

Unshakable Series – Part Six
UNSHAKABLE TO THE VERY END

2 Timothy 4:6-22

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Today is the last of our study on 2 Timothy. In this series we discovered how to be unshakable in faith, adversity, character, and in God's word in these last days.

The Apostle Paul is encouraging young Timothy to stand strong in his generation. Paul himself was coming to the end of his ministry and the end of his life as he sat chained in a Roman prison awaiting his execution.

Even then, he was unshakable because he was convinced Jesus was who he said he was and would either deliver him or help him finish well.

2 Timothy 1:12 ...I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

This time God was not going to deliver him from his enemies, instead he would deliver him from this world and into his eternal reward. Either way he wins!

Paul remained faithful to the end. He stood strong, even when some of his closest friends deserted him and turned their back on their Christian faith.

Reminds me of the song – *“I have decided to follow Jesus – Though none go with me still I will follow.”*

- I like the baptism t-shirts we use.... Baptism, a declaration of our allegiance
- Sometimes we must stand alone, but even then Jesus is right by our side

Paul closes his letter to Timothy with a testimony of his faith.

READ 2 Timothy 4:6-22

Paul states the time has come for his departure. He knew he was about to die at the hands of the Roman emperor, Nero. He was ready to meet Jesus.

I love his powerful testimony. **Vs. 8 – I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness....**

In these verses Paul describes the Christian life **as a battle and as a race**. In other words.....

1. We each have a battle to fight and a race to finish.

We do people a disservice if we lead them to think the Christian life will be easy.

We are wrong to tell people to come to Jesus and he will make all your problems go away. Jesus said take up your cross and follow me. Hated me- will hate you

The Christian life is a battle. We battle the flesh in us that is bent toward evil. We battle the devil who comes to tempt us and discourage us.

- There is a war of good and evil all around us. It is a war between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light.
- Sometimes we call it a cultural war, but it really is a spiritual war.
- We all are thrust into the middle of this war whether we like it or not.

It's critical that we understand we are in a battle. The enemy takes advantage of us and our children if we don't stand up and fight with our spiritual authority.

Paul says in **1 Tim 6:12** "**Fight the good fight of the faith.**" -FIGHT! Engage!

- When it comes to spiritual warfare you can't be a pacifist. Be destroyed.

The devil is a bully but the good news is, "***greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world***". Jesus equips us for battle. He gives us authority in his name and teaches us how to engage the enemy and win.

- In fact, he has already won. We now enforce his victory! Spiritual warfare is taking back what rightly belongs to us.

One of my favorite verses is **Luke 10:17-19**

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

He has given you and me spiritual authority over **all the power** of the enemy!

Knowing your authority in Christ is critical to winning and standing strong in the heat of the battle because the enemy uses **lies, intimidation and fear** to try and

cause us to back down and give up. **When in fact, Satan is afraid of Christians who know their authority in Christ and use it.**

When we pray with authority, God commands his angels to push back and destroy the enemy.

We can say like Paul – **“I have fought the good fight” – and I am still standing!**

Sometimes the victory is simply that you are still standing. **The fact that you are here this morning is proof that the devil has not won in your life.** You’re still standing! You’re here. You are worshipping God. You’re still pursuing God.

Don’t give up. Having done all to stand – stand.

It’s also important to understand that our real enemy is not people. Paul explains it this way:

Ephesians 6:12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Sometime people don’t realize why they react to us. There are spiritual forces deceiving them and putting hatred in their hearts.

In verse 14, Paul talks about a man named **Alexander** who did him much harm. Possibly testified falsely against him out of hatred for Christians. Paul dealt with him by simply putting him in God’s hands. He knew God would deal with him.

The world fights with bitterness and revenge but we fight by forgiving and loving our enemies. By doing this, we in fact turn the person who is giving us a hard time, over to God. God says he will deal out justice. Revenge is in his department not ours.

Romans 12:19

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.

Paul understood how to fight – not like the world does – but by walking in forgiveness toward those who mistreated him and deserted him in his time of need.

