

“Fight The Good Fight”
2 Timothy 4:1-8
1/2/22
Message 1

Introduction

- Title of the Message is: “Fight The Good Fight”

- **Illustration**

- **The Year**

- 2003

- **The Event**

- College Football National Championship

- **The TEAMS**

- Ohio State Buckeyes vs. Miami Hurricanes

- Miami was heavily favored

- They were on a 34 game winning streak - for 2 seasons

- **The Speech**

- Just before his team left the locker-room

- The Buckeyes' coach Jim Tressel

- Gathered his team for one final talk.

- After going over the game plan

- He asked his team one simple question...

- **“How do you want to be Remembered?”**

- **The Results**

- The Buckeyes had pulled off one of the great upsets in college football.
- 31–24 win in double overtime

- **A Good QUESTION For us TODAY as we Enter a NEW YEAR...**

- **“How do we want to be remembered?”**

- We want to be remembered for...
 - **1st Living For Jesus**
 - He is my Lord & Savior
 - **2nd For the LOVE we have for our Families**
 - Making sure they know how much they are valued and loved
 - **3rd Making a lasting IMPACT for Him – for His glory**
 - Discipleship –
 - Equipping the saints
 - A Heart for the LOST
 - Being used by God to bring lost souls into the Kingdom

- **In Our Text this Morning**

- ***Paul has been Encouraging Timothy & US***

- TO STAND STRONG –
- TO FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH in these LAST days

- There are Tough Days ahead BUT God is GREATER
- Hold Fast to Him and the Faith – He will get us through

○ **Remember**

- 2 Timothy is Paul's final letter
- Writing from a Roman Prison Cell – underground – Mamertine Prison
- Waiting his impending death at the hands of Nero
- This is his Most personal and intimate letter
 - He writes to his young Son in the Faith / Son in Ministry - Timothy
 - Writes to Pass the torch of ministry - To encourage Timothy –
 - To stay the course Hang in there
 - TO STAND STRONG – Fight the good Fight

• **So this morning let's look at Paul's Advice on how to "Fight The Good Fight"**

- Recognize You're Accountable to God v. 1
- Retain God's Word vs. 2-5
- Remember The Goal vs. 6-8

Recognize You're Accountable to God v. 1

• **First: A Solemn Charge v. 1a**

2 Timothy 4:1 (NKJV)

1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:

○ **1st I Charge you therefore...**

▪ **The Word Charge – Greek: Diamarturomai**

- Means: - To Testify; Earnestly, Religiously to charge; to attest, testify to, solemnly affirm

▪ **The idea is that Paul gave a solemn testimony to Timothy**

- Upmost IMPORTANCE
- Don't Drop the BALL
- Yes - FEEL the PRESSURE
- This IS VERY SERIOUS
- No Stronger CHARGE can be Made
- Timothy must heed - if he wants to be a godly pastor.

▪ **Paul Is Preparing Timothy for the FIGHT (Battle)**

- WHY?!
 - Christianity – is NOT a cruise ship – It is a Battleship
- A pastor that does NOT prepare his church for the battle is derelict in his responsibilities

• **Second: Before God - God Will Judge v.1b**

2 Timothy 4:1 (NKJV)

1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:

○ **1st Who will judge the living and the dead**

- There will be a day when every single human will stand before Christ
 - Both Living and Dead
 - Jew and Gentile
 - Believer and Unbeliever.
- The Non-Believers
 - Will be cast into Hell
- The Believers
 - The judgment is not about punishment for our sins
 - Because Jesus has paid that punishment.
 - For believers,
 - The issue is about the rewards that God has promised us for serving Him.
- **2nd Lesson: Don't lose sight of the Accountability**
 - We Will one DAY –
 - Very Soon stand before a HOLY God and Give an Account
 - Paul wrote to the Corinthians

2 Corinthians 5:9–10 (NKJV)

9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

- Paul tells us that Jesus has a bema, upon which He will judge “all”.
- Paul gave the Corinthians a picture of what happens before the bema
- For Pastors - James – Sticker Judgment

James 3:1 (NKJV)

1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

▪ **Lesson:**

• **1st There is GRACE but Never Lose FEAR**

- Please don't Misunderstand – I know we have GRACE

- BUT Never Lose the FEAR OF GOD
- BUT we must never lose a HOLY FEAR
- We Do what we do before a HOLY GOD
- We're Going to give an Account

• **2nd For Teachers**

- *Illustration*

- *This verse helps me to understand why John Knox before he went into the pulpit to preach*
- *Fell on his face and burst forth, in abundant tears out of fear,*
- *The fear of preaching and misrepresenting the truth*

- This FEAR Should...

