

1 Tim 6:11,12 FLEE, PURSUE, FIGHT, HOLD ON

PRELIMS. Paul has just reminded Tim of the World's Biggest Myth – '**Money** makes you **Happy**'! He has explained what godliness consists of – **contentment** with God's will. Explained the dangers of seeking riches – fall into temptation, plunge men into ruin, and wander from the faith. Paul now addresses Timothy himself!

Now look at how he addresses Tim! "*O man of God*"[11] What a difference from those people "*who desire to be rich*" and those who are "*craving*" for money[9,10] The term 'man of God' was seldom used - only for very special people! **APP** If **you/I** are living the way we ought, we would be called 'people of God'!

The Xian is a **soldier**! He has to be **trained, disciplined, committed**. You just **cannot** be a good Xian unless you are principled, disciplined, committed! In refuting the false teachers and warning Tim about the 'love of money', Paul makes **4 appeals**, which Tim must follow if he is to be faithful. You and I must also follow them if we are to be good Xians! They are:- **Flee; Pursue; Fight; Hold On!**

FLEE

"*flee these things*"[11] This is a familiar phrase with Paul see [2 Tim 2:22]! There are times when **nothing** else will do but **fleeing** and running away. This is **not** cowardice – it is **wisdom**! Remember **Joseph**! Nothing else would have saved him! I heard at a Conference a story of man, tempted, ran to hotel room, locked door, threw key out of window!) What wisdom! What courage/strength!

The surprising thing here is that it is **not** sexual temptations Paul speaks of (he does that in [1Cor 6:18] "*flee from sexual immorality*") Rather it is flee from the **hunger for material gain**! Flee from the 'love of money & 'craving for money[10]. Paul told the Cors "*Flee from idolatry*" [1Cor10:14] and we know Paul taught that "*covetousness* (greed/avarice) *which is idolatry*" [Col 3:5 NKJ]!

*Don't try and **reason** your way out of temptation/**wrong desires**. Covetousness has a **unique ability** to **out-reason** you! Ultimately it **will** find a 'legitimate' **reason** for you to **justify** your desire! It will show you what benefits it will provide, how much you can save by getting it, the bargain it is, etc, and you '**engage**' covetousness, you **will** finally believe the best thing to do, is just to get it! **APP** Most temptations can **only** be settled with a 'drop tools and run' attitude! That is **not** being 'chicken' or weak. That is **not** '**escapism**' (which is refusing to face your **responsibilities**, not temptations). There is **no technique** to **learn** in fleeing from temptation – just simply **run** from evil desires, as you run from a **fire** in a building!

PURSUE

Now Xianity is **not** a **negative** religion. Xianity is a '**for**' religion. Instead of pursuing the things which attracts the world, viz pleasure, promotion, fame, wealth, power – we are to **pursue** 'right living'! "*righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance & gentleness*"[11] If you are a Xn you **already have** the **seeds** of all these graces in your hearts. As one seed is planted in the ground with all the ingredients of the plant, so in grace! They can all be **strengthened** and **developed**! As in gymnastics, the **only** way they can possibly be strengthened, is by **discipline, practise** and **exercise**!

Do you want to **love** life? Do you want to have 'good days'? Then "*turn away from evil, and do good...seek **peace** and **pursue** it*"! See [1Pet3:11]!! I remember going on a **business course** on 'How to Improve Your Turnover/Sales in Business' It guaranteed 'success'! If you did what this course told you! Guaranteed to increase your profit! What a **disappointment**! It was really a course in psychology. It told you to do the **obvious**! We learned nothing new – just do what was so obvious to businessmen – things we already did do but did not do enough of! This passage reminds me of that course. To stop loving money and evil things, to live for God - just do **more of it!** "***pursue** righteousness, godliness...*" etc. Christ is **worth** it. Make it

your goal to honour Him and serve Him! **APP** Do **you** make your target godliness? When you get up in the morning, what's your aim – to glorify God throughout the day? Well, make **that** your goal. **Pray!** If you are a Xian you have the germ-seed of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance inside you. All it needs is **fertiliser** and **exercise!** Feed it with the Word & *“train yourself for godliness”*[4:7]

Do **you realise** this? If you are not pursuing godliness, you are pursuing **something else** which is **not** godly! You are **either** pursuing godliness or **ungodliness!** You are either serving Christ or the devil! Look: *“Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, **you are slaves of the one whom you obey**”*[Rom 6:16]! If you are doing what Satan wants you to do you are Satan's slave, not Christ's slave! It is what you do that confirms who you serve! By their fruits you shall know them.

FIGHT

Paul now uses another word *“**Fight** the good fight of the faith”*[12a]! Being a Xian is a **battle!** It is struggle - if you are **conscientious!** Why are we told to put armour on? The fight is **mainly** with yourself

If you are really keen to advance His Name, you find living the Xian life hard. Look at the greatest evangelist of all time- *“We are **afflicted** in every way, but not crushed; **perplexed**, but not driven to despair; **persecuted**, but not forsaken; **struck down**, but not destroyed”*[2C4:8]+ *“Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one Three times I was **beaten with rods**. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea...in toil and **hardship**, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure”*[2Cor 11:23cf]. **Far cry** from the comfy armchairs of some TV evangelists and **critics** of those who are on the **front line** of **Xn warfare!**

Notice **what** Tim was to fight **for** - *“the faith”* – the body of doctrine that is the truth! Paul said later on *“I have fought the good **fight**, I*

have finished the race I have kept **the faith**”[2Tim 4:7] The Xian work is not only to promote love – it is also to **destroy** the **work** of the **devil!** “*The weapons of our warfare are **not** of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds, We destroy **arguments** and every **lofty opinion** raised **against** the knowledge of **God**”[2Cor 10:4]! **APP** Not physical fighting – **never** (except in self-defence).*

HOLD ON!

To **enable** Tim, Paul encourages him to “**take hold** of the eternal life”[12b] The word ‘take hold’ means ‘**capture**’ - don’t let go! Make it yours for keeps. So many Xians have **abilities** or **power** they are not aware of! With the seed of God in us, with the Holy Spirit within us, we have power “*His **divine power** has **granted** to us **all things that pertain to life and godliness**”[1P1:3] There it is! There most definitely **is** a power in godliness! Thus: “*a form of **godliness** but **denying its power**”[2Tim3:5] Ie, **because** there is no power, it is not true godliness! Grab and don’t let go of this truth!**

Did Tim not already have eternal life? Yes, but he, like us, was inclined to live as if he hadn’t! We have access to Someone “*who is **able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us**”[E3:20]! Do you really believe that? Paul prayed for the “**immeasurable greatness of His power in us who believe**”[E1:19] **Why** did Paul write that? To **encourage** us! **We** too have a **source** of power that’s **way beyond our imagination!***

Paul **reminds** Tim of something which should **strengthen** him. His **ordination/baptism** – his ‘**calling**’ when he made “*the good confession in the presence of many witnesses*”[12c] For you/I to make a profession is **easy**. For us there is **no cost, no risk**. For Tim, at **that** time there were enormous risks and costs! Yet, he did it – before many witnesses he was not ashamed. **APP** Did you, Xian, not make a good **confession** at the **last communion** before many witnesses? Will you not ‘take hold’ **afresh** of that eternal life...?