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SEMINAR SIX

MAKING A SHIPWRECK OF THE FAITH

BY

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TEXT: I Timothy 1:18-20

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Life is a great journey on which we are in the process of going through. The Christian life has often been compared to a race; a flight; a warfare, a journey and more. To go through victoriously, you must maintain your faith because those who lose their faith will do much damage to their journey.

2.0 THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

The journey of life is like a journey on a ship from a destination from one side to another. Before anyone goes into the ocean, he must be fully prepared. The reason is that, no one in his right senses will go into an ocean, to get to the middle and get lost. There must be an intent or purpose before getting into the ocean either to fish, boat or to pass from one side to the other.

The basic idea is not to run the ship onto the rocks to destroy the ship and claim the lives of the occupants at the same time.

No one in the Christian life ever sets out on his journey of faith with the intent of getting wrecked somewhere in the middle, or just before they reach the other side. The intent is to do everything within our power with God's help to reach the other side and safely make it to heaven.

3.0 KEEPING YOUR SHIP AFLOAT

It is important to keep your ship afloat as you continue on this great journey from here to the other side.

Paul used two examples of shipwrecked faith when he spoke of Hymenaeus and Alexander. They were at one time involved in the preaching of the gospel, but soon became tools of the enemy in leading many astray.

So, it is important that you make sure your life is not a shipwreck and be used as an example for others. This can happen if you get your eyes off the Lord.

Paul was telling Timothy that there would be times of testing; that he would be tempted to give it all up and take to the easy road.

He was able to show Timothy shipwrecks that have found their place in:

- Rebellion
- Deception

So, he told Timothy what to do to steer clear of the rocks. It is important for us to do the same today.

4.0 STEERING CLEAR OF THE ROCKS

The rocks are those things that can hinder your journey of faith. They may look innocent, harmless, etc.

You need to take heed of the following to steer clear of the rocks:

I. WAR A GOOD WARFARE

In the midst of a difficult warfare, remember that God has a design and a purpose for your life. When Timothy started, grace was imparted into him by the laying on of hands - I Timothy 4:14, II Timothy 1:6. But in spite of that, he still had oppositions. His leadership was questioned by believers and unbelievers alike. He was asked to be bold (II Timothy 1:7). Stop doubting your abilities and calling. Timothy did until Paul reminded him. The challenges you are going through are good for you because they will keep you on track. So, wrestle in prayer over whatever challenge you may be going through.

- Serving God is not only about good times, good feelings and good days.
- Stop believing those lies from the devil. If you do, you will be setting yourself up for a shipwreck sooner than later.
- Thank God for good times, but I am committed to serve God in the bad times also.
- This warfare must be fought in the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:13-18).

II. HOLD ON TO FAITH

- There are two weapons: Faith and a Good Conscience. The two go together, but faiths comes first.
- You cannot have faith without having a good conscience.

- There must be faith in teaching and conscience in your actions
- When you have these two things, your life becomes a living example for others.
- Faith is often “senseless”. It does not appeal to our sense of direction for our lives.
- You need to trust in the great compass that God has given us for this journey you are on.
- The Bible tells us clearly of the difficulty we have with this when it says: *“There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death”* (Proverbs 14:12).
- So be careful, your compass can often be in disagreement with the direction already established in the word of God.
- Use the tools He has placed in your hands and the faith he has placed in your heart to avoid a shipwreck.
- Continue in faith
- A Shipwreck is avoided when your faith has been tested through the storms and trials of life and you realise that you must remain in Jesus Christ.
- Not only must you war a good warfare and hold on to faith, but you must also...

III. HOLD ON TO A GOOD CONSCIENCE

- Conscience is that still small voice inside of you.
- Paul told Timothy that putting off a good conscience is like tossing valuable weights overboard, thereby making the entire ship unmanageable.
- Direction becomes more difficult to latch on to and maintain
- The storms affect the boat in greater manner than before
- Billy Graham says, “Most people follow their conscience as they follow a wheel barrow. You push it in front of you in the direction you want it to go”
- See John 8:9; the conscience of the people smote them and they walked away.
- Let your conscience be washed and cleansed by the blood of Jesus as no wealth can purchase
- Good conscience
- Keep doing things that are right, even if they are unpopular
- Don’t throw away the things that God has placed in your life to enable you to get to heaven in victory

4.0 WHAT TO OVERCOME

a) Your Dream

- People have their own set of dreams and priorities but they may not be God’s.
- Pursuing such will lead to sinking easily in a storm

- Many are feeding their bodies, but starving their souls and shipwrecking their faith.
- Be careful of your dream.

4.1 CONCLUSION

- Many ships are ushered out of the harbour with a loud ovation, waving arms and glorious send-offs, only to be met with hardship in the middle of the ocean and become only another shipwreck on the bottom of the ocean. In order to keep your ship on top, you need to continue to:
 - War a good warfare
 - Hold on to faith
 - Hold on to a good conscience
 - Watch your dream.