

Fight the Good Fight!

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1. 1. 1. 1. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful 1. 1. 1.

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Likewise says, fight the good fight. 1 Timothy 6. Verse 12. Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

You could put it, fight the good fight of the faith. The good fight of the faith, says Paul, fight for it, and to earnestly contend for the faith.

[1 : 04] The faith. Fight for it. These are days to fight, brothers and sisters, people of God today. These are days when the people of God are called to fight, when the saints of God are called to fight.

We are under attack. In case you didn't realise it, we are under attack. Consider, for example, the state of the church today. The state of the church. Some preachers have lost their fight.

Some churches have lost their faith. Some Christians have lost the truth. And brother, sister, don't lose your fight. This is the time to regain your fight, to seek to refresh that fighting spirit that the church of God wants new and needs to gain and always has needed because we're under attack right from the Garden of Eden we've been under attack.

And the people of God, through history we see Israel was under attack right through as Amalek and the enemy was about in one form or another.

And I'd like to put it to you along three lines. I haven't really got a very organised sermon tonight. It's a bit all over the place. I've got more scribbles on here than what I typed out in preparing it.

[2 : 19] But talking about the fight that we face. The fight that we face. And you could see it along these three lines. The fight for sound doctrine. The fight for separation.

And the fight for soul-saving truth. And we need to seek the face of God to refresh the fight.

Christian, arise. Put your armour on. Now more than ever we need to rise up.

In Psalm 94.16 the psalmist cried, Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? Or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

And I read a book that was called Who Will Rise Up? It was by a preacher, Jed Smock in the USA. He used to go out to the university campuses and his text was Who Will Rise Up?

And he was encouraging the people of God to get about the work of open-air evangelism. He was out the work of going on the campuses of the universities in the US.

[3 : 17] And his message in that book was Who will rise up? Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? Who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? Oh, that the saints of God will get stirred up.

That we get stirred up. That we get shaken up. That we get stirred from our slumber. It's a time to rouse the saints. In many quarters the church of God is asleep. Slumbering and asleep.

And we need to wake out asleep. To wake up. To rise up. To stand up. And to listen to the call.

Because friends, it's a battle today. This is not just some poetic language.

It is a battle. The Bible says that you're in the thick of it. Or you ought to be. It's a battle. And it's a biblical mandate. A biblical imperative. For you, Christian brother, to fight.

To fight. The good fight of the faith. To earnestly contend for the faith. Once delivered to the saints. 2 Timothy 4. Paul writes to Timothy again.

[4 : 19] Along the line again of this warfare that we face. That we should be about. In 2 Timothy 4. From verse 1. He says, I charge thee.

This was strong language. This was commanding language. The kind of language that a general would charge the troops. I charge thee. Paul writes before God.

And the Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall judge the quick and the dead. At his appearing and his kingdom. Preach the word. Be instant. In season. Out of season. Reprove. Rebuke. Exhort. With all longsuffering. And doctrine. For the time will come. When they will not endure sound doctrine.

But after their own lusts. Will hint to themselves. Teachers. Having itching ears. And they shall turn away. Their ears from the truth. And shall be turned.

[5 : 15] Answer fables. Paul writes to Timothy. That this is the time that will come. A characteristic of the end days. A disregard. A sound doctrine. An itching of ears.

A preaching of fables. And we see that sadly today. Where in Christendom today. In many quarters. There's a veering aside from the truth.

The long established truth. The long established preaching of the gospel. Of the message of salvation. Of God's truth. Sound Bible teaching.

To the spectacular. The emphasis is on the spectacular today. And it's as if they've got to have. Some new fad. Some new thing. Some new wonder. As it were.

And you see on the internet. What is going on. In Christendom today. Particularly in the US. But you're seeing it. Invading our land. Of gemstones falling on people.

[6 : 13] Or gold dust. Or crazy. Holy laughter. So called. Or this. Showmanship. That is. Meant to be God moving.

