

# The Fight

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[0:00] 1 Timothy chapter 6, if you've got your Bibles, let's stand shall we, again, as we read God's Word.

If you're physically able, please stand. 1 Timothy chapter 6, from verse 11. But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 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.

Amen. Please be seated. I just want to look, especially at verse 12 there, but the context there is of people doing the wrong thing. People who are falling snare, into temptation, drowning men in destruction and perdition, the love of money, people piercing themselves through with many sorrows.

And Paul urges Timothy, he beckons to Timothy, he says, but thou, O man of God, he says, flee these things, those things of the flesh and the devil, And follow after righteousness, faith, love, patience, meekness, fight the good fight of faith.

[1:32] My theme this morning is fight. Fight the good fight of faith. Faith is not a passive, inactive, weak, careless thing.

Faith is a brave manly fight. It's armed, it's dangerous, it's a fight.

It takes discipline and courage and combat. And life, the life of faith, is an adventure. That's what it's meant to be. An adventure to live. And we know, as we grow older, we know life may at times bruise and buffet us and threaten to beat us.

But we have a fight. We can win. The fight of faith. The fight of the faith. And the fight is on, brother. The fight is on, sister, today. The fight is on.

The fight is now. The fight is real. The fight is yours. The fight of the faith. Have you lost your fight? For many believers, they lose their fight.

[2:37] They have defeat and they're overcome. But the Bible says that you are meant to be an overcomer. That you are meant to be more than a conqueror. You are under attack today.

Friends, believers this morning, every single one of you here today is under attack from an unseen enemy. It's a battle. It's a fight.

And our fight principally is against three enemies. It's been put. These three stand out for the Christian as the enemy. Your enemies. The world, the flesh and the devil.

Look at each one of those. The world, the flesh and the devil. Think of the world for a moment. The pressures that are around us. Day by day. From day to day. The influences.

The associations. The power that governs our world. As the Bible calls the enemy, the devil, the God of this world.

[3:36] Think of the associations of the world that are around about you. And we need to break them. We need to break them. We need to cut them. And form new ones. 1 Corinthians 15. 33.

It says there. Believe us. He says. Paul. In 1 Corinthians 15. 33. Be not deceived. Evil communications corrupt good manners.

Evil communications. It's talking about associations. Communications. That are evil. Those fellowships. Those friendships.

That are of the world. It says they corrupt good manners. Some associations. Some friendships. Can corrupt. That which is good.

And affect us. In an untoward way. And friends. The influence is all around us. It's all pervasive. The influence of the world. The love of the world's things.

[4:31] The love of the world's ways. And the toys of the world. The desire to please men. Instead of God. That's the world. The love of the

world. The secret wish to do. As others in the world do around you.

That is the world. Be aware of that. Brother. Sister. The world. It's something we can't really avoid. Avoid. Because it's all around about us.

It's besieging us. As we walk through the shopping centres. And we hear the music of the world.

When we go about our day by day. In the media of the world. The communication of the world.

The television. It's all around about us. And we need to be cautious and careful. Of the influence of the world. Susanna Wesley. John Wesley's mother. Wrote to him. And she talked about this worldliness.

The things of the world. Or sin. As you could think of as worldliness. And she described it. She defined it like this. She said. Whatever weakens your reason. Impairs the tenderness of your conscience.

[5:31] Obscures your sense of God. Or takes off your relish for spiritual things. In short. Whatever increases the strength and authority. Of your body.

Over your mind. That thing is sin to you. However innocent it may be. In itself. Be aware of that. Be guarded. Be guided by God's word.

James 4 verse 4. Urges you and I. It says to you. To me. That friendship. Of the world. Is enmity or hatred. Against God.

The friendship of the world. Is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore. Will be a friend of the world. Is the enemy of God. That's a telling statement.

Isn't it? A telling statement. That if we will be a friend of the world. We will be an enemy of God.

Now of course. God wants us. As was prayed earlier. To be ambassadors in our world.

[6:26] He doesn't want us to be. Insulated. And hiding in some fortress. Mentality. That we have no contact with the world. But we have to be ambassadors. Reaching out to our world.

Not influenced by it. But influencing the world. And to be. A witness to our world. A light to our world. But there's a danger that the world. And the things of the world.

