

July 19, 2020 - I Timothy 1:1-17 - “The Saved don’t suffer Hell”

Introduction

An advertisement appeared in a London newspaper: Men wanted for hazardous journey small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger. A safe return is doubtful. Honor and recognition in case of success, thousands of men responded. Why? The ad was signed by the noted Arctic explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton. Dr. Warren Wiersbe says that if Jesus had advertised for workers, his announcement might have read something like this: Men and women needed for difficult task of helping to build my church.

You will often be misunderstood, even by those working with you. You will face constant attack from an invisible enemy. You may not see the results of your labor, and your full reward will not come till after your work is completed. It may cost you your home, your ambitions, even your life. Yet there’s not a better way to spend your life than serving God, and you’ll never find a better master. Folks, nothing is more rewarding then your service that may guide people from hell to heaven. Timothy was given such a task.

I. Apostolic Authority & Recipient vv.1-3

1. On Paul’s second missionary journey, he visited Ephesus after leaving Corinth, and evidently planted the church. On his third missionary expedition, Paul spent three years teaching in the city. Later, Timothy, Aquila and Priscilla and Apollos also all spent time in the Ephesian church. The church was under attack from “fierce wolves from without,” and “perverse teachers from within.” We are experiencing this same thing today. Satan desires to destroy the church. Therefore, this needed an apostle’s authority. Paul wrote this between 63-64 AD after his first Roman imprisonment. Vv. #1 is the divine commission given authority.

2. Timothy’s (2a) mother was Euence in II Tim. 1:5 it states that she was a Jew his father was Greek. He went with Paul on his second missionary journey and became Paul’s true son in the faith (2b) possibly because he led him to Christ and disciple him. Timothy we know was left at Ephesus to pastor the church Paul founded.

Verse 2 also has a very warm salutation: “Grace and peace.” But here, and in the Second Letter to Timothy, he includes the word, *mercy*. I think this was because of Timothy’s fears. Mercy is God’s grace exercised in deliverance from circumstances, and that is what Timothy needed. Timothy was a fearful, timid and a meek young man. But he had a demanding task and a great opportunity. He needed the assurance that God could deliver him, so Paul blesses him with this additional word, “mercy from God the Father.” Mercy is what all unsaved seriously need.

3. When Paul says “stay on”, it is because Timothy might have wanted to quit. Paul tells him to stay where he is until his calling there is done. The church at Ephesus was in a wrench city. Ephesus was a flourishing city with a population of about 225,000 and possessed a huge harbor. The harbor could accommodate the largest ships in the world. Ephesus grew to become one of the largest and wealthiest cities in the world. The temple of Diana was there, which was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, being the largest Greek temple ever constructed. Diana was believed to be the mother goddess of the world by the Greeks. Diana

was a fertility goddess of life and reproduction. The worship of Diana was immoral beyond description. The worship consisted of temple priestess performing sexual orgies and sexual mutilation. The Church at Ephesus had much to contend with but it stood faithful.

II. Apostolic Command vv.4-8

1. First, Timothy was to stop certain teaching that was going on in Ephesus; they were not helpful in bringing people to Christ. Second, he was to make clear how to use the Law of Moses in the Christian life that is the lawful use the Law. Remember the Law points to sin and we need to repent from sins. As someone has well put it, "The main thing is to see that the main thing remains the main thing." Paul mentioned as John did they were not incorporating a **love for the lost**. Having turned aside to "vain jangling" that is *mä-ti-a-lo-ge'-ä* meaningless talk (6b) we must keep the gospel front and center. The good news is the gospel. Now these teachers at Ephesus were attacking this because they were **denying that the old life really had ended**. This was an attempt to cling to what was passed. This is a real problem with Christians today! **They claim they are saved but living their past lives.**

2. Note Paul states in verse [7] **Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.** They desire to be "teachers of the law," motivated by ambitious pride. Yet, Paul says, the remarkable thing is that they do not understand what they are saying or the sources from which they take their knowledge. Paul does not deny the power of the Law because it has a purpose; note in verse 8 if use in the correct way. No one can be saved by the law, the law condemns.

Roman 3:20

III. Apostolic Message vv. 9-16

1. God gives mercy to the repentant. Mercy is the opposite of grace – Eph. 2:8, 9. These teachers were leading believers out of the liberty of grace (Gal. 5:1) and into the bondage of legalism. This tragedy occurs today. The flesh loves religious legalism because rules and regulations enable a person to appear holy without really having their hearts change. Note these sinners listed in vv.9, 10. **Revelations 21:8** - What are these people saved from? Hell!

