

The Kingdom Brand Series

Legacy, Sons and Daughters

The Bible is an amazing book and its texts can operate in many different ways on human hearts when the Holy Spirit is orchestrating the process. Some parts contain records of human lives, other parts detail political developments. It entails the everyday life of families, sometimes letters to churches, other times letters to persons. Sometimes it is very doctrinal and quite 'advanced', and other times very personal and practical. The stories are about people, their relationship with God and their journey in the Kingdom (or lack of those aspects).

But it is much more than stories. In biblical narratives people are far from being angelic beings; they are not demigods. And God is not semi-human as in religious myths. Here we meet reality.

In this passage of a letter from Apostle Paul to his mentee and spiritual son, Timothy, he is very human:

"I fought the good fight, I finished the race, I kept the faith." 2 Tim. 4:7

Paul had reached the end of his life and made a personal statement. Very short and substantial. These words are placed at the end of a letter full of many deep thoughts and guidelines, but we must pay attention to them even though they are few and simple. Timothy surely did pay attention.

Paul's letters carry a lot of revelation and insight, but occasionally he freely wrote about himself. He was not teaching, disserting or proclaiming...he was talking. Why is it important? Why did such simple words and considerations find their way into these weighty documents? The reason is simple: Everything which is heavenly must find an earthly expression. It does not need to be through spectacular events challenging natural laws like earthquakes, storms, thunder and lightning. It surely can happen that way, but the highest expression of Heaven must be in Man and through Man, as Man is God's highest creation; definitely higher than manifestations in the nature. What God intends to create, shape and develop in Man goes far beyond and is more breathtaking than thunder and earthquakes.

Earthly systems (political, social and educational) are created, administrated and developed by Man. Through Man, Heaven can come to Earth and begin to regulate and reform the systems which govern communities and nations. Through Man, Hell can infiltrate Earth and spread darkness and destruction.

For this reason, the enemy of God and His plan is also the enemy of Man, because Man is intended to become God's partner. The enemy was looking for Jesus, not primarily as the Son of God, but as the Son of Man...and he did so immediately after His incarnation. His earthly birth.

Therefore, the writings of Paul about himself are essential, as we are allowed to look into his life and observe how he represented the Kingdom of Heaven in a way that influences the kingdoms of the earth, and how he established a legacy that perpetuated to the next generations.

So Paul wrote:

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Surprisingly, his own person is at the core of these words. Paul is speaking about himself. Why not about Jesus? Why not about God's grace? Both are surely there, but only implicitly. The point is that the value of being God's partner on Earth must be understood, your own value at your workplace, in your neighborhood, at the university, the hospital, in your music band, rugby team or political party, or even in the supermarket.

These words are not weak words. He is not saying:

I survived all the wars.

I just made it over the finish line.

I still believe in God.

Not at all. His heart is set; his hand is not shaking.

And now the crown of righteousness is waiting for him. There is not a shadow of doubt.

So, let's have a look at these three statements, and may God refresh our spirits and enlighten our minds so we can hear His voice and understand the nature and content of His call and its goal.

First of all, we must understand that the main issue in this statement from the hand of Paul is neither the fight nor the faith, but the race. Therefore, Paul continued and wrote about the crown and the trophy, not the ring where the fight took place, and not about his heroic acts of faith. It is about a mission, an assignment. It all gravitates around the race.

Some Christians are very fight-focused and others are faith-focused, but most of them are not race-oriented.

We must be.

As you read this volume, keep this in mind: the race is the central issue.

Now let's get started, and we start with the fight.

1. I Have Fought The Good Fight

He didn't say that he won all his wars. But he did fight the good fight. Did he consider his good fight as fully triumphant? We don't know. But maybe that should not be the focus of the matter, so we don't immediately get into the triumphant mode without understanding anything about the nature of this fight. This fight is not about the practical struggles of our daily life. Paul had a daily life, and he wrote openly about it. But this is not what he had in mind when he reached the end of his journey and sent these words to Timothy.

So yes, there is a fight, and there is a good fight, and we must be the fighter.

Matthew recorded the baptism of Jesus, and its main elements were:

- The accurate alignment to righteous requirements
- The open heaven

- The coming of the Holy Spirit
- The statement of His Father

Then the Spirit led Him into the wilderness, into pressure, both external and internal. The enemy came, the enemy of His Father and now also the enemy of the Son - the Son of God and the Son of Man. His hatred towards the Son of Man had no effect at all, and therefore his hatred continued towards Man because Man was intended to be shaped in the likeness of the Son. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Matt. 4:1-2

The devil came to Him and challenged Him. It was not a doctrinal quiz challenging His Word knowledge or His memory. It had a very different target.

The first statement was:

"If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

The next statement was:

"If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down."

The final statement was:

"All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."

