

don't care how difficult the conflict is, they don't care how long and how hard the circumstances are, they won't quit because it's not in their vocabulary. That's the word that's used here. I want to tell you something, you delight the heart of God when you hang in there. And when you stay by the stuff and you persevere. Let me describe it this way: It's steadfastness in the midst of adversity.

Now the last one is the word "Gentleness."

This is the only place this occurs in the New Testament. But there is another word translated gentleness that is a manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

Gentleness is seen in 2 Cor. 10:1. Paul says, "*I came to you in the gentleness of Christ.*"

It's the word in 1 Thess. 2:7, "*We were gentle with you like a nursing mother.*" It's the fruit of dealing with our selfishness.

When you are broken and the self is put aside, you are going to become a gentle person. The "*gentleness*" is the result of dealing with selfishness.

Let's go to Verse 12

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“Fight the good fight of faith; Take hold of eternal life to which you were called and confessed the good confession before many witnesses.”

So Imperative #1: *Keep on fleeing these things.*

for I shall rest in the joy of my Lord.”

(From Descending into Greatness by Bill Hybels and Rob Wilkins, p. 163, taken from a plaque on Lorrie Shaver’s bedroom wall)

You know, that’s it.

A person who’s persevering and is “*fighting a good fight.*”

Maybe you’re sitting here thinking, “*Well, I didn’t even know we were in a fight.*” Well you may have a problem.

You know, the Bible teaches us that we are.

We have a war on three fronts. And a leader recognizes this.

We’re fighting the world, the flesh and the devil in this.

And so he tells Timothy, “*fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of eternal life to which you were called and confess the good confession before many witnesses.*”

Now whereas you had two present imperatives in the previous verse, you have one more present imperative and a aorist imperative here and I’ll explain the aorist in just a minute.

So you have 3 present imperatives.

Understand, imperative means it’s a command.

Three commands in the present tense.

v. 12 *“Keep on fighting the good fight of faith.”*

Why is he saying that to Timothy?

You see, the only way he can say that to Timothy, is because he’s already fighting. He just needs to keep on doing it.

2 Timothy 4:7: *“I fought a good fight, I’ve finished the course, I kept the faith;”*

God delights in finishers, Timothy.

Keep on fighting the good fight.

Now you may say, well that sounds like military terminology. You could take it that way.

But really it’s an athletic terminology.

It’s the word agonizo. We get the word agony.

And any athlete knows the word agony. The agony of defeat.

It’s a struggle, it’s a strain, it’s every nerve.

We need to recognize the fact that we are in a war and that we’re putting everything we have into it.

William Bennett wrote a book called The De-Valuing of America: The Fight for Our Culture and Our Children. Listen to this. This is the neatest thing. It's called "Reflections on being in the fight:"

"Who am I? If you believe what I've been called in print, I am: a medieval knight jousting against an immoral world; Knight of the Right; the Reagan administration's principal breaker of crockery; a bull in a china shop; a black sheep; the Lone Ranger; a loose cannon; a Neanderthal; a bully with a pulpit instead of a leader in a bully pulpit; the man who put the bully back into the pulpit; the cowboy in the capital; a noisy ideologue; a motor-mouth; a pain in the neck; sexist; imperialist; bourgeois; ethnocentric; selfish; solipsistic; [whatever that means] secretary of ignorance; secretary of private education; secretary smarty-pants; secretary of religion; heaven-sent to silence the heathen; an ayatollah; Bennett the Hun; propagandist and ideological gangster; an ideological samurai; a divisive fearmonger; elitist; populist; someone who rushes in where politicians fear to tread; a political pimp; a husky brawler; a walking rock and roll encyclopedia; philosopher and tough Irish cop; a pit bull with a brain; a tornado in a wheat field; someone

who combined the ideals of Erasmus with the tactics of an alley fighter; the Cabinet’s resident Dennis the Menace.”

(p. 225)

Now after that big list, you’d think he’s saying,

“Please pray for me and feel sorry for me.”

Do you want to hear what he says?

“During ten years in politics, I have been called a lot of things and I’ve been at the center of some political storms.

But I have had a great time, and I have no large regrets.”

(p. 225)

Fourth command then is in the aorist tense and could be translated like this: *get a grip on the eternal life to which you were called, and confess the good confession before many witnesses.*

You might think, “Is there a sense of him losing it?”

No, not at all. Paul’s just saying, get a real good hold on your relationship to Christ because there’s going to be a lot of pressure to knock your relationship to Christ out of your hand.

Now, let me put two other verses beside this.

Although the same words are not used, the thought is there.

Philippians 3:12-14:

“Not that I have already obtained it, or laid hold of it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which I was also laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Phillip Keller wrote a book called Sky Edge. It’s an old man who has retired to the mountains and in the mountains he is now reflecting on many of the lessons of life. Listen to what he says:

“There has to be that deep grounding of our lives in the very bedrock of Christ’s character if we are to endure the blasts of adversity.