Listen! We are in a battle for our children, our marriages, our businesses, our church, our schools and our nation. **This battle is real. The devil is real.**

Parents, you need to do battle in prayer for your children. The enemy is targeting them but through your prayers you can push back the enemy and bring back those that have wandered from the faith.

James 5:16 “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

Paul also compares Christianity to a race. In this race we all win. But we all need to strive to finish well.

The primary key to running the Christian race is keeping your personal relationship with Jesus strong and healthy. This gives you the strength to keep running, even when the wind is blowing against you. Runners describe this invisible wall they hit a times when running. Their body and mind tell them to quit. It’s no use. I will never make it. It’s just too hard.

- But as a runner, if you push on, you break through the resistance of your mind and body and you find you have a new burst of strength to keep going.

It’s that way at times in this Christian race we are on. Paul hit a spiritual wall at times. He wanted to give up. He despaired even of life. There were times when he was so discouraged, he wished he could just die and go home to heaven.

We all hit a wall at times. But just as God gave him Paul grace to keep going, he will do the same with each one of us. We each have a race to finish and in this race everyone who finishes wins a crown.

2. When we have something to look forward to it helps us remain strong.

Runners run to win a prize or for the joy of knowing they were able to complete the marathon. Paul says....

Philippians 3:14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. (NLT)

One of the reasons I like vacations or special events is it gives me something to look forward to. It helps me through the tough weeks. I know a break is coming, family time is coming, rest is coming, fishing is coming, a reward is coming.

The bible talks a lot about **rewards and blessings** God has for us. God motivates us with these things.

This also works with our kids. We promise them dessert if they finish their meal. We use rewards to reinforce good behavior. When they have something to look forward to it helps motivate them. That's just the way we are.

Paul says we are to run for the prize – the reward at the end of the race. In the Roman games the most coveted symbol and reward of triumph and honor was a **laurel wreath** that was placed on the head of the winner like a crown.

Paul says he is looking forward to the crown that is going to be awarded to him by Jesus.

2 Timothy 4:8 There's a crown of righteousness waiting in heaven for me, and I know that my Lord will reward me on his day of righteous judgment. And this crown is not only waiting for me, but for all who love and long for his unveiling.

Someday we are going to be called before Jesus at this big honoring ceremony and he is going to put a crown on each one of our heads.

2 Tim 4:1 – There is coming a time when God and Jesus will judge the living and the dead. Those who died and those who are still alive when he returns.

The Bible describes **2 types of court room scenes in Heaven** that will take place.

The Great White Throne Judgement. This is for all those who die without putting their faith in Christ for their salvation. The Lambs Book of Life is opened and if your name is not written there you will be cast into hell and be eternally separated from God and from your believing loved ones.

The second courtroom scene is called **The Judgement Seat of Christ.** This is only for Christians who are accepted into Heaven. This is a time when our works are judged and rewarded. If we served and did good deeds with pure godly motives, we will be rewarded for them. If we did good things but for selfish motives, those works will be discounted and worthless before God.

- Some will receive many rewards and some only a few.
- So what we do with our lives now is important.

However, our salvation is not based on our works. We are saved by faith alone when we accept Jesus as Our Lord and Savior.

3. The Lord stands by us and gives us strength. He will bring us safely home as we put our trust in him.

Vs. 17,18 Paul says: *“The Lord stood at my side and gave me strength...and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom.”* *“The Lord has delivered me in the past and will rescue me again.”*

- But this time the deliverance was not from death but through death.

When praying for people with a terminal illness I usually always pray for a miracle of healing. But I also know that sometimes the ultimate healing I am praying for is awaiting the person in Heaven.

Listen, for us Christians, death has lost its sting. It is our home coming. It is our passage into our reward of eternal life.

Paul looked forward to his reward. To heaven and all that awaited him. He says this is for each of us too. Let's enjoy the life God has given us here but let's live with heaven in our heart.

Conclusion:

Throughout this study we see Paul encouraging Timothy to remain strong. As his faith grew, he became unshakable. His eyes became fixed on Jesus instead of the evil around him. Eternity was fixed in his heart. And that is how we want to live as well.

