome their sin.

2 Timothy 3:16

Negative: reprove; correction

Positive: teaching; training

Exhort – parakaleo – encourage

- ◆ confront sin
- ◆ encourages repentance to sinners to behave righteously
- ◆ “with great patience and instruction”

I Thess. 2:11

Correct and encourage until the change occurs.

#### **Duty #6) Don’t compromise in difficult times**

II Tim. 4:3; II Tim. 3:1; I Tim. 4:1

Progression:

1 Tim. 4:1 – people depart from the faith

II Tim. 3:1 – dangerous times are coming for the church

II Tim. 4:3 – those inside the church will not endure sound doctrine

### **Sound Doctrine** (*word study*)

**Sound** – 5198 (Greek Strong's) hugiaino

◆ to be sound; to be well, to be in good health  
*metaphorically:*

2a) of Christians whose opinions are free from any mixture of error.

2b) of one who keeps the graces is strong

**Doctrine** – 1319 (Greek Strong's) didaskalia

1) teaching; instruction

2) teaching

a) that which is taught, doctrine

b) teachings, precepts

“Sound Doctrine” is teaching, or instruction, without any mixture of error. The sound doctrines of the inerrant Word of God are ALWAYS absolute and are NEVER left to personal opinion, or conjecture (*speculation or guesswork*).

I Timothy 4:16

Proverbs 30:5

### **Why are people unwilling to endure sound doctrine?**

- ◆ people love their sin
- ◆ sound preaching tends to confront and rebuke sin

II Timothy 3:1-5

“they” – inside the church

II Timothy 4:3b

There is no shortage of Pastors with ear-tickling messages.

Hebrews 10:26-31

They become the victims of their own refusal to hear the truth – II Timothy 4

***“they will turn away”***

The verb is active which means they willingly choose to turn away their ears from the truth.

***“they will be turned aside to myths...”***

The verb is passive which means that this part they don't consciously choose. It is a result of their first choice (they become unwilling victims of Satan).

The human medium has overtaken the Divine message.

The church has abandoned the Biblical mandate to preach the Word.

**THE TRUTH OF GOD DOES NOT TICKLE OUR EARS, IT BOXES THEM, IT BURNS THEM. IT FIRST REPROVES, REBUKES, CONVICTS, EXHORTS AND THEN ENCOURAGES.**

John 6

true disciples hunger for the real Word – John 8:31

### **Duty #7) Be sober in all things**

The litmus test to see if a church really preaches the Word or not is to look at the demeanor and attitude of the Pastor from the pulpit.

There ought to be thoughtful sobriety according to scripture.

**Sober** – self-controlled, steady, attentive, serious. It describes a state of mental alertness and control of one’s faculties.

One who takes his call and ministry seriously will not be:

- ◆ flaky
- ◆ cavalier
- ◆ trendy or
- ◆ pursuing the latest whims and philosophies of the world.

**A Pastor can only take his congregation as far as he has personally gone.**

But God said:

Titus 2:7-8

Mark 1:14 - “preaching” – (Greek Strong’s) – kerusso

To be a herald, to officiate as a herald

- 1a) to proclaim after the manner of a herald
- 1b) always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed.

Mark 1:21- “taught” – (Greek Strong’s) – didasko

To teach one

- 2a) to impart instruction
- 2b) to instill doctrine into one
- 2c) the thing taught or enjoined
- 2d) to explain or expound a thing
- 2e) to teach something

The subject of His teaching was always the **object** of His teaching.

His doctrine was always the thing taught it was not the “way you do the what you do.”

#### **Duty #8) ...”Endure hardship...”**

Excellent ministers cannot be those who yearn for earthly applause from men. They can't be driven by the “pats on the back” and the positive feedback that most other people need as a confirmation that they are on the right track...neither can they be lovers of earthly comfort.

#### **No ministry of any value comes without pain!**

- ◆ There are two choices: endure and remain steadfast or compromise
- ◆ Faithfulness and hardship go hand in hand.

#### **Did Timothy follow Paul's council?**

Hebrews 13:23 – released from prison

#### **Duty #9) Do the work of an evangelist**

Is this an abrupt change of direction in Paul's thinking?

- ◆ No, the theme in I & II Timothy is not to give into the pressure of the day
- ◆ To reach out beyond the comfort level of his own flock and boldly proclaim the word to unbelievers.
- ◆ Part of his duty as a Pastor was to evangelize unbelievers.
- ◆ It's easier to turn inward to the security of the group we're a part of when people aren't receptive to our message.

Summing up what Paul said - face the world courageously (like a good soldier) and preach:

- ◆ Christ crucified
- ◆ sin, righteousness and judgment
- ◆ God's law
- ◆ depravity NOT dignity of the humankind
- ◆ herald the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming
- ◆ warn of eternal judgment NOT give fluffy sermonettes on angels
- ◆ magnify the cross, the resurrection, the atonement, grace and faith
- ◆ was urging Timothy to be solemn and persuasive in confronting sin and unbelief
- ◆ knowing it would likely cost him his very life.

THINK ETERNALLY!

#### **Duty #10) Fulfill your ministry**

Fulfill means accomplish, fill it up; do it all

"Timothy don't serve God, half-heartedly. When you serve God serve Him with all your might."

True believers long to hear "well done my good and faithful servant."

