

1 Timothy 6.11-21

Fight the Good Fight of the Faith

Great Blessing of SERMON Series > LEADERSHIP in LOCAL Church

Fits Well – Strong, Mature church in ZGC > By God’s Grace > Blessing!

Personally 2 Joys: 1. Preach at Start / End, 2. 3 Young Men Preached Better

1 Timothy 1.3-20	Apostolic Doctrine
1 Timothy 2.1-15	Public Worship
1 Timothy 3.1-4.14	Leadership in the Local Church
1 Timothy 4.15-5.2,17-6.2	Unity & Diversity of Church Membership
1 Timothy 5.3-16	Social Responsibilities
1 Timothy 6.3-21	Material Possessions

Ever gotten on Wrong Subway Line or Right Line Wrong Direction?

Tried to WALK thru Crowds of People moving in Opposite Direction?

UP the Stairs when CROWDS of BEIJING go DOWN All AROUND You?

AFFLUENT Elders leading Church in EPHESUS Away from FAITHFULNESS

Attractive, Popular, Gifted, Wealthy, Trusted by Flock > FALSE Teachers

Whole CHURCH was FOLLOWING Them – Trusted by the People

vs. 10,11 “...*some* have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. *But as for you*, O man of God...”

MAJORITY Going Wrong Way – POPULAR to be GODLESS

LETTER: Tim Take CARE God’s Church > Now take care God’s SERVANT
Even LEADER of church MUST Not Assume SAFE from False Doctrines

But YOU Timothy are MAN OF GOD – Title of HONOR, Title from HISTORY

Title Bible gives Moses, Samuel, Elijah, David – Stood for God in THEIR Day

What is Message to WOMEN & MEN of God here in Beijing, China TODAY?

1. Flee

Sometimes RUNNING Away is SINFUL COWARDICE

Nehemiah to his enemies: “Should such a man as I run away?” Nehemiah 6.11

Paul’s Letter to Ephesian Church > Ch 6 Spiritual Warfare > STAND FIRM

Several pieces SPIRITUAL ARMOR but NOTHING to PROTECT Backside

Not RUN from TROUBLE – Never STOP! – RUN from TEMPTATIONS!

v. 11 But as for you, O man of God, flee these things.

These Things? LOVE of MONEY, Craving the WORLD, Destructive DESIRES

Potiphar’s TROPHY WIFE wanted Handsome HUNK Named JOSEPH

Joe Young Man NORMAL SEXUAL Desires > Probably WANTS HER TOO!

SHE is Married > NOT to him! – God has BETTER Way for Man of God Joseph

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, “Lie with me.” But he refused and said to his master's wife, “Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge...How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her...she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand and *fled*...
Genesis 39.6-12

Sometimes MOST MANLY Thing is to BOLT > Not Rationalize but RUN!

Couple weeks ago Preached in Church I Pastored for 10 yrs ICF Almaty, KZ

SAD to See Old Friend MEDICAL Doc / Int’l Clinic / From Another Country

Far from Lovely Wife & Great Kids – Met his fam Couple Times VISITED

SAD to See him > NOW ALL ALONE – Found HOTTIE KZ Girlfriend

No WIFE, KIDS, No GIRLFRIEND Hottie, Heartbreaker & Homewrecker

Sometimes you Need to Tell your Friends, “*I am going to Call it a Night Now*”

Gotta Early Class Tomorrow / Work Starts Early / Wife & Kids Waiting for Me

Going Somewhere / Doing Something – Sinful Flesh WANTS to Do, WRONG!

World “If it feels good, do it” / “How could it be wrong when it feels so right??”

ANSWER – We are Broken, Appetites got Cross-Wired, Desires lead to Death!

Word FLEE Not just RUN > SEPARATION from Sins of False Teachers

“Not all unity is good, and not all division is bad. There are times when a servant of God should take a stand against false doctrine and godless practices, and separate himself from them.”
Warren Wiersbe

DANGER – Some PROUD to be SEPARATISTS, Isolationist Christians

Be CAREFUL that we Separate for God’s GLORY & TRUTH

NOT out of PERSONAL PREJUDICE AND PARTY SPIRIT

2. Follow

Separation without Positive GROWTH becomes ISOLATION

Too Many Christians KNOWN ONLY for what they are AGAINST

DANGER: Cleaning HOUSE then being OPEN 7 More DEMONS to INVADE!

Man or Woman of GOD > Puts on VIRTUES are ATTRACTIVE, INVITING

v. 11 ...Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.

