

Whom I Have Delivered Unto Satan

First Timothy 1:18 – 2:5

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~ Paul is personally appointing Timothy to the office of ministry as our Spiritual Safari nears the end of the first chapter of this epistle. This letter is extremely personal, and exclusively for Timothy, Paul's spiritual son; and the subject is the proper form of government for a local church, what Timothy is to do, and how Timothy is to behave – and all of the responsibilities that go along with being a pastor in a genuine church of Christ Jesus. While it is very practical, it reveals something of the wonderful relationship these two brothers in Christ enjoyed. If you have not read our first four reports from this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God, then I suggest you go back and do so now. It would have been a privilege to have been a personal friend of Paul; it would have also been *not* very nice to question Paul's authority, to have challenged Paul's teaching, or to speak against this Spirit-filled, Spirit-led and spiritually discerning apostle who was personally chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ. Hymenaeus and Alexander discovered this the hard way, obviously....

I

18 This charge I commit unto thee, my spiritual son Timothy, according to the prophecies which pointed to thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

~ One thing these United States doesn't seem to have learned is that a nation must never involve themselves in war unless it is done *wholeheartedly*. If the heart of the nation is not in the cause of action — and unless the intent is to completely defeat and dominate the enemy, as

well as take the victory at all cost — then war is pointless. We saw that in no uncertain terms when we considered the prophecy of Jeremiah. Christian's have very real enemies in this world — and our enemy means business — the business of destroying our faith and our soul. Of course, it is a spiritual warfare being waged; and there is a way to fight good — and a way to fight bad. Some in the church in Paul's day were *not* fighting for the cause of Christ to win; and their faith was quickly made shipwreck on the desolate isle of hopelessness as a result.

There is profound truth in this first chapter of first Timothy; tenets that concern our intricate individual personalities. See, I get a little weary of those today who want to over-simplify the Gospel. They relegate it to the level of a traffic signal — and that's about all it is to them. They reduce the cause of Christ to proceeding when the light is green, and stopping when the light turns red. Well, the Gospel — which is the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ — is simple; but not quite that simple. Paul is telling Timothy that there is a danger of becoming inconsistent by living complacently in an Ivory-Tower built in the Name of God, but intended only for self-edification. Multitudes of so-called Bible teachers honestly but erroneously believe their words come directly from Heaven; when, in reality, their work for the Lord is a complete failure. Those are the ones who typically deceives vast multitudes of ignorant sheep. It's going to shock waves of self-professing believers *in that day* to whom Jesus will say, *“depart from Me, I never knew you.”*

You and I walk with the Lord down here on the sidewalk of reality in this world. We rub shoulders with a rough humanity that hates Christ — so, they hate us. Naturally, we all have failures and inconsistencies dealing with the lost world in our Christian lives; the difference is: genuine children of God call upon our faith and allow the Spirit of God to accommodate our infirmities and failures. Others piously declare *“... the Lord led me to do this or that.”* Well, if the Lord has trained us, and has Personally provided for us, He is not going to call us out of His work to do something unimportant. People mouth these platitudes and cite Christian Clichés so often they actually begin to unconsciously equate faith to failure; because they misperceive their failures as blessings from God. When they reach that

place, they are in grave spiritual danger. Full apostasy is the easy next step, my beloved.

When we fail the Lord, we need to immediately go to Christ in prayer and confess we have fallen short. When we follow His commands, He will continuously cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Only in that deeply close fellowship will we ever see how wonderful Jesus is; counseling and mediating prayer for us with our Father. Hymenaeus and Alexander are just two examples of rank apostates who were running rampant in the day in which we are studying. Their type permeates the church today. Paul didn't have anything good to say about either one of these men. Alexander the coppersmith did Paul *MUCH* harm. I would hate to be one who harmed the apostle Paul, friends. The significance and seriousness of false teaching, and *PARTICULARLY* as it relates to the resurrection, can render one a sheer blasphemer without them even having a dim awareness of their error. It is possible for one to be turned over to Satan by a genuine man of God in order that they might be saved and instructed. We'll just leave it at that....

II

1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

~ So, we come to a section of Scripture that deals with praying publicly for elected public officials. Prayer for public governance is an instruction that Christians are given in the church; but it must be done properly and correctly; and the focus of those prayers *MUST* be made completely for the right reasons, according to Scriptural admonitions. If you want to bring this into modern times, Paul would say the republicans ought to pray for the democrats, and democrats ought to pray for the republicans! Of course, that isn't likely to happen. The senate had a famous chaplain many decades ago who was showing a visitor around. The visitor asked if the chaplain prayed for the senators. The chaplain replied, "... no, I look at the senators and I pray for the country." That's also good advice. However, a prayer for

state must be relevant; and the only relevant prayer for men in a government more corrupt than the Roman Empire would be that God will choose them for salvation. Remember, Jesus prayed, saying, *".... I pray not for the world, but for those who are in the world whom Thou hast given Me."* God isn't interested in our politics; because He rules in the kingdom of men to begin with. No, God is interested in His Word reaching the lost man who needs salvation. Period....

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

~ Civil government is a gift from God. Romans chapter thirteen teaches that truth. *ANY* government is better than anarchy! I'm sure most of us fall very short of praying applicable and relevant prayers – and in giving thanks for the government we have. It's difficult to pray for modern-day politicians. I fully understand that man has corrupted, abused, and misused our political system to the point we are on the brink of political anarchy; but, at least, we still have a remaining relic of law and order – although God only knows for how much longer. That alone should make each of us fall down and pray right now. Prayer and repentance would be good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior. My prayer is that God will preserve our nation of laws, and that we be permitted to continue to have the freedom to take the entire Word of God to the entire world in sound doctrine for many decades to come. And that's my only prayer for this country, or *any* government, by the way.

The day is coming in these United States when the genuine child of God will be severely persecuted. I do *NOT* mean organized religion will suffer, though; because organized religion will continue to thrive as they go along with whatever happens in their usual phony, pious way. Well, the objective for the genuine child of God is not to get a particular man elected – because each politician is just as bad as the next corrupt individual. That's why our safari does not recommend one candidate over another. I'm not called to that; and the church is not called to do that, either. I am told to pray for that person in office regardless of who he or she is — or what party they belong to; because I want only to continue teaching the Word of God in sound doctrine. Any person that makes that possible has my vote and prayer....

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

~ So, our Spiritual Safari ends this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God in the Roman Empire where they had a different god for every hour of the day. Today, people give themselves to pleasure, entertainment, entertaining religions, sex – and you name it. Many women will literally throw their virtue out the window for an expensive dinner – sometimes for a cheap dinner! Man sacrifices his honor without hesitation for wealth and fame. That happens all day long in this world. Some people throw it all away in a casting call that doesn't even land them the part. In the temple, in Israel, there were many priests you could go to and be deceived. Now, Paul is saying, "... *there is only One Mediator.*" The Christian is never to confess to a man — or ask another man to make intercession for them — because it's not necessary. We can go directly to our Holy High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, personally — and any time. Christ is our Mediator. Christ is our High Priest Who ever lives to make intercession for us. Jesus understands *ALL* of our afflictions, failures, shortcomings, sicknesses — and sin. That's what Job was looking for in his book at chapter nine verse thirty-three. Job said, "... *neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay His Hand upon us both.*" Job didn't have the revelation of Christ that we have! That's something else we can be very, very thankful for today....

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ~