What is all this about? It is both a temptation and a test. It is a Cold War. It is the good fight. The Son of Man fought it, and later Man must fight the very same good fight.

What is this "good fight" about?

Have you noticed that the devil challenged exactly what the Father had just told Jesus? Yes, it is about sowing doubts about the Word, about what was said to Him. Adam and Eve faced the same issue: "Has God really said..." But it is more than sowing doubts and challenging the Word. Its purpose is to challenge what the Word had said.

The Father said: "You are..."

And the devil picked it up: "If you are..."

The target is **identity**, exactly the same fight Adam and Eve had to fight - the good fight, the fight for God-given identity. Here we must understand that identity is given and received, not taken. And therefore, it can and obviously will be challenged. Satan did challenge their identity. We thought he challenged their obedience to the Word. He did, but it was more than that. It was all about identity:

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Gen. 3:1-5

You will **be like God**.

The same serpent who met the first Adam met the last Adam. And he will meet us, as we are His descendants. God expects us to fight this good fight He expects us to pass this test with excellence. Otherwise there is no chance we can finish the race. Remember, the fight is not the ultimate issue, the race is. But we must meet the requirements: to establish and consolidate our God-given identity. The first Adam fought and failed, the last Adam fought and overcame...and the devil left Him, but just

for a while, and he will target the Man transformed in the likeness of the last Adam, shaped and empowered by God.

Let us have a look at the content of this "good fight".

It is good because it is ordained by God:

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Matt. 4:1

This is not evil, it is good. God is good and His plans are good, and now we will consider what the fight is all about.

1. To break the power of passivity and resignation set to keep you ignorant and indecisive

When the serpent showed up in the garden of Eden, which was the place of absolute perfection, Eve and Adam were passive. Why did they answer the question coming from God's enemy? What truth can emerge in a conversation with the father of lies? They should have fought and settled the issue. Not fought the devil, but fought passivity. Not fought the external issue but fought the internal one. God had said that their identity was based on God's life, a life carried by the Spirit and imparted in their spirit through revelation, not by their brains being informed through knowledge of good and evil. The root and source of their identity was in God and His life, not in cerebral knowledge. Knowledge had not to come separately from God, but it had to come from Him, and reach them through the activity of the Spirit of life and the Word of life. Knowledge separated from God is lifeless and therefore extremely harmful.

So passivity overwhelmed Eve, then Adam. And it took them out of the race because they didn't fight the good fight. They resigned.

Another question could be raised: Why was the serpent inside the garden anyway, when the mandate of Man was to guard the territory? They had already resigned and stepped out of their identity of being entrusted administrators and rulers.

When Jesus was led into the wilderness and the devil showed up, He could have resigned as well. Maybe He was shocked by what this next Holy Spirit season brought. It definitely didn't bring success, prosperity, easy life...no, it created external pressure to test internal stability. The overall purpose was to consolidate identity.

The devil is 'used' by God. God is in charge, not the devil.

The last Adam did well.

The physical and emotional pressure of staying in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights didn't weaken His spiritual discernment, His mental sharpness and His ability to stand firm. Maybe He expected the Spirit to lead Him into a totally different environment or setup of circumstances.

Why not go directly from Matthew 3:17 (where heaven was open, the Spirit filled Him and the voice of the Father was heard) and move quickly to Matthew 4:17 (when He began to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom)? Why not go directly to Matthew 4:23 (where He went from city to city, teaching in synagogues and proclaiming "the gospel of the Kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people")? Or Matthew 4:25 (where "great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond Jordan")?

The discovery that the Spirit didn't lead Him into such a Kingdom-explosion might have created negative emotions and thoughts of despair and resignation. After 30 years of training by His earthly

parents and His heavenly Father, why not step out into a powerful and fruitful season? No, He had to fight this good fight.

While the first Adam was passive and resigned from His identity and mandate, the last Adam fought and overcame. He was who He was, and He was in charge of what had been entrusted to Him.

This is a part of your good fight - fight it and win it!

2. To handle the past mistakes, attitudes and situations set to create shame and confusion.
3. To let pride go, cultivate a teachable mind, and be able to retain and consolidate changes, so they become lasting realities and part of your life-foundation.
4. To keep challenging wrong patterns until you have developed what it takes to correct them.
5. To not let go of revelational truth, but to pursue understanding until the Word-seed germinates and regulates your life.
6. To overcome hindrances to growth set to keep you limited in maturity, strength and stability.
7. To ignore the temptation to stay inside your comfort-zone meant to create stagnation and reluctance to progress.
8. To starve the casual mindset and feed righteousness, joy, truth and peace, and have the courage to reconsider your values.

The next key-thoughts regarding the good fight are:

2. I have finished the race

3. I have kept the faith

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