1. Hell a Place of Torment

a) The Bible says there are torments in Hell. In Luke 16: vv. 19-24 we read the story of the rich man who died. "And in hell he lift up his eyes....And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame". What will it be like in Hell?

b) Matthew 8:12 says, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 13:42 says, "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." They will not only weep and wail, but they will hear the countless multitudes of millions upon millions of others weeping and wailing and screaming and crying and begging for mercy. Imagine what it will be like for all eternity: their hearing the screaming, the screeching, the wailing and weeping of others in that terrible place!

c) Revelation 14:11 speaks of this torment: "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." The smoke never stops! The fire never stops! The darkness never stops! The torment never stops! The weeping and wailing never stop! The gnashing of teeth never stops!

2. Hell Is a Place of Fire

a) It is not popular today to preach about Hell being a place of fire. Many preachers won't do it. The same Bible that they once believed still says that Hell has fire! "Luke 16 tells the story about the rich man in Hell. He lifted up his eyes and said to Abraham, "I am tormented in this flame." Matthew 18:8 calls it "everlasting fire. Jude 7 calls it "eternal fire." The fire in Hell is not quenched; it never dies down; it never goes out; it never subsides. It is eternal fire. Revelation 20:10 calls it "the lake of fire and brimstone."

Jonathan Edwards once preached... There is the dreadful pit of the glowing flames of the wrath of God; there is hell's wide gaping mouth open; and you have nothing to stand upon, nor anything to take hold of, there is nothing between you and hell but the air; it is only the power and mere pleasure of God that holds you up.

3. Hell is a Place of Unfulfilled Desires

a) The first desire of the rich man in Hell was that Abraham take one drop of water and place it upon his tongue (v24). One little drop-what would that do? The man is in eternal fire, in a furnace of fire, in a lake of fire; he is burning in fire and brimstone for all eternity, and he wants just one little drop!

b) My friend, how long would that one little drop last? Have you ever dropped just one drop of water onto a hot plate? It lasts but for a few seconds. This rich man is begging, crying out for just a drop, just a respite. But he can't have it. He is saying, "If I could have just a drop of rest from the fire," but he can't have it. His desire will go on for all eternity. He had a desire for mercy, but he didn't get that either.

c) In Hell for all eternity they will desire to see; for all eternity they will desire to talk to a friend; for all eternity they will desire whatever you desired on earth. But for all eternity you will never be granted even one of your desires. For all eternity you will be like a drug addict going through withdrawal.

d) The rich man had eyes, a mouth, a tongue. Those in Hell have bodies in which they must spend eternity, and those bodies will never cease to exist. You will receive this new body at the great white throne judgement and then cast into the eternal lake of fire. This will be the only reprieve from the torment, a few hours or even minutes.

3. Hell Is a Place of Darkness

1. Second Peter 2:4 calls it "darkness." Jude 13 calls it "blackness of darkness." Matthew 13:42 calls it "a furnace of fire. Understand that when people go to Hell, they see nothing! Hell is darkness, the blackness of darkness. You will be unable to see your friends. You will have eyes, but you won't see. You will see nothing except total darkness, total blackness of darkness.

Illustration: Many years ago when my wife and I were on vacation, we went down into some giant crystal cave in Virginia. It was a mile down into the bowels of the earth into total darkness. It was very eerie! You could not see the person next to you.

A church was in need of a pastor. A candidate came who preached on hell. The next Sunday another candidate's sermon was also on hell, and his fundamental teaching was the same as that of the first one. When the members of the church were called upon to vote, they voted for the second candidate. When they were asked why, the answer was, "The first one spoke as if he were glad that people were going to hell, while the second seemed sorry for it."

2. The law cannot save. It is a schoolmaster Paul explained (Galatians 3:24) to guide us. His gratitude is heightened by remembering what he had been prior to receiving the grace and mercy of the Lord. But Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom Paul was chief, and in him Christ shows an example of His longsuffering to those who believe on Him for everlasting life. Paul was shown mercy and saved.

Conclusion

I have a responsibility to warn you about what will happen to you or those you care about if they do not have Jesus as their Savior. You have a responsibility to warn folks about what will happen too! Each of you has people that you know or acquaintances that you have that you have no idea where they will spend eternity. The hope is that you will be motivated to speak up and tell others not to go there. The hope is that you will be motivated to pray with power!

Paul closed this section with a benediction and we will repeat for us today. Verse #17---
Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.