The ways of the world. Can affect us. Detrimentially. And hinder our Christian life. And walk. For example. 1 John 2.15. It says. If any man love the world.

The love of the father. Is not in him. We know that the world. And the things of the world. The lust of the world. The ways of the world. Will not last.

They will pass away. But he that does. The will of God. Shall abide forever. Paul gave us a guide. As to what to do about the world. He says in Galatians 6.4.

[7:23] The world. Is crucified unto me. And I. Unto the world. The world is crucified. It's as if the world. Has been nailed to a cross to me.

The world has been. Killed for me. The world has been. Crucified for me. It's got the sense. I'm told. The Greek word. You could. Take the sense of it.

That it's fenced off for me. It's like a fence. As you think of. A cross. As pieces of wood. There's a barrier there. The world. Has been. Fenced off for me.

It's been crucified to me. It's been. Barred to me. Whatsoever is born of God. Overcometh the world. 1 John 5.4. So think of that.

The world. Number one. Number two. Enemy is the flesh. The flesh. Last time I looked. I've got flesh. Last time I looked. I've got. The. Carnal.

[8:18] Flesh. Carnal means. Flesh. And we all have that. That carnal man. That we've got to. That we've got to. Crucify him daily. That carnal.

That carnality. The carn. The flesh. The carnal man. The carnal nature. The flesh. And our behaviour. In the world around us. Is shaped by thinking.

It's shaped by. The thinking that is around. About us. And. We need to be renewed. In our thinking. As it says in Romans 12. Verses 1 and 2. I beseech you therefore brethren.

By the mercies of God. That you present your bodies. A living sacrifice. Holy. Acceptable unto God. Which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world.

But be ye transformed. By the renewing of your mind. That you may prove. What is that good. And acceptable. And perfect. Will of God. That's a renewing of your thinking.

[9:17] That's a renewing of that. That flesh nature. That mind. That.

That. Nature that is in man. That it be renewed. After the spirit of God.

That it be renewed.

To prove. What is that good. And acceptable. And perfect. Will of God. And I've lost my bookmark. In that book. But I was going to talk about.

There's a. A sense where. In cricket. There's a blind spot. There's a blind spot. That the. Cricketers have to be aware of. And likewise. Too. We know when we're driving.

There's a blind spot sometimes. I know. Often in. Even later. Later model cars. It seems even worse. That you're looking around. To try to find that blind spot.

When you're reversing. Or. Or manoeuvring your car. And. In a way. The flesh is like a blind spot. It's like a blind spot. And. You've got to watch your flesh.

[10:12] You've got to watch for those blind spots. Those areas where you think. Everything's. Safe. And you're. Everything's. Going okay for you. But. We all have our weaknesses.

We all have. Areas where we need to ask the Lord. To strengthen us. And help us. And to pray about. Those areas of the flesh. And it's a daily struggle. It's a daily. Intensity.

A daily wrestling. In prayer. Galatians 5. 24 says. A day that our Christ. Had crucified. The flesh. With the affections and lusts. They that are Christ.

Have crucified the flesh. We've talked about. The world being crucified. The flesh has got to be crucified too. With the affections and lusts. Because friends. Brothers and sisters. As a Christian man.

Or woman today. Our mind. Is locked. In an intense war. As an intense war. A battle for our thoughts. And our mind. For our thought life. So we need to be guarded about that.

[11:09] The world. The flesh. Thirdly. The devil. The devil. There's a spiritual struggle. That's happening. Behind the scenes. And sometimes we're quite.

Ignorant of it. And. I'm told that during World War 2. There was this. Dangerous nuisance. That swept across England. Now I wasn't around in World War 2.

But you've got to take it. Take it as read here. That it's called. The optimist nuisance. I don't know if anyone has heard of that. But apparently in England. When the war was going fine. And.

It looked like Hitler was in trouble. And. There was this false impression. That the war was almost won. And that England was triumphant. On land and sea.

And in the air. But the nation was still confronted. By an implacable foe. Recruiting fellows. And many became lax. And the department.

[12:06] The government issued. This grave warning. That the war was still on. And. That we need to. Realise that peace hasn't been declared yet.

And sometimes we can make that mistake. As Christians. When life is going well. And there's victories. And we're seeing blessings. And we know that we're walking with the Lord.

