

Take Hold Of Eternal Life

1 Timothy 6:12-16

October 30, 2022

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12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Last week, you saw two instructions from Paul to Timothy.

Flee these things. Run away from worldliness. And follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. That was verse 11.

Today we see *three* more specific instructions to Timothy. And for our time today we will focusing on the second part of verse twelve - taking hold or fastening our grip on eternal life.

1. Fight the good fight of faith.

The Christian life is lifelong spiritual warfare. Therefore, fight!

When you became a believer, a born-again Christian, a follower a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, you were immediately called to be in the forefront of a lifelong battle - spiritual battle. Growing in godliness and holiness is daily, lifelong endeavor. As a Christian you have been called to fight.

Whom do you fight? Not other people not physically but spiritually. It is primarily a fight in three areas - one: a fight against your own sinful flesh, two: against the system of the world, three: against the devil.

Now, living a life of faith does not mean you will never have any setbacks or trials or disappointments. It means that you never stop fighting.

The steps of a man are established by the Lord, when he delights in his way; ²⁴ though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord upholds his hand. Psalm 37-23-24

2. Take hold of eternal life.

Second instruction in verse 12. "Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses".

The word "take hold" literally means grab it or seize or grasp or fasten. Timothy already has eternal when he became a follower of Jesus Christ. John 3:16.

So, what does Timothy need to grab hold of if he already has it? Paul is saying that Timothy needs to live in the practical reality of the eternal life to come. He needs to live in such a way that eternal life is a reality. In the Gospels, you see a picture of Jesus grabbing hold of Peter when he was sinking in the water (Mark 14:31). In the same way, Jesus reached out to you and took a hold of you and saved you. Now hold on to him and live in light of that calling.

What is your calling?

It is necessary that we are reminded on a regular basis about your calling. This calling is not your vocation or profession or job or employment. Its not also your role in family or community or anywhere else. But this is your calling as a Christian, as a disciple, as a follower of Jesus Christ.

I have at least *three* reminders about your calling as a Christian:

First reminder: Your calling to a new identity in Christ.

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers and sisters, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷ but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸ and the insignificant things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no human may boast before God. ³⁰ But it is due to Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, ³¹ so that, just as it is written: "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

What the world esteems – the so-called wisdom, the power, the influence and the money all that is nothing to God. And all that this world esteems cannot make you right before God. The world cannot

make you holy or goldy. The world cannot redeem you from sin and its penalty. Only Christ can. And that is your calling. Your calling as a Christian is that you are made right because of the Lord Jesus Christ. Your calling is that you were purchased with a price. *“I anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation”* 2 Corinthians 5:17. *“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”* John 17:3.

Second reminder: Your calling is a heavenly calling.

¹⁸ *having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,* ¹⁹ *and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might* ²⁰ *that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,* ²¹ *far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.* Ephesians 1:18-21

“Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession” Hebrews 3:1

¹⁴ *I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.* Philippians 3:14

And there are some who say that this life is all that you have. So maximize it to the fullest. Live your best life now. Enjoy the pleasures of this world. You don’t need someone telling you what to do. Listen to your heart. However, you know that your best life now will predictably end one day or may abruptly halt without prior notice. So yes, live a life that is full but know that your calling as a believer is a heavenly calling.

“All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls,” (1 Peter 1:24 ESV)

What is earthly must die one day. The mortal will put on the immortal. Paul reminds Timothy that his task as a pastor is only temporary but his calling is to eternal life.

Third reminder: Your calling is to Christ-likeness.

While it is true that you are a new creature in Christ and you have a heavenly calling, you are still on this earth as fallible human being. Sin has not been completely eradicated yet. Our bodies are tainted

with sin. However, your heavenly calling while on this earth is to pursue heavenly Christ-like qualities. What are those?

4 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1-3

3. Keep the commandment without wavering.

Verses 13 through 16.

13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

So the time between your post-conversion and pre-glorification, you are in a stage of constant renewal. Shedding off the earthly and putting on the heavenly attributes. Until when? Until the time of Jesus' return.

And Paul charges Timothy to follow his ministerial calling. And Paul calls God as his witness and the confession of Jesus Christ.

What is the good confession of Jesus?

“Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.””
(John 18:37 ESV)

Jesus came to bear witness about the truth. He made the confession about his identity. That he was the long promised Messiah, the Savior of the World.

Just as Jesus made the good confession, Paul reminds Timothy of his public confession when he was ordained as a minister of the Gospel. Timothy made the good confession publicly. Now live out that

confessional faith. Here Paul is specifically charging Timothy to keep his call to minister without wavering. Another way to translate this word wavering is blamelessly. By extension, you and I are called to live blamelessly.

²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. James 1:27

¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. 2 Peter 3:13-14

*“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.”
(Hebrews 4:14 ESV)*

*“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.”
(Hebrews 10:23 ESV)*

----- Discipleship Questions-----

MESSAGE SUMMARY: Take Hold Of Eternal Life. 1 Timothy 6:12-16

HEAD: These questions help you examine the truth of God's Word.

1. How does the Bible describe your calling as a Christian? 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Romans 8:28,30, Ephesians 1:18

HEART: These questions help you wrestle with what you believe.

2. In what ways can we "take hold" of eternal life to which we have been called? Ephesians 4:1-7, 2 Peter 1:3-7
3. What is God convicting you of and to believe in light of this message?

HANDS/HABITS: These questions help you bring the truth into your everyday life and develop behaviors that change your habits.

4. For personal reflection: In what ways do you see yourself walking in a manner worthy of your calling? What needs to be put off that is earthly and what needs to be put on that is heavenly?