TAKE HOLD OF THE ETERNAL LIFE TO WHICH YOU WERE CALLED

I Timothy 6:12 (NASB) Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Review

“Fight the good fight of the faith.” We are in a battle for Christianity and Christian values in our nation. It is a spiritual battle, primarily about truth verses lies, and our weapons are primarily spiritual. We need to train ourselves to be effective and then be involved in the struggle.

Take Hold of the Eternal Life to Which You Were Called

John 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.

I John 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

“Take hold” is *“epilambano.”* This word is used to describe Jesus taking hold of Peter when he began to sink in Matthew 14:31 and Paul and Silas being seized by the crowd after they cast a demon out in Acts 16:19. Its basic meaning seems to be to grasp firmly and hold onto.

We have (present tense) eternal life. Eternal life is not merely about duration, but about quality. Jesus said in John 10:10b (NASB) “I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly.” We need to firmly grasp the fact that we have eternal life now, not just when we die, and live in the light of all the things that flow from that incredible fact.

To Which You Were Called

The Greek word translated “called” in this passage clearly has the meaning of “invite” in Jesus’ parables in Luke 14:16-24 and Matthew 22:1-14 which ends with the statement, “For many are invited, but few are chosen.” Elsewhere it clearly refers to those who have responded to the “call.” Jude verse one says, “To those who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.”

And You Made the Good Confession

Although the NIV translates this “when you made the good confession,” as do a few other translations, the Greek is literally “and you made the good confession,” which is how it reads in most translations. Timothy was “called” and made the “good confession,” not “called when he made the good confession.” Confessing Christ is important but is not how we are declared righteous in God’s sight.

Romans 10:10 (ESV) For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Salvation includes more than justification, which means being declared righteous in God’s sight. Salvation also includes being saved from the power of sin. We are justified when we believe, we do not experience full salvation from the power of sin until we publicly confess Christ, “make the good confession.” Timothy had done that in the presence of many witnesses.

A Solemn Charge

I Timothy 6:13&14 In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time -

“Who gives life to everything.” In “Evolution from Space” Chandra Wickramasinghe and Fred Hoyle estimate the chance of the elements of a single cell coming together by chance as 1 in 10 to the 40,000th power. There are 10 to the 80th power known atoms in the universe. This extremely small possibility does not include the arrival of the information in the cell, but only the arrangement of the molecules.

“Christ Jesus…who made the good confession.” John 18:33-35 Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?” “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”

John 18:36&37 Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.” “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

“This command” would grammatically seem to have to refer to the command to “take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.” The command is given in the sight of God the Father and of Jesus and the command is to be kept “without

spot” (a blemish of any kind) “or blame” (in such a way that no one can censure you for failing to do it well).

“Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This phrase could be paraphrased “until Jesus comes back,” essentially meaning forever or until the Rapture of the Church. God the Father alone knows the time when Jesus will come back for His Church.

Acts 1:7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.”

Praise to God the Father

I Timothy 6:15b&16 God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

Revelation 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

John 5:26 “For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in Himself.

I John 1:5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

John 1:18(NASB) No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

John 12:41 Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus’ glory and spoke about him.

Revelation 4:11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

Revelation 5:13b “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!”

Things to Remember

We have eternal life. We need to grasp and firmly hold onto this truth.

Confessing we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior is an important step in our walk with God.

When we think of Who God is and what He has done for us, our hearts should be filled with gratitude and praise.