There's still an enemy. Who's out to. Find that Achilles heel. To find that blind spot. You know. The legend of Achilles. Of this. Great warrior. Of old.

But he had that weak spot. Where his armour wasn't covering. His heel. And that's why they call it Achilles heel. Because that's where the enemy. Shot him. And killed him. And likewise too.

We can have an Achilles heel. We need to be guarded. And watch. And be alert to that. And there's a spiritual struggle. Against unseen powers. Unseen forces. Now. By the same token.

[13:01] We don't want to. Necessarily give the. The devil more credit. Than he's due. And it's been said. In World War II again. Another story here. That the German.

General. Erwin Rommel. Had such a hold over people's imaginations. That the. The general from the allies. Felt it necessary.

To issue a directive. He said this. He said. There is. There exists real danger. That our friend Rommel. Has become a kind of magician.

Or bogeyman. To our troops. Who are talking far too much about him. He is by no means a superman. And it is. And it is highly undesirable. That our men should credit him.

With supernatural powers. We must refer to the Germans. Or the Axis powers. And not always keep harping on. Rommel. Please impress upon all commanders.

[13:56] That from a psychological. Point of view. This is a matter of the highest importance. And likewise. You could think about our. Our enemy.

Our arch enemy. The devil. While he is powerful.

And he should be. We should be guarded. We don't want to be overawed. By Satan. Because. Guess what. He's been defeated. Amen. At the cross of Calvary.

He is being defeated. It's like. A story was told about. A father and son. Who went to the zoo. and there's a great big lion there and the lion went and the little boy started to you know, shake and get really upset and teary but the father wasn't worried because the lion was behind the cage and likewise too we've got an enemy, the devil, Satan and there's many other names but here's a caged lion here's a caged lion Christ has confined him and held him back he's just the enemy we don't give the devil any more credit than he is due and friends today yet the Bible does say be alert, be sober, be vigilant because your adversary the devil he walketh about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour whom resist steadfast in the faith knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world so this unseen enemy he's at work, he's active he's roaming around lurking about as a lion always near us about our path spying out all our ways it's like the title of a book that I saw lately that we might put in the library

Satan is alive and well on planet earth Satan is alive and well he's active he's very much alive and active and ever since the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve he's been going to and fro walking up and down with his intent the ruin of man's soul James 4 7 says submit yourselves therefore to God resist the devil and he will flee from you notice the order of that submit yourselves therefore to God resist the devil and he will flee from you submit to God let your submission be to the Lord to his will to his way 2 Corinthians 2 11 says lest Satan should get an advantage over us for we are not ignorant of his devices I know as a young fellow I was interested in aircraft for a time and we had lots of books about aircraft and we had one particular book was from World War 2 and it was to help the gunners who manned the anti-aircraft guns and it had silhouettes of all the different planes and sometimes some of the planes look quite similar you know a hurricane and a Messerschmitt you know you can see there's some similarities there but you had to discern the difference you had to recognise you had to identify what made one different from another as an anti-aircraft gunner you know I'd be shooting down the wrong plane and likewise too as Christians we need to be discerning and recognising being alert being aware of the enemy and his activities and what features might identify his doings his wiles his devices because sometimes the devil is good at imitating Christians or churches or preachers doctrines of devils it talks about there's a synagogue of Satan in the Bible we need to be alert to those things he cloaks himself with religious garbs at times and he uses religious words 2 Corinthians 4 33-4 it says but if our gospel be hid in his head to them that are lost in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them the devil's blinding minds his blinding minds and often his blinding minds with religious rubbish there's many well meaning people that knock on our doors that are hell bound sinners they might be all nicely clothed and talking very nice and we know there's the

Christadelphians in the paper expounding their lovely Bible course with a free Bible but they're devils in the flesh this is a lie from Satan their doctrines are doctrines of devils they deny the Christ who can save man they deny the blood of Christ that brings salvation through faith in the finished work of Calvary they deny a real devil they deny the resurrection of the dead they deny heaven and hell what more can they deny friends and yet they profess to love the Bible God we need to be careful brothers sisters be careful be discerning be alert to that I know there's well many people that have brought magazines and put them on the table here from the Worldwide Church of God and various institutions that likewise it's dangerous material we need to be alert and be careful be cautious of cults and sects like the

