

Fight the Good Fight

June 6, 2021 - Worship on the Lawn Summer Series - part 1 of 4

“Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many witnesses.”

1 Timothy 6:12

Teaching point: Paul used every opportunity to tell people about Jesus.

Refer to Acts 18 – 21

Paul was on his third missionary journey and was leading many Gentiles to Jesus.

Initially he was not having much success helping the Jewish people understand who Jesus was.

But God gave Paul courage:

*“One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision and told him, ‘**Don’t be afraid! Speak out! Don’t be silent!**’¹⁰ For I am with you, and no one will attack and harm you, for many people in this city belong to me.’¹¹ So Paul stayed there for the next year and a half, teaching the word of God” **Acts 18:9-11.***

As he journeyed from one region/village to the next he shared his faith and visited with other believers to see if they had any questions – to help develop their understanding of what it means to serve Jesus.

*“After spending some time in Antioch, Paul went back through Galatia and Phrygia, visiting and strengthening all the believers.” **Acts 18:23***

Paul spoke to people in every town he passed through.

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In about a 10-year period, the apostle Paul walked over 12,000 miles on Roman roads (cut stone pavement and gravel) and bridges, and even traveled by ship across the seas on occasion.

He was tired, sleepless, treated badly and was involved in a shipwreck due to a bad storm.

He experienced riots and Roman oppression, even backlash from his very people, the Jews.

In some places he would stay for long periods of time, even over a year or so.

Mostly he would stay a few months in homes of other believers.

Despite all the trouble and travel fatigue,

Paul used every opportunity to share the love of Jesus, and His gift of salvation to anyone who would listen.

One time, Paul rejoined eight other believers who he was traveling with in a town called Troas.

*“On the first day of the week, we gathered with the local believers to share in the Lord’s Supper. Paul was preaching to them, and since he was leaving the next day, he kept talking until midnight. ⁸ The upstairs room where we met was lighted with many flickering lamps. ⁹ As Paul spoke on and on, a young man named Eutychus, sitting on the windowsill, became very drowsy. Finally, he fell sound asleep and dropped three stories to his death below. ¹⁰ **Paul went down, bent over him, and took him into his arms. “Don’t worry,” he said, “he’s alive!”** ¹¹ Then they all went back upstairs, shared in the Lord’s Supper, and ate together. Paul continued talking to them until dawn, and then he left. ¹² Meanwhile, the young man was taken home alive and well, and everyone was greatly relieved.” Acts 20:7-12*

Did you hear how Paul acted when the man fell? Paul **“took him into his arms.”**

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Do you think this was a way to tell people about Jesus?

Matthew 9:36

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

Listen to Paul’s last words to the people in a town called Ephesus. He was leaving them not knowing what would happen to him and he may never see these men and their church again.

“I have done the Lord’s work humbly and with many tears. I have endured the trials that came to me from the plots of the Jews. ²⁰ I never shrank back from telling you what you needed to hear, either publicly or in your homes. ²¹ I have had one message for Jews and Greeks alike—the necessity of repenting from sin and turning to God, and of having faith in our Lord Jesus.” Acts 20:19-21

Do you know what it means to repent and turn to God?

“Repent” means to *“Admit that you are not always good and tell Jesus that you want His forgiveness.”*

“Turn to God” means to stop deciding for yourself and ask God for help all the time.