

Life Group Lesson

SUPERNATURAL • Week of October 16

Introduction

Many shipwrecks that have happened throughout history are because captains and even crewmen ignored the warnings. We think of the Titanic going down on April 14, 1912 hitting an iceberg in the north Atlantic; there was a time in Scripture when the apostle Paul (as a prisoner) was being transported to Rome to stand trial. He spoke to the officers of the ship: “Men,” he said, “I believe there is trouble ahead if we go on—shipwreck, loss of cargo, and danger to our lives as well” (Acts 27:10). But Paul’s words were ignored, and the ship did, in fact, finally wreck on the island of Malta (Acts 28:1). Rewind further in the Bible, and we read the account of Jonah attempting to run away from the Lord, and the near-disaster brought upon the ship he was on – headed for Tarshish instead of Nineveh, where God asked him to go (Jonah 1:1-17).

More tragic than a shipwrecked vessel, as horrific as it is to imagine going down into the dark depths of the ocean, is a shipwrecked life. And yet, all around us, are individuals ignoring the warning signs, paying little to no heed, foolishly denying any coming storm on the horizon. The common theme throughout the pages of Scriptures we hear from God is: ‘Heed the warning signs. There is a coming day of judgment and final accountability. But I, the Lord, have provided a way of escape. Turn from the deadly course before you, and let me rescue you.’ We don’t have to stay on a deadly path. There is nothing more powerful on the earth than spiritual restoration. When a son or daughter hears the truth and actually turns from sin and runs to the open-arms of a loving God – that is supernatural. The apostle Paul says,

“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength to do His work. He considered me trustworthy and appointed me to serve Him, even though I used to blaspheme the name of Christ. In my insolence, I persecuted His people. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. Oh, how generous and gracious our Lord was! He filled me with the faith and love that come from Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 1:12-14).

Background

As an older man, Paul writes Timothy, his true son in the faith, encouraging Timothy to stay the course. Paul want Timothy to carry on the work of the Gospel with great focus, faith and courage. Paul hopes that the prophetic word spoken over Timothy will help him “fight well in the Lord’s battles.” The pur-

pose behind Paul’s instruction “is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.” He says, however, that some people have missed the whole point, and waste their time on meaningless discussions. They want to be known as spiritual teachers but they don’t know what they are talking about. If a prophet, preacher, teacher (any of us as Christ-followers) don’t spend time with the Lord, then the words we give will not be from God. It will be from ourselves—

“I have not sent these prophets, yet they run around claiming to speak for me. I have given them no message, yet they go on prophesying. If they had stood before me and listened to me, they would have spoken my words, and they would have turned my people from their evil ways and deeds” (Jeremiah 23:21-22).

Reading the Text

Read I Timothy 1:1-20

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?
2. What are you going to do about it?
3. How can we help you?

Reflection

Just as the Lord wanted the people of Nineveh to repent at the preaching of Jonah, God desires that we repent at the preaching of truth today. Choose faith. If you have not yet asked the Lord Jesus Christ into your heart, you can do that now. He is ready. Paul says cling to your faith and keep your conscience clear. Is there anyone you need to forgive and be reconciled? Are you holding an offense that needs to be released into the nail-scarred hands of Jesus? When we spend little to no time in God’s Word, we default to giving more attention to the culture than the voice of God. We run the risk of choosing dysfunctional behavior, even evil practices, over sweet fellowship with our heavenly Father. Choosing darkness will shipwreck your life.

But the Good News is we don't have to give into darkness, we don't have to fear peril! God makes a way of escape – the Person of Jesus Christ. We all fall short and need the Holy Spirit to help us. The Lord wants to fill us with *His* love and give us a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith. What sin, offense, dysfunction are you willing to give up and give to God? If we are like Jonah, we may need to give the Lord our anger and prejudice. If we are like Paul in his former life, it may be that we blasphemed the name of Christ. We need His forgiveness and a new direction (the right direction). Like Adam and Eve, we demanded our way; we wanted to be 'like God'. William Barclay said, "When God went from life, beauty went along with Him." Let's invite God back into our lives and see the beauty return.

In Closing

If you need to turn from sin, some offense, and be reconciled to God take a moment and pray:

Lord, thank you for loving me. Thank you for your patience and protection and mercy, even when I am going my own way. Lord, I confess my sin to you and I invite you back into my life. Help me not allow dysfunction or sinful behavior to create a gap between us. Lord, I love you. Save me all over again. I do not want to shipwreck my life nor the life of anyone around me. Help me to see that you are special and I am special to you. Lord, when you are near everything is different, better. There is peace when you are present. Lord, I want to be reconciled to you and those around me. May your beauty come back into my life. Thank you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Close in a Time of Prayer asking:

How can I pray for my fellow Life Group participants this week?

One Year Bible Readings

October 16: Jeremiah 28:1-29:32, 1 Timothy 1:1-20, Psalm 86:1-17, Proverbs 25:17
October 17: Jeremiah 30:1-31:26, 1 Timothy 2:1-15, Psalm 87:1-7, Proverbs 25:18-19
October 18: Jeremiah 31:27-32:44, 1 Timothy 3:1-16, Psalm 88:1-18, Proverbs 25:20-22
October 19: Jeremiah 33:1-34:22, 1 Timothy 4:1-16, Psalm 89:1-13, Proverbs 25:23-24
October 20: Jeremiah 35:1-36:32, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, Psalm 89:14-37, Proverbs 25:25-27
October 21: Jeremiah 37:1-38:28, 1 Timothy 6:1-21, Psalm 89:38-52, Proverbs 25:28
October 22: Jeremiah 39:1-41:18, 2 Timothy 1:1-18, Psalm 90:1-91:16, Proverbs 26:1-2

SUPER NATURAL

Text: Jonah 1:1-17, I Timothy 1:1-20

Plain Truth:

The church is a _____ ready for _____.

The path to a Shipwrecked faith:

1. Allowing our _____ to _____ louder than the _____ of God.
2. Giving into _____ behavior and _____ practices.
3. Choosing _____ over _____, yielding to _____ over _____.

October 16, 2022