WHY WE LABOR AND STRIVE

I Timothy 4:10 That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.

That Is Why

I Timothy 4:8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

I Corinthians 9:25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

Labor And Strive

“Labor” translates a Greek word meaning to work hard until you are weary.

“Strive” translates *“agonizomai”* from which comes our English word “agony.” It basically means to contend, to struggle. It is translated “competes in the games” in I Corinthians 9:25. Both the noun and verb are in 2 Timothy 4:7 where they are translated “fought” and “fight.”

2 Timothy 4:7&8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Some Greek manuscripts have a word that sounds like *“agonizomai”* in I Timothy 4:10and means to suffer reproach, to be criticized harshly. The NIV translates it “insulted” in I Peter 4:14, If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

Paul is essentially saying the reason we work until we are weary and fight the good fight of faith is because we know there are eternal rewards awaiting those who are faithful. We also work because the phrase, “saved – even though only as one escaping through the flames” (I Corinthians 3:15), does not sound pleasant.

2 Corinthians 5:10&11a For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others.

2 Corinthians 5:14&15 For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

We Have Put Our Hope in the Living God

Romans 8:23-25 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Hope is essentially the confident expectation of good.

Are we waiting eagerly for Heaven? Are we so “earthly minded we’re no heavenly good?”

The Savior of All People, Especially of Those Who Believe

I John 2:1&2 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

I Timothy 2:3-6a This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people.

“Sufficient for all; efficient for those who believe.”

Command and Teach

I Timothy 4:11 Command and teach these things.

The word “command” implies to pass on a command. Timothy is physically young, Paul is telling him to pass on what he, Paul, taught, with the authority of Paul behind him.

Set An Example for the Believers

I Timothy 4:12 Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

Don’t despise mature young believers.

Philippians 2:19-22a I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself,

Hebrews 5:12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again.

In Speech

Ephesians 4:29 Do not let an unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

In Conduct (behavior, way of life)

1 Peter 3:16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

2 Peter 3:11&12 (NASB) Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning and the elements will melt with intense heat.

In Love *(“agape”)*

John 13:35 “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

In Faith

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

In Purity

I Timothy 5:1d&2 Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

Things to Remember

We work until we are weary and fight the good fight because our hope (the confident expectation of good) is in the living God, and we know He will eternally reward those who are faithful.

The death of Christ is sufficient to pay for the sins of the whole world, but only those who put their faith in Christ have their sins actually paid for.

Don’t look down on spiritually mature, chronologically young believers.

All believers, young and old, should set an example for others in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and purity.