

YET – THE RADICAL RELEASE OF FAITH

Shane Warren

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH.” (II Timothy 4:7)

I Timothy 6:12 – Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

I choose this subject today, because as your pastor, I know that there are many people under the sound of my voice whose faith is under siege:

- Some of you are facing a crisis in your hell that is life-threatening – your faith is under siege.
- Some of you are in the struggle of your life in the area of your finances or business. In the coming days, if God doesn't move, your financial situation will reach a climax of devastating as your fiscal future hangs in the balance. – your faith is under siege.
- Some of you are battling in your homes as the enemy has unleashed the forces of hell against your marriage. You are facing the unthinkable prospect of divorce – your faith is under siege.
- Some of you have children and grandchildren, who were raised in the things of God, but now they have seemingly turned their back on the Lord, and it has broken your heart. You are fasting and praying and believing heaven for their redemption – your faith is under siege.
- Some of you are about to make personal decisions that is going to affect your life for the rest of your life – your faith is under siege.

Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abendigo, standing just outside the furnace. Your hands and feet are bound, and you feel like you are being thrown into the fire of life.

**When you go through the fire - God does not send someone -
He shows up himself!**

You desperately need a miracle today because your faith is under siege...

When I'm in the throes of a spiritual life battle, I remind myself of something that was preached to me by a great man of faith. A man who saw the miraculous in His life on a regular basis. This man is none other than Dr. E.L. Terry – one of the greatest Pentecostal evangelists of the 20th century.

You see, Dr. E.L. Terry grew up poor. At a very early age he accidentally drank lye - Lye water is a strongly alkaline (caustic) solution which can cause severe injury in the form of corrosive burns,

especially to the throat, esophagus and stomach if swallowed. These injuries can result in hospitalization and permanent damage. This would kill any normal person; however, Dr. Terry experienced the miracle power of God and lived without any damage to his body.

His father was a great “tent revival preacher” who also saw miracle and Dr. Terry experienced many of them. For example...

- Share the story of Bonnie and Clyde
- Fire on the tent...
- Dr. Terry in Africa with the witch doctors...

One time I was going through a terrible struggle as a young preacher. I was on the verge of giving up with Dr. Terry called me with a prophetic word...

Faith is harder to keep than it is to get

We are given a measure of faith according to Romans 12:3, but we are charged with the responsibility of keeping it. I have discovered that...

Satan may not sabotage your singing, socializing or your sympathy for others who are suffering, but he will look for every opportunity to undermine your faith because he knows that without faith you can't please God or receive from God... For many of us in the room we feel like we are in a moment when our...

FAITH is UNDER SEIGE...

Jesus knew the siege was coming against faith in our day and asked in the closing words of Jesus' parable of the persistent widow – this struck me to my core...

“Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8)

- “However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

And to Peter our Lord said, ***“I have prayed for you that your faith fail not.” (Luke 22:32)***

- He told Peter Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you like wheat.

Paul was not negligent to remind his son in the faith, Timothy, to ***“Fight the good fight of faith...” (I Timothy 6:12)***

Faith is *fun* when things:

- are going your way
- your prayers are answered quickly and precisely
- your cupboard is crammed full

- your bank account is fat and growing.

Faith is *fun* when...

- your health is hearty
- your job is a joy
- your family is flourishing
- your kids are kind and thoughtful and peace prevails in every aspect of your life.

When faith is fun, you can *clap* and not cry, *sing* and not sigh, *dance* and not fall into the dumps, *marvel* and not mope, *praise* and not pout and *laugh* and not lament.

We love those times when we enthusiastically and spontaneously follow the encouragement of the Psalmist who said, “*Clap your hand, all you people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.*” (Psalms 47:1) – *Let’s take a moment and do that...*

The writer of the Hebrew letter described “*fun faith*” like this..

“*Through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword...*” (Heb. 11:33-34)

But I must remind you that the story of faith does not stop there. Follow the subsequent note beginning in...

