

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of December 4, 2022

THEME: "Letters to Timothy"

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Sunday Read I Timothy 6:7-15

"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." The Christian life can probably be detailed in many different ways, but a good one might be these three words: flee, follow, fight. As followers of Christ, we must not be drawn into a worldly lifestyle, and we are called on to fight against the evil in the world. Secular humanism has invaded the American culture like never before, and God's people must not be drawn into it. We are in the world, but not of the world. Our primary loyalty is to the kingdom of heaven, with Jesus as the King of our lives. Christians have an eternal purpose in life, what Jesus in John 10:10 called the abundant life: *"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."* There is no better way to live than in harmony with God in the power of the Spirit and for the glory of God.

FLEE

Monday Read II Timothy 2:20-22

"Flee also youthful lusts." The flesh is powerful, and the temptation to overindulge is great. The Christian life, however, is to flee the lusts of the flesh and pursue the righteousness of God by the power of the Spirit as we are told in Romans 8:4-5: *"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."* When we were advised to *"flee these things"* in I Timothy 6:11, it was referring to things that money could buy. It calls money as *"the root of all evil."* Materialism can be a real distraction from the pursuit of the riches we have in Christ Jesus. Money in and of itself is good to have, but the love of money is not good. Our primary love should be for the Savior and the will of God. Many poor people in terms of material wealth are spiritually wealthy! God wants young people to know that true success is loyalty to God and His Word! Never should a believer allow the pursuit of money cause them to depart from the faith. If the will of God is for one of His children to be financially well off, good; but many believers who were not necessarily well off financially have been mightily used of God as well. Jesus made this promise in Matthew 6:33: *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

FOLLOW

Tuesday Read I Timothy 6:11-16

"Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." The highest calling in life is to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, the earlier in life the better. The life based on faith in God and His Word is by far the richest life from the eternal viewpoint, and we all are eternal beings. This life is temporal for all people who have never accepted Jesus as Savior. Their eternity is death in hell, which is eternally dying. The gift of God, by receiving Christ is eternal life with the temporary stay on earth dedicated to serving our Lord. That means allowing the Spirit to direct with the attributes of humility, patience, goodness, and love. The invitation of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 4:19 may well be the greatest invitation of all: *"Then He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.'"*

FIGHT

WednesdayRead I Timothy 6:12-19

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." The calling of the Christian is to be a soldier in the army of Christ. That is the command in II Timothy 2:3: *"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."* We have God's alert, and His strategy for winning the battles in the fight for God's glory is in I Peter 5:8-9: *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."* Christians win!

PEACE

ThursdayRead II Timothy 2:22-26

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife." One of the great attributes of the Spirit that is the joy of Christians is a God-given peace. Disagreement is not wrong; people have different opinions, and that is not all bad. It is fine to agree to disagree. Peace is more precious than winning an argument. It is important to defend the Word of God, which is always right! But people have the right not to believe the Bible. The consequences of unbelief are horrific, but a person does have that right to choose. If a believer is quoting Scriptures, he or she is on solid ground; but the listener has the right to disagree. Our responsibility is to share, not to convince. Quoting the Scripture is what God expects of us as we witness for our Lord. But we must allow the Scriptures to pierce the heart, as we are told in Hebrews 4:12: *"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."* Keep the peace and let the Holy Spirit do the convincing as Jesus said He would in John 16:13: *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."* Being laborers together with God brings an indescribable peace!

SPIRITUAL WAR

FridayRead I Timothy 1:17-19

"This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare." In advising Timothy as a young man, Paul emphasized that Christians have a fierce enemy. Satan, in the form of a serpent, attacked the first humans created by God in the Battle of Eden there in the garden where God had placed them. Satan's strategy was to use his weapon of doubt and deceit. His hope was to get Eve to doubt the Word of God, that she would not die if she ate the forbidden fruit as God had warned. God did intervene by assuring us of the ultimate defeat of Satan in Genesis 3:15: *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."* The enemy of God and the people of God would be saved by a virgin-born child. Jesus would become the Savior of the world and the Eternal King of kings by destroying the power of death with a glorious resurrection, the victory of all who would become one of His followers.

PERSONAL BATTLE

SaturdayRead II Timothy 4:7-8

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Paul closes His letters to Timothy with a remark underscoring the fact that the Christian life is a battle. Whoever said that Christianity is for weaklings is all wrong. The fight against the devil and his forces of evil is not an easy task. To be a defender of the faith requires the power of God. But our faith in God and His Word is the victorious life as emphasized in I John 5:4: *"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith."* The final destination of the believer is a home in heaven. We are on earth to fulfill the plan God had for us when He formed us in our

mother's womb. He gave us the personality and the talent to do what His plan is for us. Fulfilling that plan began when we received Christ as our Savior. That put us into the family of God and made us a soldier in the army of Christ. God uses us to do our part in the work of building the Church in the age of God's earth where we have the joy of serving Him!