
Sermon Notes

June 27, 2021

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Flight and Fight

1 Timothy 6:11-16

Responding to Threats

- ❖ A number of physiological responses take place in our bodies when we are exposed to threatening circumstances
 - an important defense mechanism
 - these responses prepare the body to either fight against or flee from danger
- ❖ Paul understands the workings of the human spirit and our need to guard our spirits against danger
 - there are things from which we need to run that invade our spiritual lives
 - there are other times, when truth is under attack, that we need to stand and fight against evil

A Time to Flee

- ❖ What dangers do we face that are so threatening that we should turn and run the other way?
 - everything that characterizes false teachers
 - have NOTHING to do with them
- ❖ Run away from evil teaching no matter what form it takes

- anything that marginalizes Christ and the gospel of grace
- petty controversies and quarrels
- divisive talk
- discontent and foolish desire
- the love of money
- ❖ When it comes to the presence of evil in our lives, it is never enough to just walk away... we must flee for dear life
- ❖ In addition to the things we need to flee from, there are certain things we must follow after
 - ***Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness***
 - the “replacement principle”
 - unless something takes the place of a particular form of evil, we are left open and vulnerable for evil to show up in some other form
 - replace the “don’ts” with the “do’s”
 - replace vices with virtues

A Time to Fight

- ❖ The battle for true doctrine... the fight for **THE** faith
 - the truth of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone
 - sound doctrine does not preserve itself... it must be defended
- ❖ Paul’s word for ***fight*** = our English word, *agony*
 - “agonize the good agony”
 - Paul pictures a voluntary, athletic agony

- ❖ We need not go out looking for trouble or spoiling for a fight
 - but we are to stand firm against the onslaught of false teachers
 - the example of Martin Luther
- ❖ Don't lose sight of what you are fighting for and whom you are fighting against
 - we only have one enemy
 - avoid "friendly fire"
- ❖ The truth of the gospel is everything, it is the difference between life and death

Walk Forward in Faith

- ❖ There is a battle prize in store for those who follow after Christ with wholehearted devotion
 - eternal life: a present possession and a future hope
 - take hold of what you have already received (Phil 3:12)
 - grab onto gospel truth and hold on for all you are worth!
- ❖ Make the good confession!!
 - Both Father and Son are walking with us and watching over us as we flee evil, fight for truth, and fasten onto eternal life
 - such knowledge is an encouragement to us... not a threat or intimidation
 - the Father and Son are involved in pouring out persevering grace on us through the Spirit
 - Jesus has already done what we are commanded to do
- ❖ The battle may seem long, but it is not forever, there is an end in sight... Jesus WILL return at the proper time

- God's timing is perfect: Jesus will neither return too early or too late
- Jesus' return will bring total triumph for Him and His people
- ❖ God, the *only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords*, is infinitely above and beyond everyone and everything else

Personal Application

1. What dangers are you aware of that threaten to disrupt or impede your spiritual well-being? Are you prepared to run away from all such dangers, or are you more likely to "flirt" with evil?
2. What unique opportunities or challenges has God brought across your path recently that have required you to stand up and fight for the truth?
3. Paul tells us that we are to *pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, [and] gentleness*. Which of these 6 quality characteristics are most evident in your life? Which ones need "special attention" in order for you to mature appropriately during this season of life?
4. Have you made "the good confession" through a public declaration of faith in Christ in baptism? If not, please make plans to take this step at our Church Picnic and Baptism on July 31.