

1 Timothy 6:11-16, Are you living the eternal life God gave you?

As we come to the end of the letter, God urges Timothy to flee from the sins of those in Ephesus who love to argue and fight and are greedy for money. Instead, he must *fight the good fight of faith*; he must continue living out the eternal life God's given him until his last breath.

6:11, "*flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness*" instead of following the path of those who reject the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who love to argue, pursue the love of money, and use religion to get rich, Timothy must pursue the behavior God's been urging him to pursue since the letter began: righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness, 1:3-7, 8-11, 12-17; 2:1-7, 8-15; 3:1-13, 14-15; 4:1-11, 12-16; 5:1-16, 17-25; 6:1-10.

6:12, "*Fight the good fight of faith*" how do you fight the battle of faith; a fight worth having that is beneficial? What's God told Timothy throughout this letter about that battle?

1:3-7, he's to stop the nonsensical and false teaching going on in Ephesus and replace it with God's Truth in order to stop all the fighting and arguing, all the ungodliness in the people, so that godliness will replace ungodliness, i.e., so the people will *fight the good fight of faith*.

1:18-19, he's to fulfill the prophecies God has spoken about him and use the faith and good conscience God gave him to *fight the battle of faith*.

2:1-15, he's to urge the men and women to *fight the good fight of faith*, i.e., to fulfill their God-given roles: men aren't to use their hands to argue and fight but pray. Women aren't to focus on outward appearance but their godly character and they're not to take positions of authority which God gave to the men of the church. And men are to take responsibility for their leadership roles instead of failing to lead as Adam did in the Garden of Eden.

3:1-13, he's to select men of godly character as the leaders of the church who will likewise *fight the good fight of faith*, i.e., who will show the family of God how to live godly lives the way they've shown their own families and others through their teaching, example, and apprenticeship, i.e., so that they'll show the church how to *fight the good fight of faith*.

3:14-15, he's to show the entire church how to safeguard and preach the Truth of Jesus Christ, who is the only One who can unravel the mystery of how to be godly because He's without a doubt God Almighty in the flesh, the only One who can turn ungodly sinners like the Gentiles into saints, i.e., turn sinners into people who *fight the good fight of faith*.

4:1-11, he's to *fight the good fight of faith* against those who've departed from the faith and gone after Satan's teachings. He's to show the brethren just how beneficial the godliness contained in the *good fight of faith* can be not only in this life but the one to come.

4:12-16, he's to be an example of godliness in every area of his *good fight of faith*. He's to give himself entirely to its teaching and application so his progress and example will be evident to all and thereby deliver himself and those around him.

5:1-6:10, he's to correct those who've gone astray as gently and respectfully as he would his own parents and siblings. Thus, he's to correct the problems in how they treat widows (the qualified and unqualified), the problems in how they treat the elders (the qualified and unqualified, i.e., those worthy of pay and those worthy of rebuke), their failures in selecting the next leaders, the problems in how slaves treat masters and masters treat slaves, the problems in those with corrupt minds who love to argue and use religion to get rich, and the problems in those greedy for wealth who fail to realize that the love of money brings only destruction and sorrow, they fail to see that the godliness in the *good fight of faith* will give them true contentment even though they may only have food and shelter/clothing.

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Did you know that you were supposed to be a warrior, that you were supposed to *fight the good fight of faith* in every area of your life? Your faith is supposed to equip and enable you to fight for every square inch of your life, 1:5, 18-19. For your marriage, your spouse, your kids, your in-laws, your siblings, your cousins, your aunts and uncles, your nieces and nephews, your job, your co-workers, your boss, and on and on. Everywhere that Satan is winning, you're supposed to step in and fight him off the way God is asking Timothy to do with every individual in the church and every problem in the church. Who's winning in your life, Satan or the Lord?

"lay hold on eternal life" does Timothy need to be saved, is he lacking eternal life? NO! He's already saved eternally, 1:1, 2, 18. Eternal life cannot be earned; it's acquired by simple faith, 1:16. However, after you're born, you have a life to live. Thus, Timothy who's taken control of his eternal life, must continue to fulfill the calling God gave him. He's made a confession of his faith and ministry but many have also witnessed firsthand Timothy's godly life. This is what God expects him to continue, 4:12-16. In other words, will Timothy lay hold of his eternal life and apply the faith he already possesses, will he *fight the good fight of faith*?

6:13-14, "I urge you in the sight of God...and before Christ Jesus...that you keep *this commandment*" as he did before, 5:21, Paul mentions once again that everything we do takes place in front of God. So he urges Timothy in God's presence to "keep *this commandment*." That is, he wants Timothy to fulfill everything he's told him in this letter and to do so in the most godly manner or as he puts it "without spot, blameless," which is what God has urged Timothy before, 4:12; 5:21, and which is the main characteristic of elders and deacons, 3:1-13. How long is Timothy to live this godly life, how long must he *fight the good fight of faith*? "Until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing." It's been nearly 2,000 years since Paul wrote this letter and Timothy is dead and buried and the Lord hasn't yet returned. So what does Paul mean? He means that Timothy (and we) must keep walking in faith, keep living out our eternal life until our last breath.

"who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate" Timothy's charge is for him to take control of his eternal life and live it faithfully. And now God points to the greatest example of taking hold of your eternal life: Jesus Christ. What was Jesus' witness, what was His good confession, how did He live His eternal life before the governor Pontius Pilate, who had the power to take His life? Jesus showed Pilate and the world that when you live a life of faith, when you *fight the good fight of faith*, when you take hold of your eternal life, God shows you the truth about the trouble that surrounds you (John 19:1-12): Pilate didn't have power over Jesus' life; God did, the One with the power of life, 6:16. So if God allowed Pilate to take Jesus' life, God could give it back to Him. That's what you will experience when you walk by the eternal life that beats inside you. You see, eternal life is a Person (1 John 1:1-3) who indwells you, 1:5, 14, 16, and speaks, 6:3.

6:15-16, "which He will manifest in His own time, *He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords*" who is Paul talking about, is this a reference to God the Son or God the Father? Jesus is called King of kings and Lord of lords in Revelation 17:14 and 19:16. However, 6:16 gives us clear indication that this reference is to God the Father because this individual is one whom "no man has seen or can see." So, God the Father, in His own timing, will reveal His Son's return to earth. He "alone has immortality" and dwells "in unapproachable light." We have eternal life because He gives it to us, but God is the only true immortal. Our immortality comes from Him. To Him "be honor and everlasting power. Amen."