

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL



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LENT DEVOTIONAL MARCH 25, 2018

SCRIPTURE

1 Timothy 6:12-16

12 Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you 14 to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. 16 It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Written by George Barr, PTS Senior **M.Div. Student**

In this passage, Timothy is exhorted to “fight the good fight,” a biblical idiom now firmly planted in the English language. But what does it mean? The verb *agonalizō*, (here rendered “fight”) is meant to evoke an athletic competition, but it might also refer more generally to a fight or struggle. Is the Christian life a race or a boxing match? Perhaps both.

Whatever is implied by the use of *agonalizō*, one thing is certain: it is not easy. To remain faithful to the message of the gospel and to obey the Lord’s commands is no small task, nor is it without its perils. One thinks of English theologian John Owen’s words to “be killing sin or it will be killing you.”

Yes, the Christian life is indeed a hard-run race and veritable slugging match, but its wreath is worth all our toils. Timothy is exhorted to “grasp” or “take hold of” that eternal life. At some point, we will know God more fully than ever. We will draw near to Him in his resplendent glory. And at that time, our constant longing will be satisfied. At last we will finally hear the words “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God who dwells in unapproachable light, grant that we might fight our fight and run our race in faithfulness to your will as revealed in your word. Set our sights on you and on the surpassing worth of knowing Christ. May that be our reward. Amen.

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