Friends today. There's a lot to be designed. On the church front. Where sound doctrine. Is put on the shelf. So that people can enjoy. The bizarre. The spectacular.

Signs of wonder. So called. And friends. It's a wonder. That Christians today. Aren't waking up to themselves. And seeing what is going on. Waking up. Smelling the coffee.

And realising. Something is dreadfully wrong. Drastically wrong. In the church of God today. And friends. One of the reasons why. Is because the Bible. Has been sidelined.

The Bible has been put on the shelf. And discarded. No wonder. We have lost the real power. The real power. The gospel is the power of God. Unto salvation.

[7 : 07] To everyone. That believer. And Jeremiah. In 23 verse 29. He says. God says. Is not my word. Like as a fire.

Saith the Lord. And like a hammer. That breaketh the rock in pieces. Is not my word. Like as a fire. Like as a hammer. That breaketh the rock in pieces.

The real power is in the word of God. We need to get back to the Bible. And this church needs to get back to the Bible. I'm staggered at the biblical illiteracy. And ignorance amongst the saints of God.

And the people of God. Even that attend this church. And we're no shining light. Friends. We've got a long way to go. Brothers and sisters. Myself included. But we need to get back to the Bible.

Christendom has lost its way. Because it needs to return to the Bible. Biblical principles need to be grasped. And applied. And put into practice.

[8 : 05] Put into action. The Bible has been neglected. The gospel has been neglected. The gospels. Today we're seeing another gospel. Another gospel. A completely different gospel.

Than what we read about in here. And we see it broadcast on the airwaves. We see it heralded in many quarters. For example. The health, wealth and prosperity gospel.

It's not found in here. But it's found on the airwaves. It's on the popular TV picture stations. These things are a deviation.

A distortion. And it's a sad reflection that the people of God. Many amongst ourselves. Are swallowing this. They're just turning on the tube. And taking it in. Without discernment.

Not realising the deception. That is coming in the air gate. Today. Christendom needs to return to the Bible. Christendom needs to return to the gospel. The gospel.

[9 : 02] The gospel. Not another gospel. Today we're seeing ecumenism in a strengthening. In a worsening.

Day by day. I mean. You just hear the news today. Of the so-called declaration of the saint of Australia. And you see people flocking to this deception.

Today. And talking of building a prayer building. To pray to Mary MacKillo. God help Australian. Shame on Australian. That we should be so duped. And some are. Even in. Protestantism. What's left of it. Are swallowing it too.

That Mary is a saint. For all. Faiths. As it were. Even atheists. You know. You're seeing this. Clap tramp. That popery is. Is swallowed.

[10:05] And yet. The old timers. Of old. Would declare. That the pope. The man of sin. That the. The popery is. Certainly a reflection. Of the antichrist spirit.

In the world today. And friends. Yeah. Christendom today. Is swallowing this garbage. That is going on. And it's going beyond ecumenism. To interfaith.

Interfaith. Where you've got. Buddhists sitting down with Christians. And Muslims. And somehow praying together. To what? Some fuzzy wuzzy. Airy fairy. God.

Certainly not the God. Of the Bible. And friends. This is a danger today. We're seeing the signs and wonders movement. The slaying carry on. It's not in here. Brothers and sisters.

You can search in vain for it. The slaying in the spirit. So called. Ananias and Sapphira. Were the only ones slain by the spirit. People today. There's a lie.

[10:59] That's being heralded. That's being preached. And swallowed. Holus bolus. The hocus pocus. As it were. Of what is being taught.

And preached. Is far far astray. From the word of God. And then you have women preachers. For one thing. And God bless women. Who will stand where men will not stand.

But certainly standing in the pulpit. Is not the place. For a woman to be preaching the word of God. The Bible is quite clear on that front. Women have many other ministries. That they can fulfil. For God's glory.

And we can't get away from the word of God. We've got to stand with the word. Otherwise we're just going completely aside from it. And today we're seeing what you could call.

