

No wonder Paul urged patience too (Heb. 10:36). This is the grace of persistency!

- f. Meekness. Here is a wonderful word, but so often confused with weakness. It really means self control. In the view of many, self is the biggest problem of the child of God. It is manifested as self righteousness, self confidence, self will, self seeking, self importance, and even self pity. We need the minimum of self and the maximum of the Lord. Spiritual grammar is contrary to normal construction. It holds that: the First Person is HE; the Second Person is YOU (Others), and the Third Person is I.

3. FIGHT THESE THINGS v. 12.

This is another present tense imperative and comes from a verb meaning to agonize. It was used of the wrestling done in a gym. Whereas the first slogan mentioned was "flee," the last one is "fight." How does this fit into the picture? The text advances three new items about the fight mentioned:-

- a. Object of the fight. The "good fight of faith" is the answer. This is not a matter of external objective faith, but internal subjective faith. It is a personal matter rather than a public one. Like Paul (2 Tim. 4:6, 7), Timothy is urged to wrestle in his own personal contest. Think not that a warfare is not at hand in your own soul when you believe!
- b. Person of the fight. The subjectiveness of the fight is supported by the fact that the next two phrases lay the onus on Timothy. He had his call up papers when he got saved (aorist tense shows this). Then there came an open confession of his allegiance to Christ (probably his baptism). It is Timothy all the way.
- c. Results of the fight. A real grip on eternal life. Can this life be both a gift and a prize? Yes. The possession of it is not in view here, but only the entering into it in a full way. Hence the fight puts one into the experience of it all (cf. James 1:12).

THE BOOK OF FIRST TIMOTHY

"Slogans for a Godly Man"

1 Timothy 6:11, 12

Introduction

1. The use of mottos or slogans by which to live is very commonplace. Life texts have been chosen by many of the Lord's people.
2. In a short and succinct fashion, Paul urges Timothy, the young pastor at Ephesus, to assume some striking mottos for himself. But the appeal is based upon his spiritual characterization--as a man of God! In the O.T., this phrase was an official designation primarily, but here in the case of Timothy it speaks of his person. To such an one, Paul gives some slogans to emulate!
3. Let's put it down in easy to understand language: there is a way of living for a child of God which differs from that of the world! It's not just our name which counts, but our lives! A "Reverend" is more than a symbol. This is true of the terms "lady," "Justice," and "saint." What kind of conduct is in keeping with a "man of God?" Here are some slogans which ought to fit him well:-

1. FLEE THESE THINGS v. 11.

The present active imperative is the form of the verb in this instance. Constant and steady action is suggested. With what? The rather specific phrase is used "these things." By this is meant all that has preceded in vv. 3-10. Basically here are items which pertain to making godliness a matter of monetary gain. The love and lust of riches are to be rejected. The tyranny of things have no place in the life of a man of God. But where shall one flee? Prov. 18:10 has the answer--the Name of the Lord. One cannot dilly-dally; he must run there! Some will deny the negatives in the life of a child of God, but this is one

of them! Run for your Christian testimony! This takes spiritual energy and persistence.

2. FOLLOW THESE THINGS v. 11.

Again the present active imperative is used. Both a command and a notice of consistent behaviour is brought to bear upon the child of God. This is the positive side of the negative just presented. There are six areas in which Timothy-- and all believers-- are urged to be involved. Check them out carefully:-

a. Righteousness. This is not the idea of imputed righteousness which is given to us through faith in our precious Lord, but ^{of} imparted righteousness. The thought here is that ^{of} moral rectitude. How deeply this is needed today. So much of the relationships sustained by believers just is not right. But it is absolutely imperative that a man of God everlastingly seek right relationships within his own family. With church members; with unbelievers. The question can be put bluntly: does our conduct betoken our faith on the Lord and is it right? This term relates the believers to men.

b. Godliness. Here is a thought which marks out the idea of god-likeness. One feels that the idea is that there will be increasing evidences in the life of agreement with Him (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18). To discover whether you are actually making progress in this, ask yourself some pertinent questions: is His Word my constant study? His will my earnest desire? His work my happy employment? His worth my daily meditation? His people my joyous companions? This term relates one to God and considers practical piety.

c. Faith. The objective relation of God is not in view here. Rather the idea considers faithfulness and fidelity. The thought of dependence upon one is the key here. Loyalty to the Lord is a prime factor in the matter of faith! It is so easy to shirk one's duty and leave the work to another. God help us! The

N.T. has a sound word for this (1 Cor. 4:2). Here is true stewardship and a word which relates the child of God to responsibility. One is reminded of the O.T. account of the woman at Zarephath. She was one whom the Lord had commanded to sustain Elijah (1 Kings 17:9). If only every born again believer felt something of the impact of God's command upon him for the work of the Lord--how differently it would be seen today.

d. Love. This is a dominant note in all the Word of God. Too frequently it is a love which has bias. God calls us to love everyone (Rom. 13:8). Luke gives an amazing story of the true love of the Lord (Luke 10). There the Samaritan showed love which was God-given for he demonstrated interest in one who was unknown, unlovely, unprofitable, and normally unfriendly. What a quality to follow all the time. To the natural man it is impossible, but God is able to cause it to abound in one's soul (Rom. 5:5). This is our relation to all.

e. Patience. The original word speaks of remaining under a circumstance. It is the thought of endurance even in the face of torture or martyrdom. It is the quality of holding on no matter what! It is a rare one to find. Most of us are prone to give up and let go! The conditions of life in the time of Timothy were not too different from today, albiet today they are increasingly more difficult (2 Tim. 3). Slowness of progress amongst believers, opposition stern and stiff, weakness of children of God, humdrum of life, rarity of zeal, perverseness of men, and the general subtlety of temptation-- what a list of circumstances to endure!