Hebrews 11:36... *Suddenly faith became a fight.* This is how it is explained. “*And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yes, moreover bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword...being destitute, afflicted and tormented...*”

When faith is not fun, you must fight for it...

On June 4, 1940, Winston Churchill made one of the most defining speeches of World War II. When things were not going well and war was taking its toll, he called for the *fighting spirit* to be kindled in the hearts of his countrymen. With passion he spoke these words...

“*Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not fail. We shall fight on the seas and oceans, We shall fight with growing confidence...we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, We shall fight on the beaches, We shall fight on the landing grounds, We shall fight in the fields and in the streets, We shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender...*”

I can't match his wit, but *I can emulate his passion* when I urge you to not give in, don't give up and never give over to the enemies of faith. Fight for faith.

- **Fight the dampening spirit of doubt.**
- **Fight when you are deflated by delays.**
- **Fight when you are being derided by distracters.**
- **Fight when you are deplored by demagoguery.**
- **Fight when you are despised by derelicts.**
- **Fight when you are disapproved by the disgruntled.**
- **Fight when you are being downplayed by the defiant.**
- **Fight when you are demoralized by antagonistic demonstrators.**
- **Fight when you are discouraged by a devilish designed dearth.**
- **Fight when your defenders stand far away in the distance.**

I love the words of Christopher Reeve. He said...

"I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles."

Such is one who fights and keeps the faith. When your faith is under siege and you feel the pressure of the attack...Concentrate on three specific things to keeping your faith.

1. **Faith must stay focused.**

- Hebrews 12:2 – "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith..."
- Hebrews 11:27 – "for he endured as seeing him who is invisible."
- Keep the "SON" in your eyes at all times....in good times and bad times, in up times and down times, in fun times and fight times.
 - o The SON shall set you free.
 - o The SON is the expressed image of the invisible God.
 - o The SON is the bright and morning star.
 - o The SON is the Lord of hosts and King of kings.
 - o The SON is the Door into the abundance of God.
 - o The SON is the Surety to all the promises and provisions of God.
 - o The SON is the way when there seems to be no way.

You can only keep the faith when you keep your focus on the SON...

Sorrow looks back, worry looks around, but faith looks up and discovers that the SON is still on the throne.

2. **We must understand the function of faith.**

- Hebrews 11:3 – "Through faith we understand..."

- Hebrews 11:7 – By faith Noah....prepared an ark to the saving of his house...”

Notice the words “*through faith*” and “*by faith*” that are repeated over and again in Hebrews chapter eleven.

Faith does something in, for and through us – **Faith is a force not a farce.**

The following words of Patrick Overton are fantastic...

“When you have come to the edge of all light that you know and are about to drop off into the darkness of the unknown, faith is knowing one of two things will happen: there will be something solid to stand on or you will be taught to fly.”

My job is to take care of the possible and trust God for the impossible

The function of faith in my life will cause *doubts* to recede, *prayers* to succeed, *steps* to proceed and *the SON* to intercede for me in the portals of heaven.

John summed it all up perfectly in I John 5:4. “*This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.*” That’s the function of faith in a nutshell – **living victoriously.**

3. **Faith must give us a certain degree of fearlessness.**

- Hebrews 11:23 – “By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they were not afraid of the king’s commandment....”
- Baby Moses didn’t know to be afraid of the political storm that was raging, but his parents did. Their baby was at severe risk. His life was in imminent danger, **but by faith they were not afraid.**
- Keep the faith. It will keep you when fear assails.

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Job 13:15 – Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

Job 19:26 - And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God...

Habakkuk 3:17-18 - Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

**The first principal of faith upon which everything believed for and built up is that WITH GOD
ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE**

David is dying and he knows some things God has promised him has not yet come to pass...Hear David's final prayer...

2 Samuel 23:5 - Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

Conclusion:

- Share the story of little girl with umbrella in Malawi Africa during the drought / greatest famine of modern history...
- Get your umbrella out...