A load of Trojan horses. Trojan horses coming into the fortress as it were. Into the very sanctuary of the thrice holy God. We're seeing these things coming in.

[11:59] With all the razzmatas. And lights. And sounds. And all the effects that the magicians can conjure up today.

And they're coming into the very sanctuary. Of the holy place. Of the people of God. And the people of God are welcoming them with open arms. The Trojan horses.

As it were. Of these other gospels. Of these false Latter-day delusions. And they're bringing in humanism. They're bringing in feminism. They're bringing in carnality.

They're bringing in flesh. And foolishness. The church of God has been infiltrated. As it were. As if it's. You know. The enemy going behind the.

Under the radar. As it were. In World War II. When you had the spies and so on. You could see them cloaked. And looking like they're on the same team.

[12:52] But they're not really. And you know. Sometimes we. Can't always discern that. And we read in 2 Corinthians 11. 15. Therefore. It is no great thing.

If his ministers. This is Satan's servants. If his ministers. Also be transformed as. Ministers. Of righteousness. Transformed.

As the ministers of righteousness. Whose end shall be. According to their works. Now. Years ago. I was watching some. Video footage. And it was a Christian meeting. It was a Christian church.

There were Christian people there. And. This sister. Had more discernment than me. At that time. And. Years ago. As I say. When I saw this. I was shocked.

When this sister. Told. Told me. She exhorted me. That certain. Well known men. Within churches today. Were actually. Satan's agents. Satan's agents.

[13:47] At first. I could not accept. This statement. But as time goes by. More and more. I can see the truth. Of that statement. Now.

This was the time. Well. Some. While back now. Of the. Of the Toronto blessing. And so on. Of. What's his name. The big fat. South African guy. Rodney Howard. Rodney. Rodney. There's some truth. That is coming out. Of his mouth. He's got a Bible. In his hand. Some of the time.

You know. There's some of the. Truth. That is being. Exhorted. Amongst some. Of what he's saying. And yet. What is being promoted. Is far. Far away. From Bible truth. And.

And. I'm not saying. That he is a minister of Satan. But I'm saying. That the Bible says. That Satan's ministers. Will be transformed. Into. Ministers. Of righteousness.

[14:44] And. We need to be. All of us. Aware of that. Alert to that. Even some. Who might. Sound like they're. Preaching. Some truth. It's like. It's being said.

If you've got. One percent. Poison. In the food. That gets dished up to you. Then it's not going to do you. Any good. And you'd refuse it. If you knew. What was in it. And. Sadly. Satan's men. And women. Are masquerading. As ministers. Of the gospel. Today. They're masquerading. As that. Maybe. They're. They're deceived. Themselves. And not even aware. Of. What they're. What they're on about. They're just going. With the flow. They're following. Their mentors. As it were. And yet. The Bible. Warns you. Friends. Today. Warns you. Warns us. As the flock. Of God. As his sheep. To be alert to. Wolves. In sheep's clothing. Ravenous wolves. Ravening. Slobbering.

[15 : 39] Fangs. Wanting to devalue. And eat you up for breakfast. Ravening. Ravenous wolves. And they're in the pulpits of our land.

They're in the pulpits of our land. They're in the TV. Pulpits. The pulpits of TV land. The pulpits of Australia. The pulpits of the world. They're in the living rooms of gullible. Fleshly Christians. Who don't understand. What? They're being fed. Spiritually shallow Christians are swallowing it. And consider. The fight that you're in. It's a fight. It's a fight. Sometimes we don't grasp that. The fact that we're in a fight. And consider the message that is being preached. From some of these pulpits in 2 Corinthians 11. Verse 4. You can see. This could be said of some of those pulpits. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus. Whom we have not preached. Or if you receive another spirit.

[16 : 39] Which you have not received. Or another gospel. Which you have not accepted. You might well bear with him. Friends. Another Jesus. Another spirit.