Christian leaders speak too easily, too glibly, too romantically of “getting onto higher ground with God.” It is

almost as if they are inviting their listeners to take a stroll into a summer rose garden.

To get onto a higher life with the Risen Christ demands great discipline from the disciple. It calls for separation from the world's soft and cozy associations. It means strong self-denial, standing alone in noble, lofty living. It entails suffering, sorrow, pain and the drastic endurance of adversity.”

(p. 84)

Now let's look at verse 13.

V.13 “I am giving you a charge in the presence of God, who causes all things to live, and Christ Jesus, the one who in His testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession;”

Paul is saying, “*I'm getting ready to charge you young Timothy and I want to charge you in the presence of God the Father*” Who does what? “*Who causes all things to live.*”

He's the source of life.

He's the reason you have physical life.

And He's also the sustainer of life, Timothy.

I'm challenging you in the presence of God that you do these things. You have a good witness.

Let's look at John 18:37. "Pilate said to him," "So you are king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Now what's the charge?

The content of it is in Verse 14.

V. 14 "to keep the principles stainless, above reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,"

The principles are divine truth. It's the Scripture.

Keep them stainless my friend!

Keep the principles stainless and then pass them on.

Be above reproach and do this until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now when you come to the last two verses Paul starts singing the doxology.

Verse 15. “*which in His own time He shall show forth (what)—the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who are reigning as kings and Lord of those who are ruling as lords;*”

**Now we focused on the Son in verse 15,
He’s King of kings and Lord of Lords,
now it’s the Father in Verse 16.**

Verse 16. “*Who alone is having immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; whom no man has ever seen nor is able to see, to whom be honor and power forever, Amen.*”

There’s 3 things that are said about Him:

He’s immortal, He’s inscrutable, and He’s invisible.

He’s immortal in that He is the author of life.

He’s gained victory over life in the resurrection of Christ.

He’s inscrutable. This means he is inhabiting in light and is unapproachable.

He’s “*dwelling in unapproachably whom no man has ever seen, of course, nor is able to see. To whom the honor and power forever and ever. Amen.*”

What a great doxology. (a liturgical expression of praise to God)

Listen to this from, The Making of a Christian Leader by Ted Engstrom.

(p 120)

“The World Needs Men...

who cannot be bought;

whose word is their bond;

who put character above wealth;

who possess opinions and a will;

who are larger than their vocations;

who do not hesitate to take chances;

who will not lose their individuality in a crowd;

who will be as honest in small things as in great things;

who will make no compromise with wrong;

whose ambitions are not confined to their own selfish desires;

who will not say they do it “because everybody else does it”;

who are true to their friends through good report and evil report, in adversity as well as in prosperity;

who do not believe that shrewdness, cunning and hard-headedness are the best qualities for winning success; who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for the truth when it is unpopular, who can say “no” with emphasis, although all the rest of the world is saying “yes.”

There are 10 lessons that come out of this study.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

#1: There are things that we ought to be constantly fleeing in our lives.

#2: There are 6 things we ought to be constantly following after: righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.

#3: We need to keep on fighting the good fight of faith.

#4: It delights the heart of God when He sees His children persevering.

#5: Perseverance is the price of leadership.

#6: Let your life and your lip give a good confession for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

#7: Timothy is charged to keep the principles stainless and above reproach until the coming of Christ.

#8: Jesus Christ is going to come in His own time.

Lesson #9: The Savior is the Supreme Sovereign.

#10: Immortality, inscrutability, and invisibility characterize the Father.

STUDIES IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

PART II - 1 TIMOTHY 4-6

"The Laws of Leadership"

Key verse 4:12: *"Let no one look down on you (think little of) because you are young; but keep on becoming an example of the believers in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity."*

LAW NUMBER FIFTEEN-Perseverance Is the Price of Leadership

1 Timothy 6:11-16

Key verse 6:11

Notes

v. 11 But as for you, O man of God, be fleeing these things; but be going after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

v. 12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and confessed the good confession before many witnesses.

v. 13 I am giving you a charge in the presence of God, who causes all things to live, and Christ Jesus, the one who in His testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession;

v. 14 to keep the principles stainless, above reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

v. 15 which in His own time He shall show forth—the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who are reigning as kings and Lord of those who are ruling as lords;

v. 16 Who alone is having immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; whom no man has ever seen nor is able to see, to whom be honor and power forever, Amen.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read 1 Timothy 6:11-16 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. What six things does Paul command Timothy to go after, according to verse 11?**
- 3. What "fight" is Timothy to fight?**
- 4. What is Timothy to "take hold of," according to verse 12?**
- 5. In whose presence is Paul giving Timothy "a charge," according to verse 13?**
- 6. How long is Timothy to stay at it, according to verse 14?**
- 7. When is Christ going to be revealed, according to verse 15?**
- 8. How is the Lord Jesus described in verse 15?**
- 9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?**
- 10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**