

"In the year 258, Marcianus, who had the management of the Roman government, procured an order from the emperor Valerian, to put to death all the christian clergy in Rome..."

Laurentius, generally called **St. Laurence**, the principal of the deacons:

- Gave to the poor Christians...
- Gave account of the the churches treasures...

"...the governor ordered him to immediately scourged. He was then beaten with iron rods, set upon a wooden horse, and had his limbs dislocated. These tortures he endured with fortitude and perseverance; when he was ordered to be fastened to a large gridiron, with a slow fire under it, that his death might be the more lingering. His astonishing constancy during these trials, and serenity of countenance while under such excruciating torments, gave the spectators so exalted an idea of the dignity and truth of the christian religion, that many became converts upon the occasion..."ⁱ

ⁱ Foxe, John (2012-05-11). Fox's Book of Martyrs Or A History of the Lives, Sufferings, and Triumphant Deaths of the Primitive Protestant Martyrs (pp. 38-39). . Kindle Edition.

In the Wilderness: The Book of Numbers

[#42 in Series] (Numbers 26–36) *A Heart Turned Towards the Inheritance: Part 12, The Temptation to Avoid the Fight* – Numbers 32

Sermon Outline – April 24, 2016

Children's Sermon: Why Is Life So Hard?

Why do we Suffer? 1. Sin cursed world... **2.** Our own sin... **3.** Living for Jesus...

2 Timothy 3:12

Indeed, *all* who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be *persecuted*...

(Paul – Acts 14:22, "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.")

The Historical Moment

Notes:

- ✓ **Kings Sihon & Og Defeated** (21:21-35)
- ✓ **Protection from from Moab and Midian** (22:2-25:18)
- ✓ **A Heart Turned Towards the Inheritance** (26:1-36:13)
- ✓ **Vengeance on Midian** (31)

Today's Main Idea

Do not try to skip fighting in God's army.

Through the War to the Inheritance

Reuben and Gad Saw... (1/2 of Manasseh)

¹ Now the people of **Reuben** and the people of **Gad** *had a very great number of livestock*. And *they saw the land* of Jazer and the land of Gilead, and behold, the place was a place for livestock. (See the map on the back)

Moses Cuts to the Heart of the Matter

⁶ But Moses said to the people of Gad and to the people of Reuben, "*Shall your brothers go to the war while you sit here?*" ⁷ *Why will you discourage the heart of the people of Israel from going over into the land that the LORD has given them?*" ⁸ Your fathers did this...

¹⁴ And behold, you have risen in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the fierce anger of the LORD against Israel!...

Consider the Pattern Taught in Israel's Salvation

- Rescue from Egypt (God did it all)
- Brought into a Covenant Relationship with Yahweh
- Now, Strap on Your Sword & Fight for the Promised Land

A Key Point

We need a fight to test our faith. The test is for our benefit and God's glory (e.g. Abraham)

We Should Understand Our Charge to Fight in a Similar Way: The Cost & the Glory of Discipleship

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.**

Benefits of the "Fight": Faith Conveyed, Refined & Displayed

James 1:2–4 (HCSB)

² Consider it a great joy, my brothers, ***whenever you experience various trials***, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ But ***endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.***

1 Peter 1:3b–7

[God] has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ ***so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (Luke 8:13 – Seed on the rocks)***

Key Reflection

Four things that trip us up in our willingness to fight.

#1 The Love of Wealth

- ✓ This land would be perfect! (Israel)
- ✓ Who in our culture has not been tempted with wanting the good things you can get in this life?!

1 Timothy 6:9–10

⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ ***For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.***

#2 The Love of Ease

- ✓ God has already blessed us (Cattle, Land) Why go any further, why fight?
- ✓ What ways do we desperately want things to be easier?

2 Corinthians 2:9 (Church Discipline)

For this is why I wrote, ***that I might test you*** and know whether you are obedient in everything.

- How deliberate are we about being obedient in everything? (Being/Displaying Loyalty vs. Easier)

When things get hard, do you find yourself asking...

- What would be right in God's eyes here? What would best show my loyalty to and trust in Jesus?

Or

- Why is this so hard? There must be an easier way!?

- How much of our grumbling about our culture connected to our craving for ease? "Our best life now..."

#3 Unbelief

- ✓ Do You Believe God Will Fight for You?
- ✓ Do We Live for Jesus Publically (Loving Jesus Out Loud)?

#4 Tunnel Vision: Selfishness

- ✓ Do You Care About the Inheritance of Your Bothers?
- ✓ Do We Love Christ's Body?
- ✓ Are We Focused On Displaying His Glory?