

Holding tightly to eternal life

Part 2

Text: 1 Timothy 6:11-12

“¹¹ But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”

NLT: “Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you”

(Ps Luis will start with a short recap of last week’s message)

Today, we will look at the 3rd active verb in this passage: ‘pursue’

¹¹ But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

What are you pursuing? What makes you run? **To pursue** means ‘to seek after eagerly, to earnestly endeavour to acquire something, to aspire’.

One scholar said that this word “has the image of a hunter who pursues an animal with intensity or purpose, for if it fails to bag the game, he will go hungry”. That is the kind of intensity implied in the words of Paul to Timothy. Pursue these things until you have them in your bag!

“But you, Timothy, man of God: Run for your life from all this. Pursue a righteous life—a life of wonder, faith, love, steadiness, courtesy. Run hard and fast in the faith. Seize the eternal life, the life you were called to, the life you so fervently embraced in the presence of so many witnesses”. (Message Translation)

1. Pursue a righteous life

Jesus made us ‘righteous’ which means ‘in right standing with God’. However, the word of God tells us to pursue that righteousness practically, in our daily lives.

We need to live lives that are consistent with ‘righteousness’. We need to pursue the values of the Kingdom of God and live them. Even though we have this ‘righteousness’ because of God’s grace, when the devil brings temptations against us we still need to make right decisions and right choices.

This is not about doing the works of the Law or some O.T. concept, but this is exactly what the N.T. grace of God teaches us:

Titus 2:11-12 - *¹¹ For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,”*

2. A life of wonder

“Pursue a righteous life—a life of wonder, faith, love, steadiness, courtesy”.

“a life of wonder” – that is how the Message translates the word ‘godliness’. This is a bit of a mysterious word in the Greek (*Eusebia*). However, a scholar shed some light on its meaning: *“Eusebia relates to real, true, vital and spiritual relation with God”.*

We are to pursue that real, vital, relationship with God where we stand in awe and wonder of Him.

There is a beautiful song by Bethel worship that goes like this:

*“may we never lose our wonder
May we never lose our wonder.
Wide eyes and mystified,
May we be just like a child
Staring at the beauty of our king
May we never lose our wonder”*

3. Faith

We are to pursue faith. The devil is after your faith - Jesus told Peter how the devil had asked to sift them as wheat but He said, *“but I prayed for you that your faith should not fail” (Luke 22:31-32).*

See also **1Thessalonians 3:2, 5-6, 8**

We need to stay in pursuit of the kind of faith that moves mountains, the faith that brings about breakthroughs and miracles.

In **Matthew 4:18-21**, there is an interesting story that illustrates the life of faith.

¹⁸And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁹Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” ²⁰They immediately left their nets and followed Him. ²¹Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them,

They left their nets to follow Jesus. They left something that was their livelihood, something that they were familiar with to follow Jesus. They had depended on nets for their survival but by dropping their nets they are now placing their trust in Jesus. That is faith. For them, those were not just fishing nets but “safety nets”. However, they decided to trust Jesus.

In verse **21**, James and John also left their father. They left nets and they left the ‘nest’.

Faith is making Jesus our source.

Luke 22:35 - *And He said to them, “When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?” So they said, “Nothing.”*

4. Love

“But you, Timothy, man of God: Run for your life from all this. Pursue a righteous life—a life of wonder, faith, love, steadiness, courtesy.

Love is the supreme value of the kingdom. We must pursue love over offense, love over hatred and enmity.

Hebrews 12:15 *¹⁵looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;*

When we choose unforgiveness and bitterness we fall short of God’s standards. His standard is love. We fail to secure God’s grace – that can compromise the very ‘eternal life’ we are exhorted to hold on to.

5. Steadiness

Steadiness speaks of perseverance, patience and consistency. We are encouraged to be single-minded and constant, not to be people of ups and downs but immovable – set on a course that is not going to change, disciplined.

1 Corinthians 15:58a - *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable...*

These qualities were evident in the life of Paul: **2 Timothy 3:10** - *But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, **perseverance**,*

6. Courtesy

Courtesy or, as in the NKJV, “gentleness”.

This is a virtue that we need to pursue. It is another expression of love.

Philippians 4:5 - *Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.*

Conclusion

Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you

Flee anything that would compromise your journey of salvation and run in the opposite direction: pursue a righteous life, a life of wonder, faith, love, constancy and gentleness. Hold tightly to your salvation. Do not neglect so great a salvation.

Psalms 71:15: *My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day, for I do not know their limits.*

This is a limitless salvation! It includes the future but also the present. It includes forgiveness of sins but also healing for our bodies, rescue, provision, deliverance and restoration!