

**1 Timothy 6:11-21** (John 3)  
"Flee, Fight, Fulfill & Faithfully Finish"

It's in John Ch 3, Jesus sharing w/Nicodemus regarding *salvation* and *condemnation*. He begins to speak to Nicodemus of the *need to*, & the *nature of* being born again. The short of it is that apart from believing in the Lord J.C. you *cannot* be born again, & *you will* not see the kingdom of God. *It's through believing in J.C. that we receive salvation, it's through rejecting J.C., refusing to come to J.C. that we remain in the state of condemnation.* You see, we don't have to do anything to be condemned, that's our natural state. *We're sinners in need of a Savior, we were born w/a sin nature, separated from God.* It's through faith in J.C. & His finished work upon the cross that we're washed of our sin & made right in the sight of God. That's why God sent Jesus; not to *condemn* the world, but that the world *through* Him might be saved.

*That's what Jesus was explaining when He said, "He who believes in Him (Jesus) is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Then beginning in Vs 19 He said something real interesting, let's look at it together.*

Here's the point, the life & the lifestyle of the one who has received *salvation* Vs the one who is living in a state of *condemnation* should be simple to distinguish. The difference in their lives *should be* as obvious as night & day, light & darkness. *We're to be in the world, yet it should be obvious that we're not of the world. As a child of God, you walk in integrity, you've got nothing to hide, your life is an open book. The unbeliever has sinful little secrets that he/she doesn't want anyone to know, doesn't want to come into the light lest their deeds be exposed...*

As we approach our final study in the book of 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, Paul has been exposing the "dark deeds" of those who use the mask of godliness as a means of personal gain. They don't adhere nor consent to the plain teaching of the word of God *doctrinally*, they have a prideful arrogant attitude *personally* & at the end of the day they're all about *money*. Now look at

Vs 11

**Vs 11-12**

Paul is saying, "Timothy, the difference between your life & theirs should be night & day, light & darkness." *"He is proud, he knows nothing, he is obsessed w/disputes, arguments, promoting his own opinion over the word of God, he seeks to use godliness as a means of gain... but you, O man of God, flee these things, pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness."* You see, these are men of the *world*; you are a man of *God*.

& As such your life is to be *obviously, distinguishably* different. The psalmist said this, *"The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity. You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; The Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple."*<sup>1</sup> (Or the temple of Your holiness). You see, David is saying there is an easily distinguishable difference between him (as one who fears God, knows God), & the unbelieving/deceitful individual.

When Paul says, "But you" he turns the page. This is who they are; this is who *you* are as a man of God. They *pursue* these things, you *flee from* these things...

Ok, how many of you realize that all of God's Word is instructional in its nature? Now it instructs in a variety of ways which can be divided into "Principles" & "Precepts". Principles are broader in nature, sometimes a principle requires a bit more digging in order to gain specific direction. For instance we know that as believers Jesus has said that we are *in* the world, but we're no longer *of* the world because He's called us *out* of the world. So, "In the world, not of the world", that's a principle found in the word of God that applies to the believer. **But what does that look like specifically? That's where we begin to dig, we're certainly seeing some of that in our current text aren't we? That which separates us from the deceiver, or unbeliever, we live our lives after a completely different order...**

However *precepts* are direct moral commands. You don't have to dig deeper for more information, it's black & white. "You shall love the Lord your God w/all your heart, w/all your mind, w/all your strength & w/all your soul." "You shall not commit murder." These are precepts, "You shall honor your mother & your father." **"Go into all the earth & make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, & the Holy Spirit."**

Precepts call for a response of obedience & to disobey is to reap the consequences accordingly. This final section of 1st Timothy Paul packs w/*precepts*.

**"Flee these things, follow after these things, fight the good fight, keep the command"** let's not be confused, these aren't principles, they're *precepts*. So the *principle* to be in the world but not of the world, is at this point leading us to *precepts* of what that's to look like practically. "But you, O man of God"; what does it mean to be a man of God?

<sup>1</sup> The New King James Version. (Ps 5:5-7) (1982). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Well, by calling Timothy a “man of God” he joined the ranks w/Moses, David, Samuel, Elijah & Elisha... the bible identifies all of these men by this title, “Man of God.” It’s one who is in God’s service, who *represents* God & speaks in God’s name to the people.

But if you & me, if we’re to be “men of God” there is a certain lifestyle, or quality of character that accommodates that. Paul makes that clear when he says, “But you” in contrast to everything that immediately precedes the statement.

