

WEEKLY ENCOURAGEMENT

from Johnny Hunt

THE CHALLENGE TO BE FAITHFUL

PART THREE

Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:11-12

I. INTRO

- Can you possibly think of a greater designation which speaks of spiritual characteristics than to be called a “man of God”? Listen to the sweetness and strength of these words: *“My Dad (Father) is a “man of God.”*
- An encouraging statement is found in these words, **“God does not call the equipped, God equips the called.”** The passage we are studying uses words that are not difficult to grasp that help us to clearly see what the “man of God” looks like.
- The Apostle Paul realized that lots of forces attempt to pull down our men, therefore, with passion and encouragement he paints the portrait of the “man of God.” One very helpful textual approach is that of contrasting the “man of God” with the one who has his affections, attention, and aim on the world only. This text concerns itself with the private and public life of our men. If these scriptural admonitions are embraced and obeyed, it would assure Timothy (the man of God) success in his life’s causes and ministries.
- We’ve shared from a negative perspective, what a man of God should flee, then from a positive aspect what we must assimilate into our lives. But now in 1 Timothy 6:12, we see what we ought to agonize for in order to be what God would have us to be.

II. ACTIVITY: WHAT WE SHOULD AGONIZE FOR | VERSE 12

- Christian life is often referred to, or compared to, a contest. This passage describes a person straining and giving their best to win a prize or battle.
- It is a **“good fight”**—a battle worth waging.
- It is both a personal and corporate battle. It’s not just about my walk with the Lord, but about those whom we interact with. We battle the **world, flesh**, and the **devil** in our hearts, and also against lethargic believers and apathetic churches.
- **“fight”**—agonizes; describes the concentration, discipline, conviction and effort needed to win. Present middle imperative; we make a choice to fight.
- **“good”**—noble cause, speaks of excellence.
- Here are a few words from Paul that truly describe the fight:

A. THE OBJECT OF THE FIGHT

- **“fight the good fight of faith”**—a war for the advancement of the faith, the extension of Christ’s kingdom.
- **“Faith”**—the body of Christian truth, the content of the Word of God.
- **Jude 3: “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”**
- We are to stand and have deep roots on the faith and its foundation of biblical truth that we use to advance God’s message in this world.

B. THE SUBJECT OF THE FIGHT

- Who is to wage the war?
- **“to which you were called”**—the effectual sovereign call of God to salvation. First aorist passive, God called us in the past, the effect is still effective.
- **“have confessed a good confession”**—to refer to Timothy’s public confession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Romans 10:9, “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”**

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- Timothy confessed Christ at his baptism and at his ordination (**I Tim 4:14, II Tim 1:6**).
- Your public confession of faith.

C. THE SECRET OF THE FIGHT

- **“lay hold on eternal life”**—get a grip (middle voice). It’s a decision or choice that **you** must make.
- Live now in light of the reality that what is eternal is all that matters. Everything you can see today is temporal. That which you cannot see is eternal. It’s time that we start living for that which is eternal.
- **Martin Luther:** “There’s only two days. This day and that day.” Help us to live in this day in light of eternity.
- This is why Paul no longer engages in the petty, meaningless battle of this world, but focuses on the eternal things. He is concerned with what will never pass away—God’s Word and the souls of people.