- 1st Keep us HUMBLE
 - me in the right spot – on my face before God
- 2nd Keep us Working Hard
 - The awesome responsibility to handle the word of God
 - I take that seriously – I study hard – because I want to get it right
 - It is a great responsibility to get this right – to rightly divide the word – Concerned about clarity and content – context

Retain God's Word vs. 2-5

• **First: Recognize your duties as a Believer v. 2a**

○ **1st Preach the Word v. 2a**

2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV)

2 Preach the word! *Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

- Preach – Greek kerusso –
 - Means: To proclaim after the manner of a herald
 - Always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed
 - It's almost exclusively translated “preach” or “proclaim”.
 - A proclamation for people to turn their lives around – REPENT

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV)

17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, *“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

- NOTE:
 - The emphasis isn't on explaining things...
 - BUT in Speaking with Authority
- Timothy needs to “PROCLAIM” God’s Word.
- Speak it out.

○ **2nd Be Ready v. 2b**

2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV)

2 Preach the word! **Be ready in season and out of season.** Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

- This tells us WHEN the pastor should be ready to preach the word.

- **1st Always READY**

- Illustration: Gal in Israel

○ **3rd Convince v. 2c**

2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV)

2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. **Convince**, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

- **Convince – (Greek: Elegcho)**

- Means: To convict; generally with a suggestion of shame of the person convicted

- MacArthur, J; “The word for “convince” refers to correcting behavior or false doctrine by using careful

biblical argument to help a person understand the error of his actions.

- This is the same word that was translated “reproof” back in (2 Tim. 3:16)

○ **4th Rebuke v. 2d**

2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV)

*2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, **rebuke**, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

▪ **Rebuke – (Greek: Epitima)**

- **To chide**, censure severely; to admonish or charge sharply.

- *MacArthur, J: “The Greek word for “rebuke” deals more with correcting the person’s motives by convicting him of his sin and leading him to repentance.*

▪ **Important to Confront – Restoration is the GOAL**

Luke 17:3 (NKJV)

3 Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

- But he might not repent.
- There are times you need to speak up, whether or not the person changes ... but if they do change, then you need to respond with forgiveness.
- Paul wants Timothy to not shy away from saying hard things when hard things need to be said.

○ **5th Exhort v. 2e**

2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV)

*2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, **exhort**, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

- **Exhort – (Greek: Parakaleo)**

- Means: To call to one's side; exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction
- It's most common usage in the New Testament is to "entreat" or, "beg", or "appeal"
- The word does not have the same harsh edge that the other two words (convince, rebuke) do.

- Listen to the heart behind this word is used

1 Thessalonians 2:11 (NKJV)

11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children,

- **6th Lesson – All this Summed UP**

- **Bring the Word of God to bear on the lives of his people.**

- He was not to treat the Word as if it were filled with interesting ideas or fascinating theories.
- He was to hold up the Word of God against the lives of his people and let God do His work.

- **Lesson**

- No Pastor Enjoys this PART
 - I'd rather just encourage all the time
 - Parent vs. Grandparent
- False Teachers Will Not do these things
 - Yet this is exactly what the false prophets were doing back in Jeremiah's day

Lamentations 2:14 (NKJV)

14 *Your prophets have seen for you False and deceptive visions; They have not uncovered your iniquity, To bring back your captives, But have envisioned for you false prophecies and delusions.*

- Reason why the Pastor must do this
 - God is concerned that people not be deceived
 - Into thinking that they are going to get away with their sins.
 - He will bring judgment against sin
 - He longs for people to be reminded to repent from their sins.

• **Second: You Must React Properly 2b**

2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV)

2 *Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

- **1st With Longsuffering**
 - **Longsuffering – (Greek: Makrothumia)**
 - Means: patience, endurance, slowness in avenging wrongs.
 - **This word has to do with being patient with DIFFICULT people.**
 - Timothy needs to not give up too quickly on people, but to be patient with them.
 - **Lesson:**
 - **Dealing With troubled & difficult people,**
 - Think about Jesus deals with YOU

- **When there is Fruit and NO Fruit**

- A Lot of people measure a pastors success by how big the church is or how well know he is
- Jesus has a different way of measuring success
- BE FAITHFUL – PREACH THE WORD

- **2nd With Teaching**

- Teaching – (Greek: Didache)

- Means: Teaching
- Whereas “preaching” is the proclamation of God’s Word
- “Teaching” is the Explaining of God’s Word.
- People need to be taught, they need to be “fed”.
- Jesus told Peter to “feed My sheep” (John 21:17)

John 21:17 (NKJV)

17 He said to him the third time, “*Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?*” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “*Do you love Me?*” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “*Feed My sheep.*”

- Timothy is not to just preach, but to teach

- **Third: You Must Realize How people will Respond vs. 3-4**

- **1st They Will Endure Sound Doctrine vs. 3a**

2 Timothy 4:3 (NKJV)

3 ***For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;***

- **What is Doctrine?**

- Who God is
- Who Man Is
- How to be Right with God
- Etc...

