Healthy Churches

**G u a r d t h e g o s p e l m e s s a g e**

**Part 2: They live the message**

(1 Timothy 1:12-20)

*12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service,13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief,14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

*18 This charge I entrust to you, Timothy my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,19 holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith,20 among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. (ESV)*

*Apply the gospel to your own life* (1:12-17)

* Credit the Lord for life change (v. 12)
* Recall pre-conversion state (v. 13)

**Acts 22:3-5**

3“I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day. 4I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women, 5as the high priest and the whole council of elders can bear me witness. From them I received letters to the brothers, and I journeyed toward Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.

**Acts 26:9-11**

9“I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. 11And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme, and in raging fury against them I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

William Barclay describes the word, “insolent opponent” (v. 13):

“The corresponding abstract noun is *hubris*, which Aristotle defines: ‘*Hubris* means to hurt and to grieve people, in such a way that shame comes to the man who is hurt and grieved, and not that the person who inflicts the hurt and injury may gain anything else in addition to what he already possesses, but simply that he may find delight in his own cruelty and in the suffering of the other person.’”

* Explain how God changed you (v. 14)

**Philippians 1:29**

“For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake.”

**Romans 2:4**

“Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?”

* Declare that the gospel saves all sinners (v. 15)
* Reassure that Jesus is patient (v. 16)
* Offer praise to God for life change (v. 17)

*Challenge believers to remain steadfast in faith* (1:18-20)

* Corporate accountability helps us remain steadfast (v. 18)
* Our conscience helps us remain steadfast (v. 19)
* Fatal examples help us remain steadfast (vs. 19-20)

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