

1 Timothy 6:12-21 – Fight, Keep, Give, & Guard

Michael Silva / July 30, 2017

Opening: Joke

- There were three guys talking in the bar.
- Two of them are talking about the amount of control they had over their wives, while the third remained quiet.
- After a while one of the first two turned to the third and said, "Well, what about you, what sort of control do you have over your wife?"
- The third fellow replied, "I'll tell you. Just the other night my wife came to me on her hands and knees."
- The first two guys were amazed. "What happened then?" they asked.
- "She said, 'get out from under the bed and fight like a man'."

Transition: In Paul's final words to Timothy he too issues the challenge to **Fight**.

1. The final verses of 1 Timothy can be summed up in 4 words...
 - a) Fight – Keep – Give – Guard
 - i) They form a perfect balance in the life of a believer.
2. We have come to the end of our Journey through the book of 1 Timothy, which has had lot to say about church leadership, doctrine, and **discipleship**.

Let's read our passage: 1 Timothy 6:12-21 (NKJV)ⁱ And Pray...

1. Last Week... Our passage addressed Masters, Misleaders & Money-Seekers.
 - a) Paul's final words help us overcome Misleaders and avoid becoming Money-seekers.

1 Timothy 6:12 ¹² Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

1. The word **Fight** in the original Greek - **ἀγωνίζομαι** (a-go-ni-zo-mai) – A word that describes both military and athletic contests with the idea of **winning**.
 - a) It means to contend with adversaries, fight, struggle, with difficulties and danger, to endeavor with strenuous zeal.

2. The word **Fight** is an active present-tense imperative.
 - a) This is **not** a suggestion, but a **command**.
 - b) The grammar also indicates that this is an **ongoing** action. Keep fighting...!
 - c) One of the training events I loved in the **Marine Corps** was something called **pugil sticks**.
 - i) Two Marines fight each other with a padded stick that simulate rifles.
 - ii) You **pummel** each other hoping to be the first one to deliver a “death blow.”
 - iii) No matter how exhausted you get, you **don’t stop fighting** until the whistle is blown.
 - d) That’s the idea in Paul’s letter... we keep fighting.
 - i) But we are not waiting for a whistle, we are waiting for the sound of **trumpet** that announces that Christ has come for us.
3. That said, we are **not** in a **physical fight** like Marines in training or like Mayweather and McGregor on Aug 26th.
 - a) Instead we are in a spiritual battle.
 - i) **Ephesians 6:12–13** ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
4. The prize or goal is... **eternal life**.
 - a) Of course, all believers will receive eternal life at the end of this life.
 - b) But the idea here is that we don’t just wait for eternity to come at the end of this life, we fight our way toward eternity day by day.
 - i) **Hebrews 12:1–2** ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
5. Making it personal: Are you fighting the Good Fight and Running the Race with endurance?

1 Timothy 6:13-14

¹³ I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴ that you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

1. Before I address the *urge* let point out an attribute... God is the *life-giver*. He *gives life to all things*.
 - a) This is why *abortion* is such a tragedy! Doctors, devices, pills, and procedures are ending the life that God has given.
 - b) With almost a million abortions a year in the U.S. alone, it shows that our society does not understand who God our Father is and how precious life is.

2. Now the *urge* or charge from Paul to Timothy.
 - a) It begins by *bringing Jesus into view*.
 - i) You can only fight the good fight if you have your *eyes on Jesus*.
 - ii) He is both our *example* and *inspiration*.
 - b) After both the *Pearl Harbor and 9-11 attacks*, military *recruitment surged*.
 - i) People saw something greater than themselves, the greater good of the entire U.S. over their own personal pursuits.
 - ii) We need an external motivation that is greater than oneself.
 - iii) How can we step up to fight the good fight? By first being motivated by who Jesus is and what He has done for us.
 - (1) He *witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate*.
 - (2) Though He faced death and the opportunity to escape it, He stayed the course. He did not waver or back down.

3. With Jesus in view now Paul urges us to... *keep this commandment without spot*, being *blameless*, which speaks of a life that isn't defiled by persistent on-going, unconfessed sin.
 - a) *Keep!* The idea is to hold onto. Don't let it go! Attend to it carefully.

4. Making it personal: Are you keeping the commandment without spot?
 - a) Are their hidden things in your life that need to be exposed to the light, confessed and repented of?

5. How long was Timothy to continue to fight the good fight of faith?
 - a) *until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing*
 - b) Since Jesus hasn't come back we continue on in this contest!

c) But this should also serve as an **encouragement**... Christ will appear again!

i) The scriptures clearly tell us that Jesus will be coming again, and I believe that day will be soon.

1 Timothy 6:15 ¹⁵ which He will manifest in His own time, *He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,*

1. Paul shifts from Jesus in verse 14 to **God the Father** in verses 15-16.

2. The word **Potentate** can also be translated as **Sovereign**.

a) This speaks of God's absolute power.

b) In **Isaiah 46:11b** God says through the prophet... "Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it."

3. The titles given to Jesus in Revelation are here ascribed to God the Father, they are both **the King of kings and Lord of lords**.

a) Remember in Paul's day that Caesar declared himself to be a god and demanded that his subjects worship him as such.

b) Yet, Paul boldly declares that God is over all, including Caesar.

c) God rules over the entire universe and has set it in order and at the same time is intimately involved in the affairs of His children. **INCREDIBLE!!!**

1 Timothy 6:16 ¹⁶ who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

1. We have not seen nor can we see God the Father, but Jesus Christ, He has made Him known. (See John 1:18)

2. The eternal God who has **immortality** dwells in **unapproachable light**, yet we are also told in...

a) **Hebrews 4:16** Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

i) Which is it? Is He **unapproachable** or can we boldly come to Him?

b) Jesus has granted us access to the Father spiritually, yet in our physical state we find Him **unapproachable**.

i) The contrast between the two is not to confuse us, but to help cultivate a **healthy reverence** and **awe** for His **holiness**.

ii) We should worship and honor Him who as everlasting power.

3. Making it personal: It's not about what Jesus and the Father can do for me, but how I can honor Him.

1 Timothy 6:17

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

1. Earlier Paul spoke of those who might have a love of money, but don't possess it.
 - a) Here Paul speaks of those who do have money.
 - b) The word haughty means high-minded, you think of yourself as being more important than others.
 - c) Paul says, don't trust in those riches, which can be uncertain, because what is valuable and esteemed today can be gone tomorrow.
 - d) Our greatest investment is in knowing and following the living God.
2. Where did the riches come from?
 - a) Is it that you worked hard? Perhaps. Is it because you were in the right place at the right time? Perhaps.
 - b) But ultimately those riches and all that we have has come from the Father who gives us richly all things to enjoy.
 - c) Here we see that riches are not bad. We also see that riches can be enjoyed, they are often the fruit of your labor.
3. Making it personal: How do you handle your money and possessions? Are you doing so in a way that recognizes where they came from?

Paul now goes on to say how the rich can honor God, by Giving... **1 Timothy 6:18-19** ¹⁸ Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

1. The command to do good is a challenge to do what is noble and excellent.
2. David Guzik reminds us that "Being a giver, and doing good with our resources is what guards our heart from materialism and trusting in uncertain riches."
 - a) **GIVE:** Giving a tithe or a 10th and the giving of offerings, that which is above and beyond your tithe to the church, helps guard our hearts from greed.

- a) We can't focus on just one, we need all four to be balanced.

Invitation: Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

Benediction: 1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

ⁱ All scripture references, unless otherwise noted, are taken from The New King James Version. (1982). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.
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