**Text**: 1 Timothy 6:11-14

**Title:** The Pursuit of Godliness

**Truth**: Our lives should be marked by an energetic pursuit of godliness.

**Date/Location**: Sunday November 11, 2012 at FBC

Introduction

We are coming to the end of Paul’s first letter to Timothy. He is bringing some important truths to his young pastor friend.

I. This Passages Applies to You

A. It is for Timothy, a man of God, and all pastors. It is essential for them.

B. All Christians are “people of God” (2 Timothy 3:16-17) so we should not read “man of God” as “only pastors.”

C. Pastors are in substance no different than you—we have a “like nature” (James 5:17).

D. The pastoral qualification passages tell us that pastors are mature Christians with a certain set of God-given abilities (1 Timothy 3:1-7). You too are supposed to be a mature Christian, whatever your gifts may be.

E. What is particularly true for a pastor is generally true for all Christians.

II. Flee Evil Motives and Their Results

A. Flee = to run for your life, seek safety.

B. The things Timothy is supposed to flee are pride and greed, and all the stuff that comes with that, as outlined in 6:3-10 about false teachers.

C. The fleeing is a constant habit.

III. Pursue Godliness in Every Part of Your Life

A. Pursue = to chase after. This also is a present-tense, always happening kind of thing.

B. Running **from** bad things and running **to** good things are part and parcel of the Christian “walk” (or “run”). This connection in meaning causes me to believe that these individual imperatives (flee, pursue, fight, lay hold) are part of a single command of larger scope.

C. We should be always in an energetic pursuit of godliness.

D. Here are the six areas we should focus on:

1. Righteousness – upright behavior.

2. Godliness – respect accorded to God, devoutness, piety.

The ideas of righteousness and godliness are closely related, but the difference may be outer behavior versus inner attitude. Righteousness without godliness is mere moralism; godliness without righteousness (if such is possible) is hypocrisy. Most people are neither righteous nor godly. Christians are supposed to be both!

3. Faith – trust in God, not anxiety and unbelief.

4. Love – sacrificial giving for others, not hate or selfishness.

5. Patience – longsuffering in difficulty, not short fuse or impatience.

6. Gentleness – reasonableness, not harsh or overbearing.

IV. Fight the fight of faith

A. To fight = to contend, struggle, engage in a contest.

B. The fight = competition, struggle against opposition.

C. The Christian life is most definitely NOT a passive thing where you release all your cares and give up any effort. It is a battle. See Romans 8:13, Colossians 3:5. It is a very active thing you should be doing.

D. The Christian life is not fight OR flight. It is fight AND flight!

E. If you are coasting, you are in danger. You may in fact be going backwards while having a false sense that you are OK.

V. Firmly Grasp Eternal Life

A. Lay hold = make it your own; really grab ahold of something.

B. Timothy was called to eternal life—so were we.

1. Generally – through the preaching of the gospel.

2. Specifically – through the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit.

C. Timothy made a good confession about his reception of eternal life among many witnesses.

D. So Timothy has eternal life presently, but he is to keep going with it into the future. This happens by fleeing, pursuing, fighting.

E. If you have not ever laid hold of eternal life, you are in trouble.

VI. The Entire Command is Reiterated

A. Paul calls as witness God and Jesus Christ in order to make clear that this is a solemn and very important command, not something to mess around with. See 2 Timothy 4:1.

1. God – gives life to everything. If something looks alive, that is because it is alive, and God gave that life. We could talk about abortion here…

2. Christ – gave a good testimony before Pilate. What did this consist of?

See Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 18-19.

In summary, Jesus affirmed He is the king of the Jews, He admitted He was a Galilean, He affirmed His kingdom is not from this world; He affirmed that He is a witness to the truth; He affirmed that Pilate’s power over Him was given from God. He was also silent when he was accused by the Jews, when Pilate asked about the accusations, when Herod questioned Him, and when Pilate asked about His origin. He did not respond to false accusations. Unfortunately Pilate was not as much interested in truth and justice as he was in pleasing the crowd to avoid chaos.

Jesus gave us an example that we should follow (1 Peter 1:21-23).

B. Keep the commandment – the stuff we have been talking about in the immediately preceding verses. Do so purely, irreproachably, untainted in character, beyond criticism, faultlessly.

C. Do so until the coming of Christ. There is an endpoint to the struggle—the fight against sin will end with Jesus returns. So take heart—God has not put us into a never-ending battle. There is relief coming.

Conclusion

What things in your life do you need to flee from?

What things are you pursuing now? What should you be pursuing?

Are you treating your life as the battle that it is to be pure for the Lord?

Are you actively taking hold of eternal life?

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