

How Can I Have Faith Like Abraham (Part 3)

Fight the Good Fight of Faith (Slide 1)

Reading 1 Timothy 6:11-16 & 2 Timothy 4:6-8

Luke 10:1-16 (Slide 2)

1 Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. **2** And He was saying to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. **(Slide 3)** **3** Go; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. **4** Carry no money belt, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way. **5** Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house.’ **6** If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. **(Slide 4)** **7** Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house. **8** Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; **(Slide 5)** **9** and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ **10** But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, **(Slide 6)** **11** ‘Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off *in protest* against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’ **12** I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.

(Slide 7) 13 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. **14** But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. **(Slide 8) 15** And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades!

16 “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

Jesus calls the ones He sends out as “**Laborers.**” He also states that He is sending them out as “**Lambs in the midst of Wolves!**” If we look at this incident from the standpoint of the ongoing “war” between “Spiritual Righteousness” and what is “Pure Evil,” *the rejection of truth*, the Laborers assume the identity of Warriors and the battlefield is the cities in which they were sent. Their arsenal is a simple message, “The Kingdom of God has come near to you!” We need to understand as Christians this side of the Cross of Christ, that the outcome of that battle has been decided. What does this mean for us who follow Christ and our Fighting the Good Fight of Faith?

The fight between God and Satan has concluded. It is over. Satan was cast out of Heaven like a powerful bolt of lightning, and I guarantee that we have never heard a

lightning strike quite as loud as this one. When the seventy came back to exclaim with glee, citing the subjection of Demons to the Name of Christ, Jesus clues them in on why this is in verses 17 and 18 of this same chapter.

Luke 10:17-18 (Slide 9)

17 The seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” **18** And He said to them, “I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.”

I believe he says this in such a way that the listener would understand that there was just no doubt about it. Satan, you are going to lose!

Satan is no match for God and he and his angels know it. Though he wins battles against humanity, he has never experienced a battlefield victory against God, nor will he.

At one point, after getting kicked out of Heaven, he thought he was victorious over the Godhead when Jesus was crucified. But it was short lived. He was handed a humiliating and devastating loss when Jesus rose from the dead.

(Slide 10)

*“Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o’er His foes,
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever,
With His saints to reign.
He arose! He arose!
Hallelujah! Christ arose!”*

The grave could not hold him! The greatest tool in our arsenal in “Fighting the Good Fight” is the fact Jesus rose from the grave.

Acts 2:22-24 (Slide 11)

22 “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— **23** this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. **24** But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

Amen and again, I say, Amen!

The outcome of the Battle between the Kingdom of God and the king of this world has never been in doubt. The Kingdom of God has won out.

Nevertheless, that component of the battle rages on between the participants of the God's Kingdom versus Satan and his angels. It is therefore the Soldiers of Christ who are asked to "Fight the Good Fight" and God has given us the tools to do that.

Throughout history the war has always been a struggle between good and evil, truth versus a lie, transparency against deception. Some of the elements of this war have been quite obvious, while others are clouded by human interpretation.

Many have lost the battle outright without even knowing or refusing to admit that there is a war. The Psalmist writes:

Psalms 14:1 (Slide 12)

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

We see proof of their defeat in the way that each element of their life opposes what is good and prudent. Many even outright reject the free gift of eternal Life, as undoubtedly many did from what we read in Luke 10. Solomon

recognized it in his day. Perhaps even from his own life at one time. He wrote in:

Proverbs 16:2-5 (Slide 13)

2 All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight,
But the Lord weighs the motives.

3 Commit your works to the Lord
And your plans will be established.

4 The Lord has made everything for its own purpose,
Even the wicked for the day of evil.

5 Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.

Their own pride hinders them from grasping the clarity of truth! Pride is our opponent's weapon in the war. Yet, many often try to use it as a means of justification for what they think or feel. And I'm talking about those who profess to be christians.

Solomon encourages us to live in humility and not arrogance. Fight the Good Fight against Pride!

Proverbs 16:18-19 (Slide 14)

18 Pride goes before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before stumbling.

19 It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly
Than to divide the spoil with the proud.

If we set our sights on the battlefield with human understanding, as the enemy approaches, we may be defeated because we don't recognize that humility is part of our arsenal. We must swallow our Pride and fight against the natural reaction when challenged.

Proverbs 25:21-22 **(Slide 15)**

21 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat;
And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;

22 For you will heap burning coals on his head,
And the Lord will reward you.

Romans 12:17-21 **(Slide 16)**

17 Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. (In other words, Fight the Good Fight) Respect what is right in the sight of all men. **18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. **(Slide 17)** **19** Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. **20** "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap

burning coals on his head.” **21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

The words of the Apostle Paul who also wrote to “Fight the Good Fight.” Who at the end of his life said to Timothy:

2 Timothy 4:7-8 **(Slide 18)**

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; **8** in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

We can easily be defeated if we think that our fight is to get revenge, to get even, to get our own justice, or to do our best to live peaceably with all men only to say in the end that, “I tried and just couldn’t do it!” In reality we’ve made our enemy our comrade because we didn’t understand what Paul meant when he said to “Fight the Good Fight!”

Love and Humility are in our arsenal as we “Fight the Good Fight!”

We cannot make peace with the enemy. There isn't a peace treaty that can be signed. There is no way to resolve our differences. They make a relationship

impossible. The Children of Israel tried it and it didn't work when they wanted to worship the God of Heaven and man made idols. Jesus explained in:

Matthew 6:24 (Slide 19)

24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

This other master could be money, material things, family, friends, etc. In other words, anything you put before God. You can't serve both. Fight the Good Fight!

Satan wants us to sin, God wants us to be Holy as He is Holy. Satan is the ruler of the world and whoever pursues worldly desires has made an unholy alliance with Satan.

James 4:4 (Slide 20)

4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

If anyone has this type of relationship, it should be severed and you can cite irreconcilable differences! Satan wants us to sin and God wants us to be Holy.

The Church at Laodicea began to feel confident in themselves to the point that serving God was a means of feeling personally justified. “I’ve worshiped this morning, what’s next,” as if they were following a checklist. They were living as if God and the world were in sync and simply weren’t “**all in**” in their service to our Lord and Master. Jesus calls them out on it in:

Revelation 3:16 **(Slide 21)**

So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.

We can easily fall into this circumstance and lose the battle. We have to advance forward against the enemy by meditating on God’s word and then, put it into practice.

1 Corinthians 10:1-12 **(Slide 22)**

1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; **2** and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; **3** and all ate the same spiritual food; **(Slide 23)** **4** and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. **5** Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.

(Slide 24) 6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. **7** Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.” **(Slide 25) 8** Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. **9** Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. **10** Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **(Slide 26) 11** Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. **12** Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.

Fight the Good Fight against self!

Finally

May we plainly understand an important element of our leader in this battle. God is and has always been. We would have no fight in us if we don't firmly believe this fundamental truth about God.

Psalms 90:2 **(Slide 27)**

Before the mountains were born

Or You gave birth to the earth and the world,

Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Fight the Good Fight of Faith with all vigor, self-awareness, self-evaluation, obtaining Spiritual Strength by gaining Knowledge through the Holy Word of God! Jesus implores us to “Take up our Cross, daily, and Fight the Good Fight!”

Invitation

Are you part of the battle?
Become a warrior by being Baptized into Christ!

Or

Has the Battle become overwhelming? Don't fight alone!
If you are struggling in the battle, Renew your strength by requesting the prayers of the warriors around you!