

Text— 1 Timothy 6:6-19

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Our Scripture selection was first addressed to the young pastor Timothy who studied under the guidance of the Apostle Paul. Nevertheless, since the words were given by inspiration of God, the words are also meant to be of benefit to all other Christians, which is plainly evident from the Apostle Paul's use of plural pronouns – such as “we” and “us” – throughout our text.

Our Scripture selection deals with very practical matters regarding our life as Christians in this world in which we are surrounded by numerous temptations to sin, for we are encouraged to:

“FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH”

With that as our theme, may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) How to fight the good fight of faith
- 2) Why we are to fight the good fight of faith
- 3) When we are to fight the good fight of faith
- 4) What special instructions apply to those blessed with worldly-wealth that they might fight the good fight of faith

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Verses 6-8, ----- (1 Timothy 6:6-8)

Think about the opening words of our text. Sinful society teaches and urges folks to acquire all the money and possessions possible. People are encouraged to out-do their neighbor by having the fanciest house and clothing, the newest cars and boats and other toys, and the finest foods and drinks. We Christians dwell in sinful flesh and consequently we are not immune to the temptation to chase after the same earthly possessions as our unbelieving neighbors. Nevertheless, the truth of the matter is exactly what our text says: *we brought nothing into this*

world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. Indeed, all worldly wealth must be left behind when physical death comes upon us. Hence, money and goods are NOT great gain for anyone since temporal possessions are quite temporary.

My friends, let us take it to heart that *godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

Godliness – living in a manner in full accord with God's will as revealed in His Word – is to be our goal as Christians. Furthermore, godliness is to be coupled with contentment, being satisfied with the things we have, being content with having food to eat and clothing to wear: the basic necessities of life.

Realize we Christians can truly be content with very little worldly wealth because we have been gifted with the riches that matter most— faith in Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sins and salvation which that God-given faith personally receives, for Holy Writ plainly states: “the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (Romans 6:23; 3:23-26; Ephesians 2:8-10; John 3:16) Thus, we are to fight the good fight of faith by highly valuing the God-

given faith in Jesus which we possess, and by striving to live in a godly manner in accord with God's Word, being content with having food and clothing in this world, and always being aware that we will not be taking worldly things with us when we depart this life.

Verses 9 & 10, ----- (1 Timothy 6:9-10)

Notice there is great danger to those who relentlessly pursue worldly wealth, for the continual urge to be rich causes folks to fall into further temptations, such as covetousness, greed, cheating, and stealing, as they do anything and everything to gain more money and possessions. Furthermore, it's like a snare, a trap, because once a person gets caught-up in the pursuit of worldly wealth, that person rarely shakes the habit but instead falls into yet more foolish and hurtful lusts, such as gambling, partying, and fornication.

Oh, it's NOT money itself that is the problem, the root of all evil; rather, it's the LOVE OF MONEY which is the root of all evil, for when one's heart is set on money and the things it can buy, one's heart is NOT set on loving the Lord Jesus Christ who has paid for the sins of the world with His own holy and infinitely precious blood. Indeed, when Christian people have taken to chasing after money which they have fallen in love with it has cost them much in that *they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*. Yes, not everyone can be like Abraham of old who remained in the faith even after the Lord blessed him with worldly wealth. Most believers end up falling from faith if they acquire much in worldly wealth because they fall in love with money and leave their first love— the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us never forget that destruction and perdition awaits those who are found without faith in Jesus Christ when they depart this life, for Mark 16:16 plainly states, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Oh, hell is the place of continual sorrow, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," as Mark 9:44 relates.

Accordingly, to fight the good fight of faith we Christians must be and remain aware of the fact that the love of money is the root of all evil, a great danger to us which can cause us to lose our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 11, ----- (1 Timothy 6:11)

To each and every individual Christian our text instructs: *flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness*. Indeed, we Christians are to flee the love of money, lack of contentment with the things we have, and the desire to be rich in worldly wealth.

We Christians are to follow after – pursue – righteousness by tenaciously clinging to Christ who supplies us with His perfect righteousness, "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe," as Romans 3:22 tells us. We Christians are to pursue godliness, striving to live in full accord with the dictates of God's Word, God's commandments as written for our learning in the Holy Bible, for, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16-17) We Christians are to pursue faith by continuing to make use of the Gospel of Christ in particular, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16-17) We Christians are to pursue love, for "We love him," the Lord, "because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19) And, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Romans 13:10)

We Christians are to pursue patience and meekness because we are to be aware of how patient God has been and is with us; and, we are to remember how meek and mild the Lord Jesus was when He visibly walked upon the earth as our

sinless substitute who kept God's holy law perfectly for us and then paid for our lack of keeping it, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:21-24)

Thus, we can fight the good fight of faith by keeping in mind all that our text instructs us to do, and by putting those instructions into action as we tenaciously cling to Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, loving Him above all else.