Another gospel. We need to be discerning. As part of the fight. That we have our eyes open. Because souls are in danger today. Souls are in danger. If it's another Jesus. If it's another spirit. If it's another gospel. What a shame. What a reproach. What a danger. Souls are in danger. If they're being fed another gospel. And they're thinking that that other gospel can save them. If they're thinking that other Jesus can save them. What a danger that would be. What a horrendous calamity that would be. What a dread. Dread thing that would be. That another Jesus is being preached. It's not the soul saving salvation. Truth. That is being preached. So what can we do. What can you do.

[17 : 35] If you're meant to be part of the fight. If you're meant to be part of the fight. Titus 2.1. Paul writes. But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine.

Speak sound doctrine. Says Paul. Sound teaching. Wholesome teaching. Where are the men and women of God. Who will speak sound doctrine. Who will have that real soul searching hunger. And thirst for righteousness. That heart wrenching desire. To get right with God. To get back to God. To get that zeal. That repentance. That love for the word. That love for the fellowship. That love for doctrine. There once was a time. When the glory filled the temple. The glory filled the temple. Not a glory of man. Not a glory of a conjured up atmosphere. Of emotionalism. Of a charged environment. Made by the twinkling of the music. Or the lights. And the words used to manipulate.

[18 : 36] To motivate. But the glory of God filled the temple. The glory of God filled the temple. That's what we want. That's what I seek. That's what I hunger for. That's what we need.

We need that brothers and sisters. And now. Yet. Now. Other things fill the temple. Other things fill the churches. Apathy. Apostasy. Prevails often. Yet we know. God says. The Lord Jesus says. That his church will prevail. That the gates of hell shall not prevail. Against the church of the living God. And we need to be part of the fight back campaign. Brothers and sisters. As we see the word of God abandoned. As we see the church of God getting secularized. And marketized. And monopolized. And the spirit of truth. Fleeing. And replaced with the spirit of error. As that invades the sanctuary.

[19 : 34] As the Holy Spirit is being replaced. With an unholy spirit. We need to be part of the fight back. The fight back campaign. Because it's a spiritual fight. That we're in. In 1 John 4 verse 6. It tells us of two contrasting spirits. Two contrasting spirits. In 1 John 4 verse 6. John writes of the spirit of error. And the spirit of truth.

The spirit of error. Or the spirit of deception. The spirit of delusion. As this word error. Is elsewhere translated. In the word of God. The spirit of deception.

The spirit of error. The spirit of delusion. Has come in and replaced the spirit of truth. Friends. Spiritual forces are at work. Deceitful spirits.

Seducing spirits. We read of that in 1 Timothy 4. Verse 1. Now the Holy Spirit. Speaketh expressly. That in the latter times. Some shall depart from the faith.

[20 : 30] Depart from the faith. Giving heed to seducing spirits. And doctrines of devils. Friends. We all need to be alert. I know. I thank God.

That God saved me. In a church. That was somewhat ecumenical. And is more so now. And they were preaching from. A pretty wishy-washy Bible. A good news Bible.

And God saved me. Despite some of that. Very faulty foundation. Within that church. But thank God. There are. Men and women of God today.

Who are waking up. To what's going on. And I'd like to hope. That you are one of them. That you are one of them. Who will be a fighter for the truth. That you'll be a zealot. For the truth of God. That the zeal of God will consume you. And inflame you. And fire you. To fight. It's like when Jesus. Entered and cleansed the temple.

[21 : 25] The temple was filled with these rogues and rascals. Who were merchandising the religion of the day. And we see the thieves in the sacred place again. We see the thieves.

In the sacred place. The money changers. The merchandisers. With their TV channels. And their DVDs. And their top selling books. And merchandise.

I wonder what the Lord Jesus would do. If he was to walk into some of the modern day Christian bookstores. Would he be throwing those things on the floor.

As it were. You could imagine. Some of those things must make God absolutely sick to the stomach. What is being merchandised. And the merchandising of the people of God.

It's another spirit. It's a doctrine of demons. It's strange fire. Charismatic chaos. There's lots to be questioning today. Friends today. In the church of God.

