Series: Legacy

Series Text: 1st Timothy

September 15, 2019

Message 6:

**Run for Your Life!**

1st Timothy 6:2b-21

**Intro:** I used to be a runner - running can be hard, but like a lot of sports and other challenges in life, it can teach you a lot.

In order to be successful -

* you have to run consistently
* You have to run through pain
* You can’t give up
* You have to run to the finish - sometimes finishing itself is the great victory. Sometimes, just finishing involves overcoming great pain and great odds.

Paul referred to running a lot … referred to athletics … referred to “the games” - Ancient Olympic Games of Greece -

There are some things we have to be firm about - there are some areas in which we cannot compromise -

In the early 1990’s, when Iraq invaded Kuwait and the world was debating what to do to protect the small country - Margaret Thatcher to George H.W. Bush: “This is no time to go wobbly.”

**Big Idea: Teach the truth and run for your life!**

**T.S.:** Paul closes his first letter to Timothy -

Timothy is a young pastor in a young church - Paul is mentoring him … Paul considers Timothy his “son in the faith” - He loves him like a son - He wants to see him succeed in ministry the way a father wants his son to succeed - so all of the guidance in this letter is given from a passionate heart of love.

Paul closes this letter to this young man that he loved by stressing what he needed to teach - how he needed to teach it - what he needed to run from - and what he needed to run to -

**> Teach the truth and let the chips fall**

1st Timothy 6:2b-3 - Teach these things, Timothy, and encourage everyone to obey them. Some people may contradict our teaching, but these are the wholesome teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. These teachings promote a godly life.

“Let the chips fall where they may.” - It is said that this phrase originated in America in the late 1800s and has reference to chopping wood. It implies that a woodcutter should focus on cutting logs and not worry about where the small pieces (chips) fall. ([Theidioms.com](https://www.theidioms.com/let-the-chips-fall-where-they-may/))

If we are going to get the job done that the Lord has called us to do - we must focus on it as a runner focuses on his goal - we must pursue our goal with love - but we must focus on getting the job done whether we see the results we would like to see or not - no matter who agrees with us or disagrees with us -

* My job is to teach you to obey the teaching of the Word of God no matter who contradicts it.

- The teaching of God’s Word will promote a godly life.

1st Timothy 6:4-10 - Anyone who teaches something different is arrogant and lacks understanding. Such a person has an unhealthy desire to quibble over the meaning of words. This stirs up arguments ending in jealousy, division, slander, and evil suspicions. These people always cause trouble. Their minds are corrupt, and they have turned their backs on the truth. To them, a show of godliness is just a way to become wealthy.

Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can’t take anything with us when we leave it. So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.

But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

* Straying from the teaching of God’s Word brings -

- Arrogance

- Confusion

- Meaningless arguments

- lead to: jealousy, division, slander, and evil suspicions.

The people who do this are troublemakers, corrupt, and rebellious

Do you like arrogant people? Do you want people to like you? If you do, you don’t want to be an arrogant person - but if you stray from the teaching of God’s Word - you become an arrogant person - you put yourself, your knowledge, your thoughts, above the thoughts of the Almighty Loving God.

This leads to confusion. You will be confused - you won’t know what to believe - you won’t know what to think - you won’t know who to believe - you won’t know who to trust -

People who don’t keep their trust in God’s Word keep changing their minds - there are no conclusive conclusions - even science is changing it’s conclusions all of the time -

If a study comes out that tells you how bad coffee is for you - wait 5 years and there will be another study giving you all the benefits of coffee. Just follow God’s Word - don’t add to it - don’t take away from it - stick with it - avoid the confusion.

Avoid the meaningless arguments - this does nothing but add stress - and it doesn’t win anyone to Jesus - Love people - tell the truth - speak the truth in love - but don’t argue - We can’t argue anyone into changing minds - only the Holy Spirit can do that.

This is the truth - I’ll tell it to you - I’ll love you - I’ll do my best to answer your questions - but I don’t want to argue with you.

* Paul speaks to those who are Only out for money -

We need godliness more than we need money and wealth.

A desire for riches is a trap that leads to ruin and destruction.

- Takes you away from faith.

- Pierces (powerful word) with many sorrows.

Examples -

* Judas - desired money more than he desired Jesus - in the end, 30 pieces of silver was more important than his relationship with Jesus. When he realized what he had done, he threw the money away and took his own life. He lost everything.

Money doesn’t have the power to do anything for you of eternal value. The level of your bank account has nothing to do with the level and depth of your relationship with Jesus.

* It is a tragedy when we see supposed men and women of God and leaders in the church who appear to be only out for money.

They may cloak it in the idea that they deserve it because of the level of their ministry - the level of the stress they face - or how much they are giving away and they can’t out-give God - yet all the time they are ingratiating themselves with insane levels of worldly possessions that are more than they could ever possibly use or justify.

They stack their boards with family members who don’t question them - they get rich from being board members - and they don’t submit themselves to Christian organizations that have been offered to provide them with accountability -

Many have been caught up and convicted in Tax evasion schemes - done time in prison, and brought stain to the name of Christ and His Church in the public culture.

There is no better place for you to support God’s work than the local church. If every person here who sent money to some other organization would give that gift regularly to the local church, we would be able to change uncounted lives right here - and much stress would be removed from what we do.

- Teach the truth and let the chips fall -

**> Run from and run toward**

1st Timothy 6:11a - But you, Timothy, are a man of God;

so **run from** all these evil things.