To begin with, you & me, we are to be the polar opposite of those who make riches the chief aim of their lives. Some people chase *after* that, Paul tells Timothy *flee from* that. “Flee these things.” **Flee from the temptation to use godliness as a means of personal gain, flee from all these negative qualities of pride, promoting your own opinion, not consenting to the word of God, seeking to serve the Lord for material benefit... divorce yourself from that frame of heart & mind, flee (run) from that stuff.**

It’s not a principle, it’s a precept, it’s a command. To the negative flee *from* these things. To the positive, pursue *after* these things: “righteousness” (living uprightly, w/integrity), “godliness” (God-likeness, holiness, grace, mercy, compassion, honoring His Word w/obedience). **Faith toward God, love toward man, patience, (or endurance, that characteristic that refuses to be moved regardless of the weight, or the trial that befalls you as the result of your service/ministry) & gentleness.**

In Vs 12 Paul says, “Fight the good fight of faith.” You say, “Wait a minute, do I flee or do I fight?” To which we respond, “Yes”.

You guys it’s all about context, if it’s spiritual attack, we fight. We won’t quit because of oppression, or warfare, tactics & wiles of the wicked one, we don’t retreat due to our enemies devices, we’re to be strong in the Lord & in the power of His might (not our might, His might). Eph 6, we’re to put on the whole armor of God that we might be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. We are more than conquerors through Him who has loved us & given Himself for us, greater is He who is in us than he who is of the world. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal (physical) they’re mighty in God...

However when it comes to *temptation*, we don’t fight, we flee. When *attacked* of the enemy we fight, when *tempted* we flee. You will never fight a scripture that encourages you to stay in the place of temptation & wrestle w/it, we’re to flee from it. Paul will tell Timothy in his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to him, **“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> The New King James Version. 2 Timothy 2:22 (1982). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Joseph had to *flee* Potiphar's wife, no need to try & reason *with* her, just flee *from* her. If you're dating someone don't put yourself in a tempting situation, flee the late night fellowship on the couch... There is a time to fight & a time to flee & wise is the person who knows when to do what.

If there are people who claim to be believers but they're pulling you down, encouraging your compromise, skewing your perspective, flee (w/draw yourself), not all unity is good & not all division is bad. Sometimes you gotta take a stand against false doctrine or godless practices & separate yourself... But here's the deal, if you flee from the negative it's just as important to pursue the positive. Separation apart from positive growth becomes isolation; so we need to cultivate these graces of the Spirit of God in our lives. Don't be know for only what you oppose, but what you *propose* as well... righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience & gentleness.

Listen, a Christ-like life doesn't just happen... you have to be intentional about it. You won't go to bed one night & wake up in the morning just like Jesus. There's focus, discipline & dependence on He who Himself embodies all these traits (namely Christ).

You & me, we are to fight the good fight of faith. It's not easy; the picture is of the person straining, agonizing to give their very best in order to win the prize, or the battle. That doesn't mean we won't lose a battle or two along the way, but we will carry on w/focus & determination until the war is over.

"Lay hold on eternal life", eternal life being the motivation to stay in the fight. Now he's not saying, "Timothy, save yourself!" "Lay hold" speaks of getting a grip, keeping the grip, don't let go. We're not talking about a handshake, but that falling from a cliff, grabbing the hand like your life depends on it kind of a grip. He's telling Timothy to get a grip on eternal kind of living. Living w/eternity in view, lay hold of J.C. & live the life of godliness to the full, it's the life to which you were called, & which you confessed in presence of many witnesses.

What does he mean by "the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." There's a bit of debate, could be speaking of his confession of Christ at his baptism... The bible says, "...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."<sup>3</sup> So it could be a reference to a verbal confession of Jesus as his Lord, & his Savior.

<sup>3</sup> The New King James Version. Rom 10:9 (1982). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Or the confession of his life in general, to confess Christ goes way beyond the words of your mouth, it encompasses the whole of our lives. Regardless, the urgency is unto forsaking worldliness & following after godliness w/all that we are, notice...

### Vs 13-16

We spoke a few weeks ago of the radical nature of the charge back in Vs 21 of Ch 5. Paul charged Timothy before God, the Lord J.C. & the elect angels. Now again Paul hammers home the urgency to keep God's Word w/integrity... He says, "I urge you in the sight of God (notice) who gives *life* to all things."

Life did not evolve, it was given by God, He is our Creator, we are His creation. We have an obligation to serve the One (namely God) who created us. Some of the biggest damage done in & to our culture has come from the simple fact that so many people no longer believe that they have a Creator that they need to honor & that they will be accountable to. Of course not believing it doesn't change the fact of it...