[22 : 20] And to be alert to. Bible believing Christians. Rise up. And see how the word of God needs to be refined within you. Refreshed within you. To return to it.

To refresh that spirit of repentance. That spirit of love. That spirit of holy zeal. To put aside those man-made doctrines.

And these sham things that are about. These man-made philosophies. These doctrines of demons that are seducing the people of God. It's a time to be alert.

When it was a time of war. They had those alarms go off. Didn't they? You know. The air raid sirens.

And the people of God had to take shelter. The people of the nation had to take shelter. Rather from the enemy's attack. And to find a place of security. A place of safety.

[23 : 20] There's an alarm going off today. We need to sound the alarm. We need to be alerted to the contamination. The subtle influence that comes around about us.

And friends. Again. I would stress that. We are not immune to it. There's people here today. There's some people. Just this morning. That was talking about Herbert Armstrong.

And thinking that was some good material. And I know I've had some folk. Try to put material on our magazine table. From very questionable sources. The Church of God. Of Philadelphia.

Or whatever it was. Various cultic. And really anti-gospel preaching churches. And yet some Christians are totally thick. That they can't see this.

They can't discern this. And perhaps that really. It boils down to that it's my fault. It's my fault for not exhorting you more strongly. In Bible doctrine.

[24 : 17] In Bible salvation. In Bible truth. And perhaps there's a fault with you. Where you're not coming to Bible study night. Where you're not coming to be fed with the Word of God.

Where you're not coming to get the Word of God in your soul. And make it live. Be exhorted tonight.

The lack of truth is because we're not studying the Word. We're not searching the Scriptures.

We're not seeking His face. We've lost our way. We've lost our discernment. We've lost that caution. Again I'm not saying it's all them. All these other churches. I'm saying this church here needs to lift its game.

Amen. We need to lift our game. We need to get serious about the Word of God. We need to be reprov'd. Rebuk'd. Exhort'd. With all longsuffering. And doctrine.

We've been warned many times in God's Word. A little leaven. Leaveneth the whole lump. I know lovely people in our midst. And they're telling me they watch certain preachers on TV.

[25 : 14] And I just wonder how can you take that. And yet come here and hear me rebuke. And speak against such things. And yet not be discerning about them.

God's Word warns us repeatedly. Of a little leaven. Leaveneth the whole lump. I'll just exhort you brothers and sisters tonight. To give a wide berth to these things that are questionable.

Now there was one couple this morning. Asked me about Michael Youssef. As far as I know I think he is a good preacher. I'm not that familiar with him. But it's not saying that all of them are wrong. There are some good ones out there. I know Charles Stanley I think has got some good material too. Amongst others. But friends. We all need to be discerning and cautious and careful. Dig deep into the word question.

Search the scriptures. See if these things are so. And for me too. I might say something that's a bit off. I know I've been exhorted of late. By one who has attended here.

[26 : 13] Questioning one of the things I said. And I was glad of that. We need that. We need to sharpen iron. Sharpen one another. Get sharper in the Word of God. A little leaven. Leaveneth the whole lump.

That's the danger. Don't let a chink of it in. Don't let a sliver of it in. Don't let an ounce of it in. And that's why as a church we guard our music.

We guard the teaching that we deliver. That's not to say there's good music outside of this book.

There's lots of good music out there. And there's lots of good teaching available.

But we need to be alert to things such as the emergent church of today. The emergent church. The post-modern church. It's some crazy new agey kind of replacement gospel that is being fed people today.

And no wonder the church of God, the saints of God, they're getting lukewarm. And they're not discerning between right and wrong. They're not discerning the difference between the holy and the unholy.

[27 : 13] We've lost our way in terms of sound doctrine. We've lost our way also. Secondly, not that this is really a three-point sermon, but to make it a division of sorts, we need to be discerning that we've lost our way with separation.

