



## A Spiritual Encouragement Message

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### Smooth Sailing!

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The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy to encourage him to hold fast in the faith. One way he did that was by discussing two men who had made a “shipwreck of their faith”.

***Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well, holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme. (1 Tim. 1:18-20)***

Hymenaeus and Alexander will be forever remembered as those who have made a “shipwreck of their faith”. Unfortunately, we know very little about Hymenaeus and Alexander, that it becomes difficult to know the extent of their sin. Alexander is such a common name that all attempts to tie him to Alexander the metal worker **2 Tim. 4:14**, or Alexander the Jew (**Acts 19:33**) are speculations at best. However, Hymenaeus is mentioned again by Paul in the second letter to Timothy and his name is rather rare, even by 1<sup>st</sup> Century standards. Not the comparison between the exhortation of Timothy and the condemnation of Hymenaeus.

***Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have departed from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. (2 Tim. 2:14-18)***

Hymenaeus was a man who sought to “quarrel about words and indulging in godless chatter”. Essentially, Hymenaeus was a vicious gossip and a man who sought to entertain ungodly theology that perverted the minds of other Christians. He spent more time on the unknown than he did on the KNOWN. Which is why Paul tells Timothy to “present yourself to God as one approved”. The contrast is astounding! One man is godless and another God-approved!



In this time of isolation and loneliness, we can so easily be tempted to chase after godless chatter and the quarreling of words. Perhaps you've heard the conspiracy theories? Maybe you disagree with a number of things that have happened over the last few weeks. The question is, how are we going to handle these things?

***Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. (2 Tim. 2:22-24)***

- **Flee from sin** during this time of isolation. Only YOU know the temptations you face in your lonely moments. Consider Him who paid this ultimate price to purchase us by His name!
- **Pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace** during this time of isolation. We live in a busy world. Many of us have even busier schedules. One blessing of this social experiment is that we have schedules almost immediately clear up (some of us...). If you find yourself with extra time, spend it in **prayer or study**. After you've enjoyed that, pick up the phone and call someone. I'm amazed at the comfort given to me when speaking to God's people.
- **Be kind to everyone** in this time of distress. There are many different opinions out there. And, opinions are like elbows. Everybody has a couple of them and they're capable of rubbing people the wrong way. Maybe you're mad that your neighbor stockpiled food and toilet paper? Maybe you're insulted that someone is upset with you for stockpiling food and toilet paper? Whatever the situation, our resentment and frustration will not serve Christ. Only our kindness and willingness to serve can do that.

Folks, we are experiencing more isolation than we are used to. It can be lonely, overwhelming, and terrifying! Unfortunately, our shut-ins feel this year-round... Remember, when Adam was alone in the Garden, God said it **“is not good for man to be alone”**. I don't know what Adam was doing to cause God to create Eve, but I know it wasn't good. Reach out! My prayer is that you experience smooth sailing in your journey of faith! Do not let isolation and loneliness become the sandbar that wrecks your ship!