

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 5 Jun 2022

Sermon Title : All's Well That Ends Well

Speaker : Rev John Foo

Text : 2 Timothy 4:6-7

INTRODUCTION

As we approach the mid-point of the year, how satisfied are we with the way that we have been living our life so far? What has been occupying our time and attention? If "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." as William Shakespeare famously quoted, are we actors/actresses on this stage who are just going through the motions of our life? And, if our life is being played out, how can we make sure that it has a good script that ends well?

Let us consider how Paul viewed the life he lived through 2 Timothy 4:6-7,

"For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

In this verse, Paul mentions three key areas that are important to living his life well:

- He has fought the good fight
- He has finished the race
- He has kept the faith

To end our life well we need to:

1. Know what we must fight

Paul mentioned that he fought the good fight. Why did Paul use this analogy of a fight and what was Paul fighting for and fighting against?

We are living in a fallen world and we will encounter problems and hardships in this world. However, our fight is not against hardships, difficulties and challenges.

- *"Count it all joy... when you meet trials of various kinds"* (James 1: 2)
We are to count it all joy *"when"* we encounter trials and not *"if"* we encounter trials. This indicates that it is inevitable that we will face problems and trials and we are not to fight against trials but instead to count it joy when we face them, because trials are an inevitable part of life - *"Man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward"* (Job 5:7)

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

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Even though it is inevitable that problems come, we should not be fighting against these things. We often show that we are fighting against problems/trials by praying for God to remove them from our lives but that is not what we called to fight.

To fight a good fight, we need to know the following:

- **What do we fight for?**

We should fight for the things that count for eternity and that are on God's heart!

These are things that matter to God hence they should matter to us. We are to spend our time fighting for the gospel, great commission, salvation of souls, creation care, care and concern for the marginalized and upholding of justice. All these are things we are called to fight for.

- **What do we fight against?**

We fight against hindrances such as sins, temptations, fears, worries, hopelessness, despair and others.

Do we spend most of our lives worrying? What does God expect of us? God wants us to cast our anxieties on him because He cares for us. God wants us to fight against wasting our time on such things that hinder what counts for eternity.

When Paul fought the good fight, he displayed his confidence in God. Similarly, we can have the same confidence as Paul if we know what we are fighting for and what we are fighting against.

If we choose to fight for things that count for eternity and against its hindrances, we will fight a good fight and end well.

2. Live a directed life

God is calling us to live a directed life where we know what He wants us to do. Paul likened his life to running a race. He knew the right direction and end that he needed to reach. Are we certain that we are living our life with the right end in mind? It would be tragic if we finished our life on earth without reaching the right finishing line.

- A directed life stays on the right direction towards a right end. God has a specific race marked out for each one of us. Hence it is important for each of us to run our own race. We cannot run another person's race. Paul specifically told Timothy to run his own race (2 Timothy 4:5) and it is the same for us.

Are we in the race that God has marked out for us? What is God calling you to do with your life? God wants us to run a race with meaning and focus.

If we live a God directed life, we will surely reach the correct finish line and end well.

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3. Maintain the Integrity of our Faith

Paul was able to keep his faith because he did not compromise the integrity of his faith. Charles Swindoll in his book "Simple Faith" defines simple faith as "God says it, I believe it." Are we able to live out a simple faith? As Christians, some of our responses to "God says it" may be "I don't quite believe it", "I doubt it", "I am going to ignore it", or "God, let's sit down and talk about it." What is our faith based on and do we believe what God says?

- Our faith should be a child-like faith that enables us to jump into God's arms without hesitation, trusting that He will catch us no matter what. Such a faith shows that we are able to trust in God.

Often, our faith in God may be conditional and self-manufactured and is hollow on the inside. If our faith is filled with worldly perspectives, it is no wonder that our faith cannot sustain us when we face problems and challenges in life. Such faith is not the kind of faith that the Bible talks about.

- Paul's faith was anchored in the word of God and that is why he was able to stand firm.

What kind of faith do we have and what feeds our faith? It is good that we meet in fellowship in small groups and it feeds our faith. It is also good that we meet in worship in church on Sundays and it feeds our faith. But the real challenge comes when we are to live out our faith in the world, among unbelievers.

Paul maintained his faith even when he was ridiculed, mocked and persecuted. Will we compromise on the integrity of our faith when we face challenges?

If we keep the integrity of our faith and do not compromise our faith, we will end well.

The Power of The Holy Spirit

It is difficult to live out our faith unless we live it in the power from God.

- The Christian life is a paradox as it is both difficult and easy to live. It is difficult to live if we do it in our own strength but easy to live if we live in the power of the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION

Let us allow the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us as our Counselor in our journey of life. God has given us His Holy Spirit so that we can live a Spirit empowered life to fight the good fight, a Spirit directed life to finish the race well and Spirit enabled life to keep the faith. May we know what to fight for and against, stay focused towards the right finish line and end well by keeping our faith.

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A. Review Sermon Application

Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk!?
- 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?

2. Appoint someone to read Timothy 4:6-7 slowly.

Reflect on the way you have been living out your life for the past 6 months.

- a. How satisfied are you in the way you have lived your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ?
- b. How would you rate yourself on a scale of 1-10, 1 being least satisfied and 10 most satisfied?

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B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

- 3a. What are you fighting for in your life and why are you fighting for these things?
- 3b. (i) Do you fight against hindrances to what counts for eternity or in God's heart?
- (ii) What are some challenges you face in fighting for what is on God's heart?
- 3c. How does knowing what you are to fight for and against, help you to count it all joy when you face trials?
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- 4a. "God says it, I believe it." Does this statement reflect your faith in God?
- 4b. (i) How can you know the race that God has marked out for you?
- (ii) What distractions do you face in focusing on the race that God has marked out for you?
- (iii) What is one main challenge you face in maintaining the integrity of your faith?
- 4c. How can your group members encourage or help you to overcome 4b(ii) and 4b(iii) in the following week(s) until your next meeting?

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C. Testimonies and Prayer

Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.

5. Share your personal experience on how the empowerment of the Holy Spirit helped you to fight the good fight of faith.

OR

Give thanks to Jesus for sending us the Holy Spirit to be our Helper (John 14:16, 26; 15:26) to teach, guide and empower us to live out our Christian life.

6. With a prayer partner, bring all that have been shared in Question 3 and 4 to God, asking for the Holy Spirit's revelation on God's direction for your life. Submit all requests and help needed into the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

As a group, pray for your group and our church to commit to allowing the Holy Spirit to teach, correct and guide us in keeping each other accountable in this spiritual race by fighting the good fight and keeping our faith so we may end well.

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. Christ Jesus Glorified – JPCC Worship
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_7D4i_kyrA
2. The Power of Your Love – Hillsong
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9_0jiO5ZRM
3. Spirit Touch Your Church – Kent Henry
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ja2Wi-o6xHA>

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