LISTS 21st C Way to Make SELF feel BAD > To Do List, MUCH UNDONE!

Not just RANDOM TASK List – Bullet Points about BLESSED LIFE of God

righteousness – Personal INTEGRITY – Can be TRUSTED to be TRUE

godliness – Practical PIETY – Righteous > Character / Godly > Conduct

faith – FAITHFULNESS, Dependability

love – AGAPE / Self Giving to Others > Your LOSS, Others GAIN

steadfastness – PATIENCE, Endurance – Refuse to Quit when Gets TOUGH

gentleness – “POWER under CONTROL” KJV > Meekness, NOT Weakness

6 Qualities CAREFULLY Chosen – Areas where Ephesian Elders were WEAK

IMPERATIVES that are LIVED Out by AUTHENTIC Christian

REMAIN Woman or Man of God – by ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT

Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers. 1 Timothy 4.16

In NT FOLLOWING often connected to FLEEING – Different Terms same Idea

Deny Ourselves > Follow Christ // Say ‘no’ to ungodliness, ‘yes’ to holiness

Put Off the Old Nature > Put On the New Nature // Flee Sin > Follow Savior

3. Fight

v. 12 “Fight the good fight of the faith”

Show SERIOUSNESS of STRUGGLE for LIFE & DOCTRINE in Church

About Truth & Doctrine > Some WANDERED From it, We FIGHT for It

Athletic Metaphor – INTENSE Effort > SPEND it All, Leave it ALL on FIELD!

Fight the GOOD FIGHT! = lit. *AGONIZE the GOOD AGONY*

CONSTANT Effort is REQUIRED

DAILY Discipline – Word, Prayer, Fellowship, Service – IS Fighting Good Fight

This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. 1 Timothy 1.18,19

v. 12 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.

DEBATE: Confession @ BAPTISM or ORDINATION?? Hopefully BOTH!

BEGINS at Baptism > CONTINUES thru ORDINATION

Someone Called: “I should have taken your Preaching Class 2 years ago!”

God is Calling me to PREACH – NOT to be Pastor, but to SHARE His Word

If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be...able to teach 1 Timothy 3.1,2

Elder should be ABLE to Clearly Communicate GOSPEL MESSAGE

Preaching may NOT be VOCATION, MIGHT be your SERVICE to Church

Told Person there will be MORE Classes for him to Take

v. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things

Be Good Christian > Will be Good Minister

Be Good Minister > Will be a Good Christian

Do NOT Fulfill Ministry – Not Fulfill CALL of God on your LIFE

FAITHFUL Service for GOD MEANING of LIFE: BORN & Re-Born for HIM

Come to STUDY? – Good! Get Ph.d. – NOT your Life’s PURPOSE!

Make MONEY? Make a Million! RMB & Dollars! TITHE ZGC – Still EMPTY

Find LOVE? Find Self LONELY in ARMS of Hottie or Hunk – Deeper Love!

VITAL Principle tucked into Qualifications for Deacons > Elder Mbazingwa:

For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 3.13

This FIGHT for Kingdom of God – ETERNAL, PERSONAL Benefits TOO!

Perhaps most Soul-Satisfying thing you can do in BJ Serve the Lord in ZGC!!

4. Faith

Some FEELING BEAT UP by this SERMON – “I just can’t DO ALL This!”

That’s GREAT!! – Not that FEEL Bad – UNDERSTAND Biblical TRUTH

Fully EXPECTED to Flee – Follow – Fight > ONLY in Strength of God in Christ

v. 12 *Take hold* of the eternal life to which *you were called*

v. 20 O Timothy, *guard* the deposit *entrusted* to you.

He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. 1 Thessalonians 5.24

Ballad of Heaven NOT “Enter the Conquering Hero” > “Worthy is the Lamb!”

v. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession

Just as TIMOTHY Stood before WITNESSES / Jesus stood before PILATE

Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” Pilate...went back outside to the Jews and told them, “*I find no guilt in him...*” “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that *I find no guilt in him*”... When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for *I find no guilt in him.*” John 18.37,38, 19.4,6

Jesus INNOCENCE did Not STOP PILATE from MURDERING Him

Just as Christians in IRAQ and SYRIA being SENSELESSLY KILLED Today
Timothy and Men & Women of FAITH TODAY Called to Follow Him by Faith
vs. 14,15 keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the
appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ which he will display at the proper time

ONLY Reason we have ANY HOPE of Standing – Flee, Follow, Fight

BECAUSE Jesus our SAVIOR & Sovereign STOOD Faithfully FOR US

“Proper Time” – Disappointments in Church Life – People LATE, DELAYS!