[19:23] Jehovah's Witnesses people that say that that's you know they're the only select group that have the truth we know that the Christian church worldwide those that love the Saviour and love salvation by faith and love and believe this book and the true message of this book are saved in all matter of different groups across our world and yet there are cults today that are dangerous and demonically driven we need to be aware of that Ephesians 4 27 it says neither give place to the devil don't give the devil place don't give him an inch don't give him a chink don't give him a gap don't let him have that door ajar in your life don't give place to the devil don't give him an opportunity friends and yet as

we said in context again too not to give the devil more than his due it's been said that Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees

Satan trembles when you pray he's afraid of you he's afraid of your prayers of your faith of your Lord of your the one that is in you is greater than he and anything that is in the world and so think of this fight today be encouraged to fight against the world the flesh and the devil and the question this morning is who can join this fight who can join who can sign up I know you could put it tongue in cheek that for this recruitment drive for this not really a conscription but for this call for recruits today that there's no medical to pass there's no age limit there's no nationality requirement there's no proof of identity required you just have to bow your heart and trust him you just have to bow your will to the saviour and find that captain of your salvation

I'm encouraged by there's a passage in 1 Samuel 22 1 Samuel 22 in the Old Testament that encourages us who can join this fight and we see David's army there David as he was scaphing and hiding in a cave as he was fleeing from his enemies and regathering himself and his troops 1 Samuel 22 look at the people that came to David and if you think you're not qualified to join up if you're not qualified to sign up for God's army today you can be encouraged by this it says David therefore he entered thence and escaped to the cave of Dullam and whence his brethren and all his father's house heard it they went down hither to him and this is 1 Samuel 22 2 it says and everyone that was in distress and everyone that was in debt and everyone that was discontented gathered themselves unto him and he became a captain over them and they were with him about 400 men isn't encouraging friends today

Christian this morning if you're in distress today if you're in distress if you're in debt if you are discontented then there's a place in God's army for you you can sign up you can be part of David's army of the son of David's army of the king of kings and the lord of lords army he will take you and you can sign up it doesn't matter if you're in debt it doesn't matter if you're in distress it doesn't matter if you're discontented David went high to the mountains to rest from the enemy and to hear from God and from this motley crew from this ragtag bunch of no hope has they had been called came David's mighty man David's mighty man mighty warriors valiant warriors where are the mighty men today where are David's mighty men where are the mighty men of war the mighty men of valour

I've got a book this week it's called why men hate church why men hate church it's interesting reading it's interesting reading and it's true I'm thankful there's lots of men here today and I'm not meaning to disenfranchise the women today but it's been said that there are 13 million more women in church than men every Sunday in the USA 13 million ladies account for 61% of the people in the pews and I know this has got to go and there's so much less men in church and likewise which is all the more important a lot less men who are saved in terms of the modern equation in the modern evaluation of it there's a lot less Christian men and men who will stand up and be counted in Ezekiel 22 30 it says and I sought for a man among them that should make up their heads and stand in the gap before me for the land that I should not destroy it but I found none he found none he didn't find one man and God is seeking man he's seeking man mighty man man of valor man who will be mighty man and friends

[24:56] I want to encourage you today you know I'm still halfway through this book and I know that brother Kirk and others are interested and keen in setting up a man's ministry we want to reach the man we want the man who don't come to come to church the man of wives who come here today we want to reach them we want this church to be a place where they can feel this is a place I want to be this is a message I want to hear this is a salvation I want to be part of this is a saviour who I want to know and follow mighty man and we can give a message of challenge a message of courage a message that's stirring that men will want to be here and they'll want to follow Christ there are countries where there's more men than women there's countries where there's persecution there's countries where people have got to give their blood for Christ by and large they're the countries where there's persecution where there's challenge where there's danger in being a