With separation. In the Word of God, God says he's put a difference between the holy and the unholy. Now we're seeing a blurring of all that. Where you can't really see where's God in all this. In some of this carry-on, in this entertainment gospel that predominates the scene today. We need to heed the warning of God's Word.

Be ye separate. Be ye separate. There's a sense where it's black and white. There's truth and error. Sometimes as Christians we might have to discern where that line is.

But some things are quite plain to see. And we need to regain that sense of the separation between the holy and the unholy. To counteract error with truth.

[28 : 17] To preach it soundly. And I've been preaching against things a lot. But to be preaching for the truth. Content for the truth. To contend for the faith. We ignore God's warning at our peril.

And we need an awakening from slumber. The fact is, the church is in a deep, deep slumber. A deep slumber. As false teachings, as flesh, as falsehood seems to prevail.

We need, as the Word challenges us to, to return to the old paths. The old paths, as it says in Jeremiah. Stand in the past and see where is the good way.

And ask for the old paths. The old paths. And the old paths, when you think about it, where was the church of God? In old time, when it was on fire. When it was progressing. When it was advancing.

When the kingdom of God was advancing. Was when the people of God had a zeal for evangelism. When the people of God had a zeal. A love for souls.

[29 : 16] A love for discipleship. A love for the revival of the Word of God. Of a refreshing. Of spiritual awakening. We need to get real. Real discipleship.

Real evangelism. Real revival. We need to get real, brothers and sisters. And I'm saying that for me too. To get real. To stop playing games.

To stop playing church. And to question what is happening. What is being embraced. And to not follow the trend where it's growth is more important than truth.

Growth is not more important than truth. Rather that we are a remnant of a holy people. Than to be a crowd of a mixture where I'm having to tickle ears or tone it down.

Or give you some easy to palette kind of message. That doesn't challenge you about sin. And friends. Yet today.

[30 : 21] We see some are busy making the church worldly. With the excuse that they're making it relevant. Making it worldly. With the excuse that they're making it relevant.

There's a danger there. There's a danger now. We want to be relevant. We want to reach our generation. We are the ones who should be reaching our generation. And the generation to come. But that's not to say we make the message any less than it is. Or turn aside from the truth. And in this church.

This church. There's a long way to go. A long, long way to go. There's a scarcity of commitment. There's a lack of Bible knowledge. There's a laxness in many quarters.

And I'm saying that for me too. I've got a long way to go. Most at fault is the man in the mirror. Because if this church is not powerful. And of sound doctrine.

[31 : 21] Then it's this person's fault right here. And friends. I exhort you. To be exhorted. Pray for me. That I might be. A strong voice.

That I might be a voice. That God can use. Despite my own failings. And friends. Just coming to a close. Biblical faith is our great name today.

Biblical faith. Biblical repentance. The biblical gospel. We need to fly the flag. In the face of the onslaught. That is all around us. Enemies within without.

Fighting's within without. We need to fly the flag. Fly the flag. Raise it on the mast. Raise the standard. And get back in the fray. Sound the alarm. It's a time to fight.

Not to flee. It's a time to advance. Not to retreat. It's a time to stand strong. To get stronger. By God's grace. To sound the alarm.

[32 : 17] It's a fight for the gospel. That's what it is. It's a fight for sound doctrine. It's a fight for separation. And it's a fight for souls. It's time to repent. It's time to repent.

As we see apostasy. As we see Babylon. God help us. Lukewarmness. Shame on Australia. Saint Mary MacKillop. Shame.

Shame. Shame. Shame. God help us. Biblical truth. Biblical truth that used to be revered. Used to be loved. Used to be upheld. Respected.

Authoritaded. This truth needs to be defended. Heralded on all fronts. Within the home front. The community front. The church front. This is not a time for retreat.

It's a time to stand up and fight. To stand up and fight. It's time to launch the counter-offensive people. It's time to launch the counter-offensive. A time for us to fight.

[33 : 14] I love to tell the story of haunting things above. Of Jesus and his glory.

To stand up and fight. To stand up and fight.