▪ **This Describes today...**

- To embrace doctrine or to take a dogmatic stance on anything scriptural is considered as being arrogant

▪ **Timothy needed to keep focused on the Word of God**

- Because man, by his natural instinct, does not want God's revelation.
- He would rather hear what he wants to hear - something to scratch his itching ears.

○ **2nd They Will Heap Up For Themselves Teachers v. 3b**

2 Timothy 4:3 (NKJV)

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, *but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;*

▪ **Must USE God's Standards**

- The most POPULAR Teachers are not necessarily the most faithful teachers.

- Guzik; "We shouldn't assume a teacher is scratching itching ears just because he is popular, but neither should we assume that he is faithful to God's Word just because he is popular"

○ **3rd They Will Turn Their Ears Away From the Truth v. 4**

2 Timothy 4:4 (NKJV)

4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

- *Clarke; "Endless curiosity, an insatiable desire of variety; and they get their ears tickled with the language and accent of the person, abandoning the good and faithful preacher for the fine speaker."*
- Yes this is REAL
 - Many Pastors tempted to build THEIR Kingdom will compromise the TRUTH
 - The Pastor that is only concerned with Building God's Kingdom – will NEVER compromise the TRUTH
 - We've got to speak the TRUTH in LOVE
 - Trust God For the Outcome

○ **4th They Will Turn Aside to Fables - Myths**

2 Timothy 4:4 (NKJV)

4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

- This refers to...
 - False Ideologies
 - Viewpoints - Philosophies in various forms that oppose sound doctrine
 - (2 Cor. 10:3–5; 1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; cf. Titus 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:16).
- Once people leave the Word of God they often then embrace fantastic fantasies.

- *When a man rejects God's truth, it isn't that he believes in nothing; he will believe in anything.*

- **5th Modern Illustrations**

- **Confusion In the Modern Church**

- A large numbers of evangelicals have abandoned even the most basic evangelical beliefs.
- George Barna leads the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, and a very alarming survey
 - The following numbers from the survey are specifically for "evangelical Christians"...
- 48% believe a person who is good enough or does enough good works can earn eternal salvation
- 44% do not believe that history is the unfolding narrative of God's reality
- 44% claim the Bible is ambiguous in its teaching about abortion
- 43% maintain that when Jesus was on earth, He sinned
- 43% do not believe that there is a common, God-given purpose to humanity (i.e., to know, love and serve Him)
- 42% seek moral guidance primarily from sources other than the Bible
- 42% do not identify and confess their sins on a daily basis
- 40% do not believe that human life is sacred
- 40% accept lying as morally acceptable if it advances personal interests or protect one's reputation

- 39% identify the people they always respect as being only those who have the same beliefs as they possess
- 36% prefer socialism to capitalism
- 36% fail to seek and pursue God's will for their life each day
- 34% reject the idea of legitimate marriage as one man and one woman
- 34% argue that abortion is morally acceptable if it spares the mother from financial or emotional discomfort or hardship
- 32% do not thank or worship God each day
- **People Leaving the Church – During so call pandemic**
 - Millennials lead shift away from organized religion as pandemic tests Americans' faith
 - <https://www.cnn.com/2021/12/29/millennials-lead-shift-away-from-organized-religion-as-pandemic-tests-faith.html>
 - A Pew Research Center survey found 29% of U.S. adults said they had no religious affiliation, an increase of 6 percentage points from 2016.
 - Millennials are leading the shift away from organized religion, according to the survey.
 - More faith leaders are stepping up their outreach efforts — from social media to revamped sermons — to attract these younger adults.
 - A Pew Research Center survey, released earlier this month, found 29% of U.S. adults said they had no religious affiliation, an increase of 6 percentage points

from 2016, with millennials leading that shift. A growing number of Americans said they are also praying less often. About 32% of those polled by the Pew Research from May 29 to Aug. 25 said they seldom or never pray. That's up from 18% of those polled by the group in 2007.

