

Teamwork: The Good Fight of Faith – Part Three

Ephesians 3:14–4:16, ESV

Intro & Overview

1. Fighting the Good Fight of Faith

1 Timothy 6:12 (ESV) 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...

2 Timothy 4:7 (ESV) I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

2. Good Soldiers of Jesus Christ

2 Timothy 2:3–4 (ESV) Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.

The Right Fight

3. Basic Training starts in

- Eph Chapter 1 with spiritual foundations
- not chapter 6 with weapons training

Illustration by military analogy: Basic Training for soldiers

Review

Faith

1. Saved through faith

Hebrews 11:6 (ESV) And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Ephesians 2:8–10 (ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

2. Live by faith

Galatians 2:20 (ESV) I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

3. Contend for the faith

Jude 3–4 (ESV) 3 Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. 4 For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were

designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

4. Our faith overcomes the world

1 John 5:1–4 (ESV) Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. 4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Mission

1. Unite all things in Christ

Ephesians 1:9–10 (ESV) [God has made] known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

2. All the nations have access to God our Father through Christ

Ephesians 3:6–12 (ESV) This mystery is that the Gentiles [that is, all of the nations or families of earth] are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. [Paul was sent, picking up in verse 8] to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, 10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

Transition: Jesus taught the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18–20 (ESV)

- MISSION: 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
- TEAM: 20b And behold, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age.”

Illustration by military analogy: FOB Ghazni, Afghanistan

- CW3 Mark Colbert and SFC Andrew Busic, 1st Special Forces Group, JBLM
- Silver Star - the nation’s third-highest award for valor

“All these men placed not only the mission before their own welfare but also the lives of the men to their left and their right, be they U.S. or Afghan. -- It’s no easy choice to do these things that these men have done. I would hope that every member of our regiment has the tactical knowledge and skill to close with and destroy the enemy. The hard part is to choose to act, to step out from a covered and concealed position, and take action. These men made that choice.”

Teammates

With Christ

Eph 3:14 “For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom **every family** in heaven and on earth is named,

16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to

- be strengthened with power
- through his Spirit
- in your inner being,
- 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—

that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
- 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,
- that you may be filled with **all** the fullness of God.

20 Now to him who is able

- to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think,
- according to the power at work within us,
- to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 1:19–23 (ESV) 19 and what is **the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places**, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

1 John 4:4 (ESV) Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

With the Church

4:1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

- 2 with all humility and gentleness,
- with patience,
- bearing with one another in love,
- 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Philippians 1:27–28 (ESV) 27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are

- standing firm in one spirit,
- with one mind
- striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, 28 and
- not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.

Philippians 2:1–4 (ESV) 1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by

- being of the same mind,
- having the same love,
- being in full accord and of one mind.

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Eph 4:7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. ...

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,

- 12 to equip the saints
- for the work of ministry,
- for building up the body of Christ, (Eph 1:23)

Romans 12:3–11 (ESV) 3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do **not** be slothful in zeal, **be** fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Eph 4:12 ... building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and

- of the knowledge of the Son of God,
- to mature manhood,
- to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about

- by every wind of doctrine,
- by human cunning,
- by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

15 Rather, speaking the truth in love,

- we are to grow up in every way
- into him who is the head, into Christ,

16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped,

- when each part
- is working properly,

makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

Illustration by military analogy:

- FOB Ghazni, Afghanistan
- SSG Michael Ollis, shielded Polish officer
- 10th Mountain Division, 1BCT

No greater love

John 15:12–17 (ESV) Jesus taught: “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. 17 These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

Instead of dying for our team once, how about living each day for them? For Christ, and the Church.