

1 TIMOTHY
February 12, 2023

1 Timothy 6:11-16

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. 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—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. ¹

“This is the Word of God” – “Thanks be to God.”

BUT AS FOR YOU!

What a strong transition. What a strong word from the man of God to his young pupil. But as for you.

Paul has just spent numerous verses giving Timothy clarity on dealing with the foxes in the henhouse, the wolves in the flock, the heretics in the church body who were drawing people away from the truth. Paul provided a listing and step-by-step process of removing the evil from the midst.

This is where most would like the letter to end if we were on the receiving in. Just tell me all the things that I need to do to fix everyone

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (1 Ti 6:11–16). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

else in the church. Tell me what I need to focus upon and give me the theological ammunition to rightfully remove those who are playing the church game but are actually harming the body.

Just tell me what to do with THEM.

Those people.

This is what Timothy needed and it was right. It would be what any church's pastor would want. It is reminiscent of the phone calls I get from pastors who are dealing with issues among their church members. Just tell me what to do with them.

Okay. Good. Checklist completed.

BUT AS FOR YOU...

Wait? Me? No, no, no. I need to know what to do with them?

BUT AS FOR YOU, MAN OF GOD...

What a powerful transition! And, the brakes are slammed.

To put it simply – Timothy, you can do all the right things for the church body, for the people in the congregation, to rightfully remove the error pushers and the false teachers, you can rightfully fix the boundaries of elder and deacon selection. You can intentionally repair the ministry to widows that has overtaken the body. You can biblically correct the false teaching. And you should. You must. But...as for you.

You must do these things or all else will be short-term and ultimately the equivalent of arranging deck chairs on the Titanic if the shepherd is not well. So goes the shepherd...so go the sheep.

Health does not trickle up. It flows down. So, if the pastor is not well, the church will suffer.

The instructions are clear...and simple...but not easy.

FLEE

¹¹ But as for you, O man of God, flee these things.

Flee what things? Everything the false teachers proposed. Everything that centered on self rather than Christ. Everything that was corrupt, evil, off, and wrong.

Paul gave that checklist earlier in this chapter.

⁴ he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain²

Flee these things just as Joseph fled Potipher's wife.

It's simple, once you start negotiating with yourself regarding your own amazing abilities to withstand temptation, you will fall. Because you will lose this battle.

Once you think you're immune, you will be infected.

Once you think you're above it, you will be under it.

Once you have achieved all the goals you've set in life, you'll put your guard down and lies will sound like truth.

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (1 Ti 6:4–5). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Once you stop listening, you will cease to hear God.

O man of God...flee these things.

FLEE AND PURSUE

Fleeing is not a command to go for a run, but to intentionally, with direction run toward something else...or someone else.

Flee all these things that will steal, kill, and destroy, and PURSUE the following.

Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.

Now, here's a checklist to keep handy. This is in contrast to what was to be avoided. You cannot pursue these things while you're chasing the other.

This is not just for the pastor, but is certainly for the pastor. Yet, for every Christian, every man of God, every woman of God...pursue these things. Every child of God is to be fueled by a strong desire to put as much distance between himself or herself and evil.

Flee and pursue.

Note that there is no allowance for sit and soak. The Christian life is more than just a class on gathering information, but as we all know, the temptations and desires of the heart are continually moving, working, and drawing us away from righteousness and holiness. Thus, we must strategically, intentionally, and willfully flee such sin and pursue the God who IS NOT hiding.

It is simple. It is not easy. It's not a mantra. Not a verse-a-day theme. Not an camp cheer. This is deeper than what is most often provided to

the everyday church attender. You see, concert Christians can sing about it, but true believers must endure it and live it.

This is not Instagram-worthy faith. This is the real deal.

Flee and pursue.

FIGHT

¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. ³

The imagery here is of a battle and verses like these without context or understanding become the themes for men's retreats and a version of masculine Christianity that was the rage for churches at one point, but please...can we get a better understanding of what is being said here without all the "be a man and rub some dirt in it" coach-speak that often comes from the yelling manly conference speaker?

Fight the good fight of faith.

This is not just any fight. This is not some clip that shows up online of someone getting a beat down at a Waffle House. This is not celebrating the vitriol that spews from a generation of angry people. This is a good fight. This presumes there are bad fights. This is the good fight of faith. This presumes that there are fights that have nothing to do with faith.

And this is not God saying "I can't do this without you, so I need you to fight for me." That would be heresy.

As R. Kent Hughes states, this is Paul telling Timothy to fight for the essential apostolic faith that is described throughout the New Testament as "the truth," "the teaching," "the doctrine," "what has been entrusted," and/or "the deposit."

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (1 Ti 6:12). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The language is clear. It is intense. It is harsh. This will be a fight, meaning that it will be agonizing – not easy. It will be painful – not fun. This will be grueling and the crowd may not cheer, but God will.

Paul is telling Timothy to do what he was doing himself.

2 Timothy 4:6-7

⁶For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.⁴

This is how you live well and finish well.

HOLD ONTO ETERNAL LIFE

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.

Why flee? Why fight? Because eternity hangs in the balance. In other words – this really matters. Eternity is at stake. To the young pastor, Paul's reminder is that the calling which he had was not for his own sake, but for God's sake. The promise of eternal life was fulfilled in Christ and his as a great gift.

Now, standing before God's church, the message remains clear – eternal life is offered and it's a free gift. Don't turn your preaching into political analysis, cultural updates, or feel-good, ear-tickling TED Talks about how to be a better person, but remind the church of that which they NEED to know. Take hold of the eternal life you have...and share it.

KEEP THE COMMANDMENT

¹⁴to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (2 Ti 4:6–7). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The commandment, a singular word here is to live a life above reproach so that the message of the gospel is not tarnished. Keep the faith, as Paul said he did. Keep a close watch on yourself. Keep your eyes on Christ and his teachings. Live a life worthy of the calling you have been given and love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. For this is the greatest commandment...and it never changes nor expires.

Love is manifested in action. Love actively, not passively.

Christian, the commands remain. The challenges are real. The facts have not changed and yet, a watered-down understanding of the gospel leaves many settling for a version of Christianity that provides enough Jesus to know about God, but not enough to know God.

But as for you...what will you do with this Jesus?