#### **Duty #11) Holding fast the faith**

*“Holding Fast the Faith”*

Quotes from sermon by Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“We must never hide our colors. There are times when we must dash to the front and court the encounter; when we see that our Captain’s honor demands it. Let us never be either ashamed or afraid. Our Lord Jesus deserves that we should yield ourselves a willing sacrifices in defence of His faith. Ease, reputation, life itself must go for the name and faith of Jesus. If in the heat of the battle our good name or our life must be risked to win the victory, then let us say, ‘In this battle some of us must fall, why should not I?’ I will take part and lot with my Master; and bear reproach for His sake. Only brave soldiers are worthy of our great Lord. Those who sneak into the rear; that they may be comfortable, are not worthy of the Kingdom... Brethren, we must be willing to bear ridicule for Christ’s sake, even that peculiarly envenomed ridicule which “the cultured” are so apt to pour upon us. We must be willing to be thought great fools for Jesus’ sake...For my part, I am willing to be ten thousand fools in one for my dear Lord and Master; and count it to be the highest honor that can be put upon me to be stripped of every honor; and loaded with every censure for the sake of the grand old truth which is written on my very heart...Before I could quit my faith...I should have to be ground to powder; and very separate atom transformed.”

“Everybody admires Luther: yes, yes; but you do not want anyone else to do the same (as Luther) today. When you go to the zoo you all admire the bear; but how would you like a bear at home, or a bear wandering loose about the street? You tell me that it would be unbearable, and no doubt you are right. So, we admire a man who was firm in the faith... as long as it was four hundred years ago; the past ages are a sort of bear-pit or iron cage for him; but such a man today is a nuisance, and must be put down. Call him a narrow-minded bigot, or give him a worse name, if you can think of one. Yet imagine if (in those ages past), Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and their peers had said, ‘The world is out of order, but if we try to set it right we shall only cause a great disturbance, and we will only get ourselves disgrace. Let us go to our chambers, put on our night-caps, and sleep through the bad times, and perhaps when we wake up things will have grown better.’ Such conduct on their part would have entailed upon us a heritage of error: Age after age would have gone down into the infernal deeps of doctrinal error; and (by our day) it would have swallowed all. These men loved the faith and name of Jesus too well to see them trampled on. Make note of what we owe them, and let use pay to our sons the debt we owe our fathers.”

Pay debt to our children by defending, and fighting for doctrine and truth with just as much passion and vigour and sacrifice as they did for us.

Some error and compromise takes generations before the real damage is done. It will be our children and grandchildren who pay the price if we don't act on their behalf now.

“It is today as it was in the time of the Reformation: decision is needed. Here is the day for the man, where is the man for the day? We, who have had the gospel passed to us by martyr's hands dare not trifle with it, nor sit by and hear it denied by traitors, who pretend to love it, but inwardly abhor every line of it. The faith I hold bears upon it marks of the blood of my ancestors. Shall I deny their faith, for which they left their native land to sojourn here? Shall we cast away the treasure which was handed to us through the bars of prisons, or come to us charred with the flames of those burned at the stake in Smithfield? Personally, when my bones have been tortured with rheumatism, I have remembered Job Spurgeon, doubtless of my own stock, who in Chelmsford Jail was allowed a chair; because he could not lie down by reason of rheumatic pain. That Quaker's broad-brim overshadows my brow; perhaps I inherited his rheumatism; but that I do not regret if I have his stubborn faith, which will not let me yield a syllable of the truth of God. When I think of how others have suffered for the faith, a little scorn or unkindness seems a mere trifle, not worthy of mention. Having so many ancestors who were lovers of the faith before us, ought to be a great plea with us to ourselves abide by the Lord God of our fathers, and the faith in which they lived. As for me, I must hold the old gospel: I can do no other: God helping me, I will endure the consequences of what men think in obstinacy. Look you, sirs, there are ages yet to come. If the Lord does not speedily appear, there will come another generation, and another; and all these generations will be tainted and injured if we are not faithful to God and to His truth today. We have come to a turning point in the road. If we turn to the right, perhaps our children and our children's children will go that way; but if we turn to the left, generations yet unborn will curse our names for having been unfaithful to God and to His Word. I charge you, not only by your ancestry, but by your posterity (on behalf of your children...and your children's children), that you seek to win the commendation of your Master; that though you dwell where Satan's seat is, you yet hold fast His name, and do not deny His faith. God grant us faithfulness, for the sake of the souls around us! How is the world to be saved if the church is false to her Lord? How are we to lift the masses if our fulcrum is removed? If our gospel is uncertain, what remains but increasing misery and despair? Stand fast, my beloved, in the name of God! I, your brother in Christ, entreat you to abide in the truth. Handle yourselves like men! Be strong! And may the Lord sustain you...for Jesus sake. Amen.”

“Dear friends, this name, this faith, these are our message. Our only business here below to cry, ‘Behold the Lamb.’ Are any of you sent of God with any other message? It cannot be. The one message which God has given His people to proclaim is salvation through the Lamb, salvation by the blood of Jesus...To tell of Jesus is our occupation, we have nothing to say which is not comprised in the revelation made to use by God in Jesus Christ. He who is our comfort is our one theme.”

Preach the Word:

- ◆ We have nothing else worth saying.
- ◆ There is no other message.
- ◆ There is no other valid ministry.

Until the church recovers the centrality of that truth and that single-minded commitment to our calling, evangelism will continue to be pulled relentlessly further onto the downgrade.

The only hope is a return to scripture and sound doctrine.

“...yet, surely there must be **some** who will fling aside the [cowardly] love of peace, and speak out for Our Lord, and for His truth. A craven spirit is upon many, and their tongues are paralyzed. Oh, for an outburst of true faith and holy zeal!”

AMEN