Things do NOT HAPPEN like WE EXPECT > Tim reminded ON-Time God

From Perspective of Eternity – Resurrection Viewpoint – Our Good / His Glory

Our confidence is in God’s perfect timing, and our consequent willingness to
leave things in his hands, arise from the kind of God we know him to be. John Stott

Paul – Chief Sinner – Forever CONSCIOUS of this FOUNDATIONAL Truth

Often in Letter(s) > Breaks into SONG of PRAISE – Exalts Him who is Worthy

vs. 15,16 he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord
of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom
no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Doxology > 5 Truths about our God’s Sovereign Power

Far BEYOND our Control or MANIPULATION

a. **Invincible** v. 15 “blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords”
Rome’s Emperors **VAINLY** took Titles of **DIETY** – Blasphemous Lies

Today we **CALL** our Dogs – Caesar and Nero!

b. **Immortal** v. 16 “who alone has immortality”

We have **LIFE ON LOAN** > God our **LIFE-GIVER** has **LIFE** in **HIMSELF**

Alpha & Omega / Beginning & End / Eternal God

c. **Inaccessible** v. 16 “who dwells in unapproachable light”

Darkness in any shape or form, whether falsehood or evil, cannot enter his presence, let alone overcome him. John Stott

d. **Invisible** v. 16 “whom no one has ever seen or can see”

All our **HUMAN** Eye can See is **REFLECTION** of **HIS GLORY**

Why Jesus **INCARNATE** > **REVEAL** God to Us! **WORD** made **FLESH**

Only can Know Him – If and When **HE REVEALS** Himself

e. **Importance** v. 16 “To him be honor and eternal dominion”

In Light of **GOD** – Nothing Else **ULTIMATELY** Matters!

GOD GAVE you **LIFE** – Maker and **KEEPER** > Fully **DEPENDENT** on Him

5. Focused

MONEY is One of **MAIN** Problems in Church in Ephesus – **REPEAT** Teaching

vs. 6-10 those who **WANT** to be **RICH** / vs. 17-19 those **ARE RICH**

vs. 17-19 As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

10 MORE Points – Preach **NOW!!** – Take **HOME** Study, **SMALL** Group??

Ch 3 – Try to Find ELDERS & DEACONS who do NOT LOVE Money (vs. 3,8)

Ch 5 – Put Truly Needy WIDOWS ON ROLE – church SCAMMED (vs. 6,8,16)

Do NOT Muzzle OX, In this RICH Church, Pastors POORLY Paid (vs. 17,18)

Ch 6 - False Teaching leads to SIN & SLAVERY to MONEY (vs. 5,9)

Paul cannot say enough against this pernicious enemy that draws people away from the faith. Solomon Andria, Madagascar

FOCUSED > \$ Looks like MAIN Thing – Just TEMPORAL TOOL in World

Many FALSE Teachers making FALSE Promises – Faith makes you RICH Now

Not ENTIRELY False: Many of those PREACHERS have GOTTEN VERY RICH!

Last Sunday – Nations Church in Istanbul – Translator to Turkish Troubled

That Week – Member Died – Assyrian Xtian woman, beautiful, Vibrant,

Pharmacist – Not only DISPENSED Prescriptions – Shared Gospel Often

Young and Healthy > Cancer – One Year Later > Dead

Painful – Hard to Understand – **NT Simple Theme:** Suffering leads to Glory!

RICH & Wannabe Rich > FOCUS on Him

Invincible - Immortal - Inaccessible - Invisible - Eternally Important

6. Faithful

FINAL Heart-Cry of Aged Father to his Beloved Son:

vs. 20,21 O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” for by professing it some have swerved from the faith.

DANGERS Face Any Church > FALSE Teaching & Apathy of AFFLUENCE

SAD Reality > Problem in Church in Ephesus, Not Persecution from Outside

As Paul PREDICTED in Miletus

Paul to Ephesian Elders, “I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and *from among your own selves* will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them” Acts 20.30

False Teaching Elders – Smiling, Friendly NOT Monsters with HORNS

Elders became Men of World: LOST Christian OUTLOOK > MINDS Depraved

HODGE-PODGE of HERESY Popular Teaching > Making People RICH!

