

Fight the Good Fight

June 27, 2021 - Worship on the Lawn Summer Series - part 4 of 4

“Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many witnesses.”

1 Timothy 6:12

Training to be Spiritual Olympians.

Teaching Point: “Following Jesus is like running a race for a wonderful prize”

Refer to **Philippians 3**.

“¹²I don’t mean that I am exactly what God wants me to be. I have not yet reached that goal. But I continue trying to reach it and make it mine. That’s what Christ Jesus wants me to do. It is the reason he made me his. ¹³Brothers and sisters, I know that I still have a long way to go. But there is one thing I do: I forget what is in the past and try as hard as I can to reach the goal before me. ¹⁴I keep running hard toward the finish line to get the prize that is mine because God has called me through Christ Jesus to live up there in heaven.” (3:12-14 ERV)

I’m not the best I can be right now.

“^{12a}I don’t mean that I am exactly what God wants me to be. I have not yet reached that goal.”

Colossians 3:1-3 (ERV)

*You were raised from death with Christ. So, live for what is in heaven, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. ²**Think only about what is up there, not what is here on earth.** ³Your old self has died, and your new life is kept with Christ in God.*

3:5-10 (ERV)

So put everything evil out of your life: ... doing anything immoral, letting sinful thoughts control you, and wanting things that are wrong. And don’t keep wanting more and more for yourself, which is the same as worshipping a false god. ⁶God will show his anger against those who don’t obey

Fight the Good Fight

him, because they do these evil things. ⁷ You also did these things in the past, when you lived like them.

⁸ But now **put these things out of your life**: anger, losing your temper, doing or saying things to hurt others, and saying shameful things. ⁹ Don't lie to each other. You have taken off those old clothes—the person you once were and the bad things you did then. ¹⁰ Now you are wearing a new life, a life that is new every day. You are growing in your understanding of the one who made you. You are becoming more and more like him.

I keep on trying because that what Jesus wants from me.

The WHY:

^{12b} But I continue trying to reach it and make it mine. That's what Christ Jesus wants me to do. It is the reason he made me his. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I know that I still have a long way to go.

The WHAT:

^{13b} But there is one thing I do: I forget what is in the past and try as hard as I can to reach the goal before me."

1. What's in the past is buried and forgotten – "Forget what is in the past."

2 Corinthians 5:17 ¹⁷ When anyone is in Christ, it is a whole new world. The old things are gone; suddenly, everything is new!

2 Timothy 2:4-6 ERV

⁴ A soldier wants to please his commanding officer, so he does not spend any time on activities that are not a part of his duty. ⁵ Athletes in a race must obey all the rules to win. ⁶ The farmer who works hard deserves the first part of the harvest.

The prize **is** mine – I am a winner.

¹⁴ I keep running hard toward the finish line to get the prize that is mine because God has called me through Christ Jesus to life up there in heaven."

Fight the Good Fight

Here in this world, *“I keep running hard”*.

1. To live for Christ now...

You are not working for heaven; you are working hard for the Savior.

- *Not for a place to rest, but for a Person who has restored you.*
- *Not because of the labor, but because you are loved.*

Living out my purpose for the single calling:

2 Corinthians 5:19-20 ERV

“¹⁹ ... God was in Christ, making peace between the world and himself. In Christ, God did not hold people guilty for their sins. And he gave us this message of peace to tell people. ²⁰ So we have been sent to speak for Christ. It is like God is calling to people through us. We speak for Christ when we beg you to be at peace with God.”

2. To live with Christ past the finish line.

- The finish line is mine!
- A life in Heaven with Jesus.

So, let's think of it this way...

Hebrews 12:1-2a

*We have all these great people around us as examples. Their lives tell us what faith means. So we, too, should run the race that is before us and never quit. We should remove from our lives anything that would slow us down and the sin that so often makes us fall. 2 We must **never stop looking to Jesus**. He is the leader of our faith, and **he is the one who makes our faith complete.***