

## 1 Tim 6:11,12

## FLEE, PURSUE, FIGHT, GRASP

PRELIMS. In this chapter Paul is reminding us that the Xn, the *man of God*, as he calls Timothy, is a **soldier** and that we are in a **war!** The Xn has to be **trained, disciplined, committed** in order to *fight the good fight of the faith*. You just **cannot** be a good Xn unless you are principled, disciplined, committed! In **refuting** false teaching and warning about the **craving** for money, which many people are obsessed with, Paul makes **4 appeals**, which Tim must preach about if he is to be faithful. You and I must also follow them if we are to be good Xns! They are:- **Flee; Pursue; Fight; Grasp!**

### FLEE

*“as for you, O man of God, **flee** these things”*[11] ‘Flee’ is a familiar phrase with Paul. He uses it again in [2 Tim 2:22] regarding *youthful passions* and in [1 Cor 6:18] *flee from sexual immorality!* There are times when **nothing** else will do but **fleeing** and running away from a situation. 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. Rather it is flee from the **hunger for MATERIALISM!** Flee from the ‘love of money and 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]!

\*Don’t try and **argue** your way out of temptation/**wrong desires**.

Covetousness has a **unique ability** to **out-wit** you! Ultimately it **will** find a ‘legitimate’ **reason** for you to **justify** your desire! It will show you what benefits you will gain by giving in, how much you can save by getting it, the bargain it is, and how it will be useful some time in the future. etc! If you **engage** covetousness, you **will** finally believe ‘giving-in’ is the best thing to do, so just to get it & end the struggle!

**APP** Most temptations can **only** be settled with a ‘drop tools and run’ attitude! That is **not** being ‘chicken’ or weak. Fleeing is **NOT ESCAPISM!** Escapism is **refusing** to **face** your **responsibilities**,

fleeing is facing them and **conquering** them! 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! \*The Lord Jesus would have us **AVOID** all **involvement** with temptation and advises us to *Watch and pray that you may **not enter into** temptation* [Mar 14:38] **Every morning**, make a point of praying that you would **not have** to fight with temptation today, but **if you have** to, you would **conquer!**

## **PURSUE**

Now Xnity 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, steadfastness & gentleness*[11] If you are a Xn you **ALREADY HAVE** the **seeds** of **ALL** these graces in your heart! A seed has **all** the **ingredients** of a plant within it! As it is planted in the ground, all the ingredients are planted with it! **So it is with the seed of grace!** If you are a Xn, every single **good thing** is within your heart! What we need is that these seedlings be **strengthened** and **developed!** The life that is there needs to be **nourished/fostered.** That is **why** it is **vital** you are daily **fed/watered** by God’s **Word** and **Spirit** for it is *the Spirit who gives life*[J6:63]

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”*[1P3] **Sanctification** is actually **SIMPLE!** I mean simple in **theory** - not practise. Its **LOGICAL!** I remember going on a **business course** on ‘How to **Improve** Your Turnover/Sales in Business’ It guaranteed ‘success’! Guaranteed to increase your profit! I **believed** it!! 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. The way to be holy is just to *“pursue righteousness, godliness...”* obvious!

Dwell on Christ - **watch** Him! Make it your goal to copy Him and serve Him! Respond and react the way he did. *When He was reviled,*

*He did **not** revile in return; when He suffered, He did **not** threaten, but continued **entrusting Himself** to Him who judges justly [1P2:23]*

**APP** When you get up in the morning, what's your aim – is it to become more like Christ throughout the day? Let us all make **that** our goal. **Pray** that the germ-seed of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness inside you, would grow and increase. Ask God for the **fertiliser** of His Word and rain of His Holy Spirit would feed you, so that you would **train yourself for godliness**[4:7] All Xns have a **responsibility to train ourselves** for godliness!!

If you are not pursuing godliness, you are pursuing **something else** which is **not** godly! You're **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! 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 Xn is a **battle**! It is struggle - if you are **conscientious**! Why are we told to put armour on? Because we are in a fight! If you are really keen to advance His Name, you will 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].

That to me is a **real** fight! **Not many** of us **are asked** to fight such battles! Do not let that discourage you from living the Xn life! But if you are asked to engage in such conflicts as Paul, what a **privilege**! Consider it all **joy**! You **will** have your **reward**, you will not be the loser in any way, but the gainer! After saying *we are regarded as*

*sheep to be slaughtered*, Paul said in *all these things we are more than conquerors* [Rom 12] nothing can separate us from God's love!

Notice **what** Tim was to fight **for** - "*the faith*" – the body of doctrine that is the truth! Paul *I have fought the good fight...I have kept the faith*"[2T4:7] The Xn work is not only to promote love – it is also to **destroy** the **work** of the **devil!** *The weapons of our warfare...destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God*"[2C 10:4] **APP** Never physical fighting except in self-defence!

### **GRASP!**

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 Xns 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 and eternal life!

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 **confession!** *the good confession in the presence of many witnesses* [12c] For you/I to make a profession is **easy**. For us there is **little cost, little risk**. For Tim there were **enormous** risks and costs! Yet, he did it – before many witnesses he was not ashamed. Paul is saying '**Don't go back** on your profession'! **APP** Your profession at the **last communion** Xn, was a good **confession** before many witnesses? **Don't throw away** your confidence. Be encouraged. Take hold anew and afresh of that **Christ** who is your **life!**