- **Fourth: You Must Respond Prayerfully v. 5**

- **1st Be Watchful In All Things v. 5a**

2 Timothy 4:5 (NKJV)

5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

- **But YOU**

- Timothy STAY focused
- Don't Drift

- **Be watchful in all things**

- Timothy could not fulfill his ministry unless he kept careful attention, being watchful in all things.
- **Every good shepherd has his eyes open**
- We can't ignore FALSE TEACHING with the body we over-see
- Watchman on The WALL Ezekiel

- **2nd Endure Afflictions v. 5b**

2 Timothy 4:5 (NKJV)

5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

- **What Affliction...**

- People despised his youth
- So called Lack of Education...
- Mocking
- Death Threats
- Family Threatened

- **People Forget**

- That everywhere Jesus went He was upsetting people
- That everywhere Paul went Revival or Riots broke out

- **3rd Do the Work of an Evangelist v. 5c**

2 Timothy 4:5 (NKJV)

*5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an evangelist**, fulfill your ministry.*

- This implies that Timothy was not particularly gifted as an evangelist but he still had to faithfully do that work as a preacher of God's Word.
- Illustration –
 - Placer High Lunches

- **4th Fulfill your Ministry v. 5d**

2 Timothy 4:5 (NKJV)

*5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, **fulfill your ministry**.*

- DO what God has CALLED you to do
- For US – Do what God has Called you to DO

- Sadly there are many reasons why someone's ministry goes unfulfilled and each must be earnestly battled:
 - Fear
 - Unbelief
 - The cares of the world.
 - The fear of man
 - Criticism and discouragement.
 - Besetting sin.

Remember The Goal vs. 6-8

• First: Your Death is in God's Hands v. 6

2 Timothy 4:6 (NKJV)

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

- **1st A Drink Offering**
 - You brought wine before the Lord and poured it out at His altar
 - It was a way to give wine to God as a sacrifice
 - Just as an animal might be given as a sacrifice.
 - History
 - The idea of a drink offering is first presented in Genesis 35:14, where Jacob poured out a drink offering before the Lord as a sacrifice.

- In the Mosaic Law, drink offerings could be a part of sacrifice to the Lord (Exodus 29:40-41 and Leviticus 23:13).
- Means:
 - Poured out has the idea of a complete giving, with no reservation.
 - The liquid is completely emptied from the cup, and totally given to God.
 - The drink offering was a symbolic way of saying, “I gladly give all that I have to the Lord.
 - My life is given as a symbol of my wholehearted commitment to God
 - Nothing is held back
- **2nd The time of my departure is at hand**
 - He waited for his boarding call
 - FINISHING STRONG
 - Timothy must carry the torch
 - God's workmen pass on, but God's work continues.

• **Second: Your Dedication is a continual discipline v. 7**

2 Timothy 4:7 (NKJV)

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

- **1st "I have fought THE good fight."**
 - “The” Meaning Jesus FIGHT
 - Paul contended for the faith – Stood for the truth

- Paul contended for souls
- Passionate about people
- **2nd I have finished the race:**
 - Throughout his ministry Paul used the picture of the race and the Christian being an athlete running that race
 - (Philippians 3:12-14, Acts 20:24, 1 Corinthians 9:24, Hebrews 12:1).

• **Third: Your Destiny makes it ALL Worth IT vs. 8**

2 Timothy 4:8 (NKJV)

8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

- **1st There is laid up for me:**
 - Paul knew there was a crown waiting for him in heaven, and he was ready to receive it.
 - There are 2 main words for crown in the New Testament.
 - One refers to a royal crown (Diadem)
 - The other to the victor's crown (Stephanos)
 - Here Paul referred to the victor's crown
 - That we will cast at His FEET

Revelation 4:10 (NKJV)

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

Closing

• **Let's Fight The Good Fight – Of Faith in these LAST DAYS**

- Recognize You're Accountable to God v. 1
- Retain God's Word vs. 2-5
- Remember The Goal vs. 6-8

- We Fight By...
 - Kneeling in PRAYER
 - Preaching – Teaching the Gospel
 - Keep Ourselves from SIN - Purity
 - BE IN CHURCH

Communion

- First: Remember (Looking Back at what Jesus did)
- Second: Repent / Reflect (Looking Within) 1 Cor. 11:27-28
- Third: Rejoice (Looking Forward) 1 Cor. 11:26
- Fourth: Reconcile (Looking Around) 1 Cor. 11:29, 33-34

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV)

23 *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;*

24 *and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*

25 *In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

26 *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*