So, "Before God who gives life to all things, & before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate," "Hey Timothy, you're not alone in having difficulties that you need to forge through while remaining true to your confession... Jesus Himself has blazed this trail to the point of costing His very life." Even before Pilate... "Are You a King?" Pilate asked Jesus... *"You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."*<sup>4</sup> He told Pilate that he could have no power over Him at all unless it had been given to him from above (Jhn 19:11), He let Pilate know that God was in charge, not Pilate.

Jesus witnessed the good confession before Pilate & now Paul is telling Timothy that he needs to stand firm for the truth as well; that he keep the command (that is, the embodiment of truth that Paul has entrusted to him in this letter) w/out spot, blameless to the very end (until our Lord J.C.'s appearing).

Which (notice) He (that is God) will manifest in His own time... You don't give up, you don't give in, you fight the good fight of faith until Christ returns. When will that be? On the day & at the hour that God (the blessed & only Potentate, the King of kings & Lord of lords) has ordained.

He alone has immortality, no beginning, no end, undying, never corruptible, He dwells in unapproachable light whom no man has seen nor can see.

<sup>4</sup> The New King James Version. [John 18:37](#) (1982). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

No man has seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. Jesus is the brightness of His glory, the express image of His Person & in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead, bodily. **To Him be all honor & everlasting power. Amen. No matter how great your struggle, the One who has called you is greater & He will enable you to endure so that you will grow & He will be glorified...**

### Vs 17-19

Wealth is certainly a relative issue. To Timothy we would all be rich. Having said that we understand that there are those who have way above & beyond the average (even American) wealth. **Paul says, "If you're one whom has been entrusted w/ riches don't be arrogant about that or think you're better than others because of that. Don't trust in your riches which fluctuate in value everyday anyway, trust in the Living God."**

Don't think it's your brilliance, or your exceptional business skills that have caused you to become rich. The bible says, **"...you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth,"**<sup>5</sup>

Notice Paul speaks of the "rich in this present age". **Being rich in this age is no guarantee of being rich in the age to come, you might be extremely poor (comparatively speaking) in heaven because you hoarded your riches on earth rather than investing into the Kingdom of God. Having said that you might be poor on this earth & incredibly wealthy in heaven because you give the whole of your life to J.C. & to the service of His kingdom.**

Listen, your security is not in your wealth (write it down & look it up later Luke 12:13-21). We're not to trust in riches, thinking all our problems would be over if we just had a little more money. We're to trust in the Lord who gives us richly all things to enjoy (what's that), yeah the word "enjoy" is in the bible. God wants you to enjoy His blessings upon your life.

**But listen, don't stop at being rich monetarily (if that be the case) be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share. Be it through the tithe, or perhaps offering above the tithe, one of the ways that God helps us safeguard our hearts from greed & trusting in uncertain riches is through giving.** Listen, God is the One who put the ore in the earth, He's the one that owns the cattle of a thousand hillsides, our giving isn't to benefit God, it's to benefit us! To guard our hearts from greed & the trust in uncertain riches.

<sup>5</sup> The New King James Version. Deut 8:18 (1982). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Is it biblical to give? Yes, does God need our money? No. It's not for His benefit, it's for ours; both presently & ultimately eternally. Storing up for ourselves a good foundation for the time to come.

### Vs 20-21

Be *on guard to safeguard* the truth of God's Word. Not only will wrong motives (the desire for riches) cause a person to wander from the faith, so will wrong teachings. Lies that work their way into a person's heart & mind & cause them to drift away from the truth.

The grace of God, the gospel of J.C.... Guard it diligently, share it freely... May the Lord cause us to walk wisely & shine brightly in these otherwise dark days. May we have a heart to study His Word, not just academically but w/a resolve to obey it practically. **May we flee temptation, follow after godliness, fight the good fight, fulfill the commandment being obedient to God's Word & faithfully finish the work that's been committed to our trust until our Lord J.C.'s appearing. Which He will manifest in His own time.**

Now to the King of kings & Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light be honor & everlasting power forever & ever. Amen.

### Prayer Points:

God, thank You for Your Word. For Your Love & for Your mercy. We pray God that as Your children our lives would be easily, distinguishably different being light in an otherwise dark world. Help us Lord to fight the good fight of faith & to guard what You've committed to our trust. Lord we hasten Your appearing, & we give You all our praise for You alone are worthy of all honor & power & blessing.

**Let me encourage you today that if you don't know the Lord, you've never received the Lord that today can be the day of salvation for you.** You can step out of darkness & into the light being made brand new by faith in J.C. who has loved You, shed His blood & died upon the cross, being raised again the 3<sup>rd</sup> day so that you can be forgiven of all your sin & stand blameless and w/out fault before God in Him. If He's calling out to you today, come to Him, open your heart before Him & surrender to Him.