What evil things? He’s talked about -

* false teachings - teaching contrary to God’s Word
* Endless arguments about myths and meaningless speculations
* Murder
* Sexual immorality
* Homosexuality
* Slave trading
* Lying
* Breaking promises
* Blasphemy
* Alcohol abuse
* Pride
* Dishonest with money
* Slander *(diabolos)*
* Legalism
* Disrespect for elders and leaders in the faith

We are to “run from” these things - word means to seek safety by flight - to flee from something abhorrent - to escape safely out of danger.

We’ve got to actively run from these things if we are going to survive.

But he doesn’t just give Timothy and us things to run from - He tells us what we should be running toward -

“Don’t look back” - you lose time - you can’t worry about what is behind you - focus on the goal in front …

\* Run toward the lifestyle of God

1st Timothy 6:11b - **Pursue** righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.

Pursue - to run swiftly to catch these things -

Are you running toward these things? Have you gone beyond praying the prayer - asking for forgiveness - trusting that you are going to heaven - and just living your life as it comes - we are not to do that.

We are to RUN - toward - pursue -

* righteousness - are you striving toward righteousness.

The attitude that says, “I’m imperfect and I sin every day - so I don’t worry about it - it’s all under grace” - is contradictory to this teaching of running toward righteousness.

I’m not saying we achieve perfection or forgiveness by our striving to do good things - but I’m saying that if we want to please God in response to all He has done for us and forgiven us of - then we PURSUE right living to please Him and to have the kind of life here He desires for us.

Also pursue faith - are you wanting your faith to grow? Are you actively reading your Word - listening to godly teaching - praying - so that your faith will grow?

Paul is not telling us to be passive about this life! We must do more than show up on Sundays - for some, that is the great victory - there is more!

Are you pursuing love? Are you actively pursuing ways to show love to other people?

Are you persevering? Not giving up? There are many obstacles! We must decide that we are not going to give up no matter what the devil throws at us!

Are you pursuing gentleness? Are you yielding your personality to the personality of the Holy Spirit so that you will be more like Jesus than yourself?

\* Run toward the fight of faith!

1st Timothy 6:12 - **Fight** the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many witnesses.

Fight - to contend and struggle with strenuous zeal -

Nothing Paul says here is passive … This life of faith is a great blessing - but it is a spiritual warfare! We have a spiritual enemy that is warring against us - and warring against what God wants to do in and through us -

* through you
* Through your family
* Through our church

Don’t shirk the fight - we are not fighting other humans - we are fighting a warfare - and through prayer, the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God, we can’t run from this fight - we have to run to it! Engage!

\* Run toward obedience

1st Timothy 6:13-16 - And **I charge you** before God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, who gave a good testimony before Pontius Pilate, that you **obey** this command without wavering. Then no one can find fault with you from now until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. For,

*At just the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords. He alone can never die, and he lives in light so brilliant that no human can approach him. No human eye has ever seen him, nor ever will. All honor and power to him forever! Amen.*

This is a strongly worded “charge” from the Apostle Paul - This is a command - this is an order!

If we are going to be successful we must obey - “to be careful to guard and observe” -

* We must know and obey - be careful to guard and observe God’s Word
* We must obey - be careful to guard and observe - the teaching that comes from God’s Word through His teachers He has given to the church.

Why? So that no one will be able to find fault with us - because Jesus is coming back - and when He comes back - all will be judged!

\* Run from pride and trusting in money

1st Timothy 6:17-19 - **Teach** those who are rich in this world **not to be proud and not to trust in their money**, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.

This must be important because it’s repetition! This is not the first time Paul has addressed this.

In a relatively short letter - he repeats to this young man - this young pastor - one he has adopted as a son in the faith - one he loves and wants to see Timothy have a great influence on others in ministry -

He repeated - watch your pride - watch your connection to money - and teach this to your church!

Watch your pride - and watch your loyalty to possessions!

So - I say to myself - Watch you pride - and watch your loyalty to possessions!

So - I say to you - Watch you pride - and watch your loyalty to possessions!

This is the Word of God!

Trust only in God - use what God gives you to bless others - not to heap more and more upon yourself - that’s not what it’s given to you for -

Become rich in your spirit by the good you do for others - be known for your generosity - always be ready to give and share - This is going to give you treasure in the future - in the life to come!

\* Run from foolishness

1st Timothy 6:20-21a - Timothy, **guard** what God has entrusted to you. **Avoid** godless, foolish discussions with those who oppose you with their so-called knowledge.Some people have wandered from the faith by following such foolishness.

*(Keep our mouths shut - don’t defend ourselves - don’t enter into needless arguments when we’re not going to convince anyone or change their minds - move on - move forward.)*

Continuing foolish, meaningless, never ending arguments not only keeps people from faith but causes them to wander away from the faith. It’s hurtful - forget it - again - let the chips fall - and move on.

A fire can only die if you stop feeding it -

Sometimes that means you have to be quiet, not defend yourself - and stop answering every accusation, so eventually the fire can go out and people can stop being hurt.

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1st Timothy 6:21b - May God’s grace be with you all.

He ends with grace - how much we all need grace -

John Newton - captain of a slave trading ship - made his living and his wealth from sailing a ship where merchants would travel to Africa - capture human beings - pack them into unsanitary conditions in the bottom of a ship - cross the ocean - many men, women and children would die of horrible diseases, starvation - simply throw the dead bodies off the ship into the ocean -

Those who survived, were sold as slaves in Britain.

He heard of God’s love and grace - was convicted of his sins - became a preacher - influenced William Wilberforce who fought for decades and was a single force in eliminating the slave trade from Britain.

John Newton wrote -

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound

That saved a WRETCH like me …

I once was lost, but now I’m found

Was blind, but now I see.

If there is grace for him, then there is grace for us - if we share grace with anyone, we should share it with everyone.

**Invitation -**

**Blessing -**