

HYMENAEOUS & ALEXANDER – CHURCH DISCIPLINE

INTRODUCTION

During Paul's earthly ministry he was forced to deal with false teachers. This was important because these teachers were damaging the faith of some. Hymenaeus was a prominent man in the church at Ephesus. He had become seriously sidetracked by the enemy. This allowed Satan to use him to hurt the faith of some. Paul used the word, "blaspheme" to describe Hymenaeus' error. Blaspheme is a false teaching that reproaches God's character or His revealed truth (see **Nu.15:30-31**). Paul's prayer is that this severe discipline would bring both Hymenaeus and Alexander back into full fellowship with the Lord and with His people (**1Tm.1:20**, "learn"). Despite their error, Paul did not think they committed the unpardonable sin. The devil is still active today doing the same thing to upset God's work. Paul was concerned of becoming useless to the Lord for further service (**1Co.9:27**). Church discipline today is much neglected. In Western culture it places authority with the individual. However, Scripture is clear that the church has real authority (**Mt.16:19; 18:15-20**). Church pronouncements are binding when they agree with God's Word.



- ¹⁹"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: ²⁰Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." (**1Tm.1:19-20**)
- ¹⁷"And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; ¹⁸Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." (**2Tm.2:17-18**)
- ¹⁴"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: ¹⁵Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words." (**2Tm.4:14-15**)

PROBLEMS



1 FALSE TEACHING

Hymenaeus was teaching that the resurrection, and by implication the second coming, had already occurred. Most assume this means that he was teaching there was no resurrection from the dead (**1 Corinthians 15:12**), but only a moral resurrection at conversion (as taught in **Romans 6:4**). Such false teaching would remove any hope in a future life after death. There was already the false notion that the resurrection was past. And that Jesus' resurrection was the only one. The resurrection of believers was only a parable to teach the freedom of the soul to the one that comes to Christ. Paul taught against this notion in **1 Corinthians 15:12-19**. The believer looks for the future physical resurrection of the body.

2 SHIPWRECKED FAITH (Process)

1. They put away a good conscience (**1Tm.1:19, Ac.24:16**). It had become dull! It is very important to have a clear conscience.
2. They have shipwrecked their faith (**1Tm.1:19**)
3. They lived careless and undisciplined lives (**2Tm.2:19**)



3 DAMAGING THE FAITH OF OTHERS

He was causing other people to wreck their faith by his false teachings (**2Tm.2:18**).

SOLUTIONS

- 1 **ACKNOWLEDGE THE POSSIBILITY** "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (**1Co.10:12**)
- 2 **ACKNOWLEDGE OUR DEPENDANCE ON THE LORD** "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (**Jd.24**)
- 3 **PERFORM SELF-JUDGMENT ON OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION** "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." (**1Co.11:31**)
- 4 **THE CHURCH IS TO MARK THOSE THAT CAUSE DIVISION** "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." (**Rm.16:17**)