

Message Four

Fighting the Good Fight and Finishing the Course

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 4:4:7a-b; 2:3-4; 1 Tim. 1:18; Acts 20:24; Heb. 12:1-2

I. “I have fought the good fight”—2 Tim. 4:7a:

- A. A proper Christian life involves fighting the good fight against Satan and his kingdom of darkness and for the interests of God’s kingdom—Eph. 6:10-19.
- B. Paul considered the ministry a warfare for Christ, just as the priestly service was considered a military service, a warfare—2 Tim. 2:3; Num. 4:23, 30, 35.
- C. No one serving as a soldier entangles himself with the affairs of this life; this means that to fight the a good fight for God’s interests on earth, we need to clear away all earthly entanglements—2 Tim. 2:4
- D. Paul charged Timothy, his faithful co-worker, to fight against the differing teachings and to fight for God’s economy—1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:3-4.
- E. To war the good warfare is to war against the differing teachings and to carry out God’s economy according to the apostle’s ministry concerning the gospel of grace and eternal life for the glory of the blessed God—1 Tim. 1:18; 6:12.
- F. Whenever we minister Christ to others, we find ourselves in a battle; hence, we should be soldiers fighting for God’s interests—2 Tim. 2:3-4.
- G. To fight the good fight of the faith means to fight for God’s New Testament economy; in particular, it is to fight for Christ as the embodiment of God and the church as the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 6:12; 1:4; Col. 2:9, 19.

II. “I have finished the course”—2 Tim. 4:7b:

- A. A proper Christian life involves running the course for the carrying out of God’s economy according to His eternal purpose—1 Cor. 9:24.
- B. We need to seek out the journey that the Lord has ordained and faithfully walk on it, paying any price to wholeheartedly continue on our journey until we reach the end—2 Tim. 4:7.
- C. The journey that the Lord has ordained for us is the race that we all must run—Heb. 12:1.
- D. We need to “run with endurance the race that is set before us”—v. 1:
 - 1. Like the apostle Paul. all Christians must run the race to win the prize, not salvation in the common sense but a reward in a special sense—1 Cor. 10:35; 3:14-15; 9:26-27; Phil. 3:13-14.
 - 2. We need to run the race with endurance, suffering the opposition with endurance and never growing weary or fainting in our souls—vv. 2-3.
- E. We run the Christian race by “looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith”—v. 2:
 - 1. Jesus is the Author of faith, the Originator, the Inaugurator, the source, and the cause of faith—Heb. 12:2:
 - a. The faith of the believers is actually not their own faith but Christ entering into them to be their faith—Rom. 3:22 ; Gal. 2:16.
 - b. Our believing is our appreciation of Christ as a reaction to His attraction—Rom. 10:17.

- c. We need to look away unto Jesus with undivided attention by turning away from every other object—Heb. 12:1-2; S. S. 1:4; Psa. 27:4.
 - d. When we look away unto Jesus, He as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b) trans-fuses us with Himself, His believing element.
2. Faith is a substantiating ability, the ability by which we substantiate, give substance to, the things unseen or hoped for—Heb. 11:1:
- a. We must exercise our spirit of faith, our mingled spirit, to believe and to speak the things that we have experienced of the Lord—2 Cor. 4:13.
 - b. Faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit.
3. We do not regard, look at, the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal—v. 18:
- a. The Christian life is a life of things unseen—Rom. 8:24-25; Heb. 11:27; 1 Pet. 1:8; Gal. 6:10.
 - b. The degradation of the church is the degradation from unseen things to seen things; the Lord's recovery is to recover His church from things seen to things unseen—John 20:25-29; 2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 8:24-25; Heb. 11:1; 1 Pet. 1:8.
4. Jesus is the Perfecter of faith, the Finisher and Completer of faith—Heb. 12:2:
- a. As the Completer of faith, the Lord Jesus, continually infuses Himself into us as the believing element and ability.
 - b. When we look away unto Him, He ministers heaven, life, and strength to us, trans-fusing and infusing us with all that He is, so that we may be able to run the heavenly race and live the heavenly life on earth—2 Cor. 3:18.
 - c. As we look away unto Him continually, He will finish and complete the faith that we need to run the heavenly race—Heb. 12:1-2.