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As we ponder the next verse of our text, let us see why we are to fight the good fight of faith.

Verse 12, ----. (1 Timothy 6:12)

Our text is very clear here, for we Christians are commanded: *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

Take it to heart that without a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ there is no eternal life but only eternal death, for John 3:17-18 clearly states, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Note well: the cause why anyone is condemned to never-ending death in hell is lack of faith in God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Fellow Christians, we've been called to faith in

Jesus Christ or we would not be Christians. We, like Timothy of old, have professed a good profession before many witnesses, for we all vowed faithfulness to the Lord when we were confirmed in the faith; furthermore, we confess our faith in Christ regularly when we confess the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed during worship services. Let us never stop fighting the good fight of faith until we arrive safely in heaven where we will enjoy eternal life.

Let us remember that we fight the good fight of faith because God commands us so to do in His Word, it is the way to lay hold on eternal life, we are called to persevere in the faith of Jesus Christ, and we are to keep our promises made to the Lord.

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As we ponder the next few verses of our text, let us see when we are to fight the good fight of faith.

Verses 13-16, ----. (1 Timothy 6:13-16)

Observe the charge, the command, given to Timothy and therefore to all other Christians as well, for the Apostle Paul penned the words of our text by inspiration of God for our learning.

Note well that the command to fight the good fight of faith is to be kept until our Lord Jesus Christ visibly appears in glory. Oh beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ is coming to earth again, and it will not be in humility as was His first coming, for Matthew 16:27 clearly states, "the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Yes, when Jesus Christ returns in power and great glory, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." (Revelation 1:7)

At that time, the Lord Jesus Christ will finally be known and recognized by all as *the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light*

which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

Oh, the brightness and blinding light of Jesus in all His glory cannot be approached by any human being in his or her natural sinful condition, “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” (1 Corinthians 13:12) Yes, fellow Christians, we must bear in mind that 1 John 3:2 informs us, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” Indeed, we Christians will be changed, “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality,” declares 1 Corinthians 15:53. Therefore, to Jesus Christ our Lord be all honor and power and glory everlasting; yea, yea, it shall be so!

Let us never forget Jesus’ perfect example to us in maintaining the confession of the truth to the end, for as Jesus stood before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, Jesus never changed His confession of the truth even though He was ultimately sentenced by Pilate to be crucified.

Accordingly, let us Christians fight the good fight of faith until we depart this sinful world in temporal death or until our Lord visibly returns in power and great glory, which ever comes first.

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As we ponder our text to its conclusion, let us see what special instructions apply to those blessed with worldly-wealth that they might fight the good fight of faith.

Verses 17-19, ----- (1 Timothy 6:17-19)

Not everyone who is wealthy in money and goods is an unbeliever. God has blessed some Christians with abundant money and possessions in this world, as for instance God had blessed King

Solomon in Old Testament times. Nevertheless, Christians with worldly wealth still dwell in sinful flesh and thereby are tempted to shift their faith from the Lord to their money and earthly possessions.

Hence, Christians who are rich in money and goods are not to get on their high-horse of self-esteem and think they are better than other folks. Additionally, Christians who are rich in money and goods are not to trust in such worldly wealth since such things are uncertain in that they can be here today and gone tomorrow. Rather, Christians who are rich in this world need to earnestly endeavor to keep their trust in the living God who richly gives us all things to enjoy, for without God’s blessing none of us would have money, goods, physical life, or spiritual life. Let us remember James 1:17-18 states: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

Let those Christians who are especially blessed with worldly wealth use it aright, doing good therewith, being rich in good works, works as specified in the Holy Bible, distributing to those who are in need, sharing with others, for by thus being fruitful in the faith they lay *up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* Indeed, Christians who are richly blessed by God with worldly wealth are to be conscious that they have been so blessed in order that they may be of help to others by being fruitful in the faith of Jesus Christ, for James 2:26 informs us, “as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” A dead faith cannot save, for it is merely a faith of the head rather than a faith of the heart— a heart that beats in love for the Lord Jesus Christ who gave His all for us!

So, the special instructions which apply to those blessed with worldly-wealth that they might fight the good fight of faith are clear: they must be

fruitful in the faith by showing love to the Lord and love to their neighbors, using their gifts of wealth to help others both spiritually and physically.

Fellow Christians, as we've pondered our Scripture selection we've surely seen that it encourages us to fight the good fight of faith.

Let us therefore daily and sincerely repent of our sins. Let us keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord. And, let us go forward, endeavoring to fight the good fight of faith by keeping our focus on our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, rather than on the things of this world. Amen.

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