Christian the men rise up maybe that's part of the problem that we need to have more of a gutsy manly religion in Australia where men will stand up and be counted that they follow Christ what if we fail what if we fail in this fight you might think it sounds too hard all this talk of war and fighting in combat hand to hand face to face front line combat zone I'd rather stay in the comfort zone what if we fail maybe you'd never try because you're worried that you're going to fail Proverbs 24 16 it says for a just man fall seven times and rise it up again but the wicked shall fall into mischief the just man shall fall seven times but he's going to get back up again here's a quote the person who wins the battle is the one who is knocked down nine times but gets up ten he is the one who will not accept defeat who will never learn to sound retreat who will never turn back he continually goes upward and onward and the gates of hell cannot prevail against him it is not important what happens to us how we react to what happens to us is important you know the stories have been told of wrestling matches or boxing matches where the the favourite the one that they'd have vetted on and said he was sure to win was beaten by the one who just kept on fighting he just kept on getting back up again he just kept getting back up again and that's what we needed as

Christian men and women we need to be willing to get up again get up off the map and get back in the fight fight the good fight of faith Matthew Henry an old time commentator a respected man of God said this he said those who will get to heaven must fight their way there the fight of the faith that's what Paul had he says I have fought the good fight I have finished the race there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give to me that day and to all them that love his appearing Judges 6 12 Gideon was there threshing some wheat and the angel of the Lord said unto him the Lord is with thee thou mighty man of valor the Lord is with thee that's what made him a mighty man God with you God is with you if you're a Christian man or woman today the Lord is with thee shouldn't that make you strong it does make you strong whether you feel like it or not

God is with you that's what makes the difference that's what makes you a mighty man of valor no matter what might happen against you against us let me leave you with a challenge today will you aspire to be an overcomer the Bible says of Christians that we're to be an overcomer an overcomer Christianity works it works faith works faith is evident it works applied Christianity is something that happens day by day by day you don't clock off when the service finishes you don't clock on and off Christianity it's there with you tomorrow morning when you're at work it's there with you when you're down the shop about your day by day it's there where you live where your neighbourhood is it's 24 7 by 365 and 366 sometimes amen it's every day with Jesus it's sweeter than the day before will you be that man that woman will be an overcomer have that applied

Christianity to be a man of action it says to be doers of the word not just hearers only Christianity Christianity is about applied Christianity it's about applying it it's applicable it's relevant it's something you can apply and live out you can be a man of action a man of integrity a doer of the word and whether you're male or female this morning there's a fight on your hands there's a fight on your hands it's a fight and you're going to get wounded you're going to get beaten down sometimes you're going to fall on the mat sometimes but guess what God's going to lift you back up amen God's going to get you back on your feet and you've got to fight the fight of faith it calls the strength of character friends it's a real world this is reality that we know that you're facing it Monday you're going to face it you might face it later today you're going to face the challenges you're going to face the test you're going to face the hurts the setbacks what did

[31:11] Peter what did Christ call Peter a rock be a rock be a rock be a Peter be a rock strong steadfast with courage with conviction a quote to close here about a warrior a warrior a warrior is a father pleaser he has acknowledged his sins and has made restitution where possible he has bridled his passionate unruly human nature a warrior has submitted and obeys Jesus Christ as his supreme commander a warrior knows his place and purpose in God's army he has been trained and knows how to use the weapons of war he keeps his powder dry until he is called into battle he knows the word trusts the word and is able to hear God's still small voice a warrior knows who the enemy is and how he operates he knows that the enemy is not made of flesh and blood like ordinary people against those unseen powers a warrior knows that

Jesus in him is greater than all the enemies around about that Jesus in him has defeated every enemy including death a warrior has no fear except the fear of the Lord a warrior knows that the battle is the Lord's the victory is the Lord's and the glory is the Lord's the secret to victory is the power of the Holy Spirit greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world the power of the Holy Spirit resident president evident in your life in your day by day and our model is Christ it says that we should copy him we should mimic him he is our model that we should copy that we should follow in his footsteps in his footprints you could describe that word in Peter to walk in his footprints and this

Jesus is not gentle Jesus meek and mild he is the one in Revelation with fire in his eyes with a sword in his mouth with blood all over him and with an army behind him amen the word of God let us pray Lord we praise your wonderful name that you are the word of God that you have come to bring victory and life everlasting that you have ransomed your people from the chains of darkness and sin Lord that we can have victory over the works of the enemy in our lives Lord help us to see that to be more than conquerors because of your love for us Lord that we might follow you more closely more dearly more nearly that you might help us to stand up and rise up in this wicked generation and to be that people of God that army of God that you would be glorified in Jesus name we pray amen amen