

# 26. Gospel Driven Life

## Fight the Good Fight

1. Intro: Knowing the what and why of fighting makes a huge difference in our ability to stay in the fight (e.g. World War 2 vs. politically driven wars; fighting for family vs. stranger)
  - a. What am I fighting for?
    - i. For years, it was escaping (books, movies, games)
  - b. What are YOU fighting for?
    - i. Climb the ladder? Most likes on facebook? Compensate for your past? Prove something to your dad?
  - c. **1 Timothy 1:18, "Wage the good warfare..."**
    - i. Paul tells Timothy to FIGHT. But for what? Why? How?
2. *[11] But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. [12] Fight the good fight of the faith.*
  - a. What Paul wants Timothy to do → be a good soldier for Jesus (man of God)
    - i. What 1 Timothy has been about → Fight for God by being gospel centered
    - ii. Now he gives practical things to do
  - b. Fight the good fight by fleeing sin and pursuing virtue**
    - i. A good soldier knows when to flee, when to pursue
    - ii. A man/woman of God knows when to flee, when/what to pursue
  - c. A lifestyle of repentance
    - i. Active terms, nothing passive about them
    - ii. RUN from sin like it's guaranteed destruction (b/c it is... c.f. James 1)
      1. Examples of fleeing vs. not fleeing sin and evil
      2. Not "run from sinners" → run from sin in your life
    - iii. Pursue virtues of faith with all your might (picture is of vigorous athletics)
      1. In the word, in prayer, in community, fasting, choosing to obey
        - a. Hear. Embrace. Live. → Hear and obey.
  - d. Fight the good fight by living a repentant life.**
    - i. A gospel shaped, gospel driven life
3. *Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called...*
  - a. Every soldier needs to know they are fighting for something
    - i. Keep a picture, letter, keepsake w/ them
  - b. Take hold of eternal life → keep it close to your chest to remind you why you fight
    - i. What we've received (past tense); what we pass on in Christ's name
  - c. We don't fight in order to obtain eternal life. We fight because we have been given eternal life and so can live, and fight, fearlessly.**
4. *Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. [13] I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius*

*Pilate made the good confession, [14] to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, [15] which he will display at the proper time...*

- a. In ANE, so much hinged on glory and honor → to die well
  - i. To not be ashamed; to honor your emperor
- b. As soldiers would train, before they were officially enlisted, they had to proclaim an oath - a confession - before the emperor and many witnesses
  - i. Desertion = being a traitor to your king. You swore, you confessed
  - ii. You agreed to fight for the glory, honor, purposes of the emperor
- c. Paul is using this imagery for a reason
  - i. Christians fight for glory and honor as well, but not for an earthly king
  - ii. Appearing (v.14) refers to Jesus' ultimate coronation as King of kings
  - iii. Eternal life is what we have been given by this king
  - iv. Our response is our confession ("about which you made...")
    - 1. In Paul's mind, he is thinking baptism - publicly following Jesus
  - v. To follow Jesus as king would be insurrection - rebellion
    - 1. What Jesus was charged with - who is the king? Jesus or Caesar?
  - vi. Our confession hold much more weight b/c it is in the presence of:
    - 1. God - who gives life to all things
    - 2. Jesus - whose confession cost him his life (and it was given back by God, who gives life)

**d. Fight the good fight by honoring your oath of allegiance.**

- i. To deny it is to forget who you are, who he is → and who is he?

5. *... he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, [16] who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.*

- a. He is the only God
  - i. Not one among many, not you, not some religious leader, not your XYZ
- b. He is King and Lord over everyone you follow, fear, seek to please
- c. He is uncreated → Do you realize how different that makes him?
- d. He dwells in unapproachable light → Indiana Jones, face-melting glory
  - i. Nobody has seen him, nobody can see him
- e. The only one who deserves honor (so follow him, listen to him)
- f. The only one who will reign forever
- g. How do we begin to approach the unapproachable one? WE DON'T w/out Christ
  - i. But in Christ, we boldly approach the throne and are sworn into his army

**h. Fight the good fight by remembering for whom you fight.**

6. *[17] As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. [18] They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, [19] thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. [20] O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called*

*“knowledge,” [21] for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.*

- a. Rich, poor, widow, married, slave, free, pastor → **Fight the good fight.**
  - b. Fight the good fight by remembering that you fight for the gospel.**
- 7. Paul fought the good fight.
  - a. 2 Tim 4:7, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”
  - b. And Timothy in his footsteps... and so many other Christians in history
    - i. Poured out for the gospel
    - ii. Fought the good fight at all odds, at great pain, at risk
  - c. Made their lives count
    - i. Paul said whether I live or die, it is for Christ
  - d. Will we fight the good fight? Will I? Will you?
    - i. I think of Bilbo Baggins in the Hobbit → invited to a grand adventure bigger than himself
      - 1. Will he go, or will he stay and enjoy the comforts of home?
  - e. My pep talk won't do anything → this needs to come from somewhere else
    - i. Two sources: Legalism or the gospel
      - 1. Legalism says foundation is “my fighting the good fight”
        - a. WRONG
      - 2. Gospel says:
        - a. Foundation = WHO GOD IS (v. 15b-16)
        - b. ETERNAL LIFE (v12b)
        - c. CONFESSION OF ALLEGIANCE (v12c)
        - d. FLEE & PURSUE
        - e. FIGHT WELL
        - f. GOSPEL DRIVEN LIFE
  - f. We are invited, called to fight the good fight.
    - i. To stand upon the foundation of who God is, clinging to the eternal life we have been given, and boldly proclaiming our allegiance to him as we flee from sin and pursue Christlikeness - all for the glory of God.**
    - ii. We are called, like Paul, to live and to die for the gospel. Will we?
    - iii. Will we fight?
  - g. **Fight the Good Fight** → glorify God, in word and deed, make disciples