

# WHAT'S YOUR MESSAGE?

**Introduction:** Advertising is worth big dollars.

- Good slogans can affect sales, help with elections
  - Who remembers “It’s Time!”??
- A good charismatic communicator can get people mobilised
  - To earn money
  - To buy an investment
  - Influence a crowd
    - For politics
    - For church
    - For a nation

**1 Timothy 1:4b** ...*These [people] promote controversies rather than God’s work – which is by faith.*

- Some promote controversies
- Rather than God’s work
- Key to good promotion of God’s work is LOVE

**1 Timothy 1:5** *The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

- True love is motivated by our heart, our conscience and our faith

## 1. Pure Heart

- If love’s motivation comes from a “pure heart”, what does that look like?
- Starts with God’s love for us, and our response

**Jeremiah 31:3** *The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.”*

- God draws us with His loving kindness.
- A pure heart:
  - Unmixed with other material
  - Original wording can be applied to pruning



- A pure heart has been pruned to make it fit to bear fruit.



ILLUSTRATION: Rick Warren's father on death bed; "One more for Jesus".

## 2. Good Conscience

- Conscience can be trained by culture, family upbringing
  - This can be both good and bad.
  - Many cultures have no problem in disposing of unwanted children.

ILLUSTRATION: <sup>1</sup> From a letter dated 17 June, 1 BC. From a Roman soldier names Hilarion – based in Alexandria – to his wife Alis, assuring her his pay was on his way to her. He wrote:

*Hilarion to his sister Alis, many greetings, also to my lady Berous and Apollonarion. Know that I am still in Alexandria; and do not worry if they [the army] wholly set out, I am staying in Alexandria. I ask you and entreat you, take care of the child, and if I receive my pay soon, I will send it up to you. Above all, if you bear a child and it is male, let it be; if it is female, cast it out. You have told Aphrodisias, 'Do not forget me.' But how can I forget you? Thus I am asking your not to worry.... The 29<sup>th</sup> year of Caesar, Pauni 23." [17 June, 1 BC]*

ILLUSTRATION 2: Xaveiria Hollander, author of "The Happy Hooker"

Xaviera Hollander, a prostitute, sought to silence the people who believed that no prostitute could find joy in what she was doing. In her book, Hollander celebrates the joy she experienced in her profession, saying that she never felt guilty about what she was doing. "To be sure," Hollander said, "The first time I involved myself in prostitution, I felt pangs of guilt. But over time, I got to the point where feelings of guilt dissipated."

<sup>1</sup> "Bullies and Saints" by John Dickson.[Zondervan Reflective © 2021] Page 34

However, there was one important exception to this. Whenever Hollander heard the ringing of church bells, her conscience would flare up. She was reminded that what she was doing was wrong in God's sight. Even this hardened professional prostitute could not totally destroy the conscience that God had placed in her.

- Conscience can be reset to serve God
  - Petrie Terrace Madam (1974)

**Hebrews 9:14** *How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

- Good conscience is a guide post

ILLUSTRATION: PARABLE OF THE WORKER (Matthew 20:1-16)

- How did a good conscience help the land owner?

**Matthew 20:13-15** *But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous.'*

- If your conscience does not condemn you, then you can love freely.

### 3. Sincere Faith

What is faith?

**Hebrews 11:1; 6** *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.... And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

- Be certain
- God rewards those who earnestly seek Him.
- Sincere faith is not hypocritical
  - Operate at the level of your faith
- Hypocritical faith is all show but no heart

**1 Corinthians 13:2** *...If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*

ILLUSTRATION: The Parable of the Great Feast (Luke 14:15-24)

- People invited and presumably accepted invitation.
  - They knew everything was being prepared.

Excuse #1:

**Luke 14:18** *But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must see it. Please excuse me.'*

Excuse #2:

**Luke 14:19** *Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.'*

Excuse #3:

**Luke 14:20** *Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'*

- This kind of faith –
  - does not promote God's work
  - does not love deeply
- the owner wants his house full

**Luke 14:21b** *...Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'*

- Those not normally invited.

**Luke 14:23** *Then the master told his servant, 'go out to the roads and country lanes, and make them come in, so that my house will be full.'*

- Things were now urgent – “MAKE them come...”
- Paul’s Testimony:

**1 Timothy 1:12-17** *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*