



FIRST LIGHT CHURCH

# SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Date: 4/24/22

Series: Fighting for Faith

Text: 1 Timothy 6:11-12

**BIG IDEA: Disciples fight for what is right.**

**ICEBREAKER:** Looking back, what have been some silly things you've gotten into a fight over before?

**CONTEXT:** The Apostle Paul is writing a letter to his young apprentice and disciple, Timothy, as he leads the church in Ephesus. Paul has warned Timothy of false teachers, how to identify and raise up godly leaders, and how he should lead and treat people. In this section, he is going to tell Timothy what is required of the "man of God."

**PASSAGE:** Have a volunteer read 1 Timothy 6:3-12.

## DISCUSSION:

1. Paul begins verse 11 by telling Timothy to "flee these things." Looking back at verses 3-10, what is Timothy to flee? Why are these harmful to our faith?
2. We don't just flee; Paul also instructs Timothy to pursue certain attributes. What are these attributes, and why are they important to our faith?
3. What does it look like to pursue these things?
4. Why do you think Paul describes faith as a fight?
5. Why is fighting for your faith a "good fight"?
6. How does holding on to eternal life help us fight for our faith?
7. We see in verse 12 that part of fighting for our faith is having a public profession. What might that look like today? How can that encourage you to keep fighting for your faith?

## APPLICATION:

8. How do you need to fight for your faith?

## K4 CONNECTION:

Everyone fights for something. They may fight for independence, justice, equality, family, or anything else that is important to them. While these may not be bad things to fight for, they ultimately don't lead to eternal life. We need to fight for our faith by fighting for the souls of our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and anyone else in our community. There is a fight for the hearts and souls of every man, woman, and child in our community. As we fight for our own faith, don't forget that we're also fighting to help those around us know and follow Jesus.

## CARE AND PRAY:

- Confess on your own the things that you've been fighting for more than your faith.
- Ask the Lord to help you pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness.
- Share any prayer requests and needs within the group.

## COMMENTARY

**[v.11]** Paul addresses his command to the “man of God,” which refers to Timothy specifically, but applies also to everyone in the congregation, as Timothy is to be an example among those who believe. Paul’s exhortation is for Timothy to “flee these things,” referring to the vices of the false teachers outlined in the previous paragraph: their conceit, greediness, desire to be rich, love of money, and wandering away from the faith. Paul tells Timothy to “flee”—which has the idea of seeking safety through flight (BDAG). The best way to be free is to flee.

Fleeing from evil, however, is of little value if it is not accompanied by an active pursuit of the good. So Paul tells Timothy to “pursue” six character qualities: righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness.

“Righteousness” refers to “conduct that is in accord with God’s will and pleasing to him.”<sup>1</sup> “Godliness” is closely related to righteousness. It denotes the “duty that man owes to God,” perhaps even “piety.”<sup>2</sup> “Faith” refers to trust in God, not to faithfulness. “Love” refers to the affection for one another that the Spirit of Christ works in His disciples (cf. John 13:35). “Steadfastness” refers to the attitude of patience and trust that a person has when bearing up under unjust treatment. This attitude is one of faith and confidence in the final outcome that God has ordained.<sup>3</sup> “Gentleness” is the opposite of an overbearing attitude.

**[v.12]** Believing in Christ is a fight. It is a bona fide struggle. There will be many trials that will tempt the “man of God” to abandon faith in Christ. But the man of God must fight to maintain his faith. It will be a lifelong struggle, but at the end, the man of God will have the opportunity to take hold of immortality. So this is a call to persevere to the end. The “good confession” is Timothy’s confession of Christ that he made either at his baptism or at his ordination, a “public acknowledgement of Jesus (Mt. 10:32; Lk. 12:8) as the resurrected Lord (Rom. 10:9–10).”

*Commentary used from the ESV Expository Commentary - 1 Timothy 6:11-21*

**[v.12b]** As Timothy fights “the good fight of the faith,” Paul instructs him to “take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses” (v. 12b). Timothy already had eternal life, as had been confirmed at his conversion and baptism when he made his good confession.

Eternal life is, obviously, everlasting, but the emphasis here is on its quality. Eternal life is the life of the age to come, which is given only in Jesus Christ. As Jesus explained, “And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3). Timothy, like all believers, has eternal life both as a present possession and as a future hope (1:16 and 2 Timothy 1:10 give the present sense; Titus 1:2 and 3:7 give the future sense).

Nevertheless, Paul tells Timothy (and by extension all of us) to grab—to fasten onto—eternal life. According to Bauer’s lexicon, the word translated “take hold of” means “to take hold of, grasp . . . sometimes with violence” or to “take hold of, in order to make one’s own.” The “violence” in the word is seen when it is used to describe how Jesus “took hold of” Peter as he began to sink (Matthew 14:31) and how the crowd “seized” Paul and dragged him from the temple (Acts 21:30).<sup>7</sup> This is the

idea: Timothy already had eternal life, but he is instructed to grab it for all he is worth, to live it to the full.

*Commentary used from the Preach the Word Series - 1 Timothy 6:11-16*

## WHERE'S THE GOSPEL

Paul begins his closing words to Timothy with an eloquent charge toward godliness. Timothy is to “pursue” the virtues toward which God summons us. But this is not a godliness devoid of the gospel of grace. Rather, this is itself the life of faith: “Fight the good fight of the faith” (v. 12). There can be no fulfilling of the gospel ministry without godliness and its attendant virtues, all of which arise from the beauty of the gospel, as we behold Christ, the mystery of godliness (3:16).

*Commentary used from the ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible - 1 Timothy 6:11-16*