Final Appeal – GUARD or Keep the Faith / Essential Message of Letter

AVOID – Godless Chatter / Importance of FINAL WORDS

IMPORTANT Message that we MUST Apply? Books? Podcasts? Music?

Many SWERVED from TRUTH > We are to hold it SECURELY

Church: “the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth”
1 Timothy 3.15

GUARD the Gospel by PREACHING and PRACTICING It
CLEAR WORD and a CONSISTENT WITNESS of the Church
Church ONLY as STRONG as its MEMBERS & LEADERS

Timothy is NOT WEAKER than any OTHER of God’s Leaders

Abe – Moses – David – Jeremiah – Peter – Paul - ALL of US > STRUGGLE

O Timothy MAN UP!! - Be TRUE Man of God

O ZGC – BE Women & Men God CALLS you to BE – His Glory, Your Good

7. Future

v. 21 Grace be with you. – PLURAL – Y’ALL – Each ONE of YOU

Both PERSONAL Letter to Timothy & PASTORAL Letter to Church in Ephesus

ABRUPT End – More Abrupt than even Galatians – SERIOUS, URGENT

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Timothy 1.2

Only SAVED by Grace, Only SERVE by Grace, Only STRONG in Grace

MONTHS LATER Paul will write Tim Again – 2 Tim – Paul’s Final Letter
 PROBLEMS are NOT Solved in Ephesian Church – Gotten WORSE

“You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me” 2 Timothy 1.15

YEARS Later Somebody writes LETTER we call HEBREWS – Final Verses...

“You should know that our brother *Timothy has been released*, with whom I shall see you if he comes soon.” Hebrews 13.23

ALMOST 2000 yrs Later – Here WE are Xtians from Round World in Beijing

CAPITAL City of World’s Most Populous Nation

Vibrant, Growing, Chinese Church SURROUNDS Us

Every NATION Today – Find a Christian, probably Church – FEAR or Freedom

Spent last month in 3 Nations have Strong Orthodox Church

1 European Country – Cross on Flag – Church leaders High Social Status

Some of Most Ancient & Elaborate Buildings Churches & Monasteries

90% Population CLAIM to be Christian – Only God Knows – Not their Judge

Tragic Mistake MANY Nations: 1. Church is BUILDING / 2. Xtians are INSIDE

NOT what Read 1 Tim or NT – Christian living Relationship with Risen Jesus

Jesus says HIS Church is to be IN the World, NOT OF IT > Sends us to Reach It

There is not one square inch of the entire creation about which Jesus Christ does not cry out, “This is mine! This belongs to me!”

Abraham Kuyper, Prime Minister of the Netherlands 1901-1905

FIGHT for THE Faith – Not FEELING – BIBLICAL Truth, GOSPEL Message

Body of Doctrine taught by APOSTLES – 5 X’s in Pastorals “Faithful Saying”

Agreed Upon & Established GOSPEL Truths from Earliest Church > TODAY

“...Christians (need to) be equipped by their churches to do three things: (1) to be a verbal witness to the gospel in their webs of relationships, (2) to love their neighbors and do justice within their neighborhoods and city, and (3) to integrate

their faith with their work in order to engage culture through their vocations...Only this kind of church has any chance in the non-Christian world”

Tim Keller, “Center Church”

Many Disappointment at church – Sinful Pastors named Mark – Blair & Driscoll

Far from HOLY Bride of Lamb we are Called to Be

Solemn Promise of Jesus

“I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Matthew 16.18

WE HERE Evidence that HE was not Just BLOWING SMOKE

Savior & Sovereign PROMISE Keeper – Invites us Co-Labor with Him

The church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ her Lord;
she is his new creation
by water and the Word.
From heaven he came and sought her
to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her,
and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation,
yet one o'er all the earth;
her charter of salvation,
one Lord, one faith, one birth;
one holy name she blesses,
partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses,
with every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder
we see her sore oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder,
by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping;
their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping
shall be the morn of song.

Mid toil and tribulation,
 and tumult of her war,
 she waits the consummation
 of peace forevermore;
 till, with the vision glorious,
 her longing eyes are blest,
 and the great church victorious
 shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union
 with God the Three in One,
 and mystic sweet communion
 with those whose rest is won.
 O happy ones and holy!
 Lord, give us grace that we
 like them, the meek and lowly,
 on high may dwell with thee.

Samuel J. Stone, 1839-1900

1 Timothy 6. ¹¹But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. ¹²Fight 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. ¹³I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, ¹⁴to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. ¹⁷ As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. ²⁰ O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” ²¹ for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.