

**THREE THINGS THAT QUALIFY YOU TO BE READY TO MEET THE LORD.
FIGHT THE FIGHT, RUN THE COURSE, KEEP THE FAITH.**

1-10-21

II Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

II Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

II Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

II Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

II Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

II Timothy 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

II Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

II Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Intro:

Imagine being Noah in the days of Noah. It looked like he faced an impossible task. He was called to preach righteousness to a world that was totally given up to debauchery, violence, and wickedness. Imagine being Lot in the city of Sodom. He vexed his righteous soul from day to day. He could not even convince his own kids to live for God. Again it seemed like an impossible task.

Now let us look at the state of affairs in the day that we live. I have seen how the world has gradually been censoring the voice of Christians in my lifetime. It has happened to us in such a subtle and gradual way that we have become like the frog in the pot that was bathing in the water on the stove not noticing how the temperature was gradually rising.

Now because almost every digital platform has been taken over by liberals, there will soon be no platform where conservative people can be free to share their opinions about current affairs.

I don't have a twitter account, or a facebook account. I do use Youtube and have set up an account for our church to broadcast messages during the early part of the pandemic. In the process we have had one video banned because we dared to suggest that someday Jesus is going to heal all disease in His kingdom. When He returns there will

be no pandemics. So we dared to suggest Jesus is the answer to all of men's woes. They said we were giving medical advice contrary CDC standards. This world has gone haywire.

I have seen it time and time again, the world attacks so many things that have a Christian perspective.

When I was working in a mall during the Reagan days, a news reporter came by interviewing people about Nancy Regan's, coat she was wearing. She wore a mink coat and they wanted to know our opinions about how we felt about that. They interviewed a customer at my stand, and he said, he thought it was a disgrace because of the animals that had to die to make that coat. Then they interviewed me, I said, she's the first lady, she deserves to wear the best. What do you want her to wear? If she wants to wear a mink coat who should criticize her?

Now the interview was for some rock station, so there was no way I was going to hear it. So i forgot about it. Then my wife asked me to go get something at the drug store for our new born baby, as I was walking down the aisle they had a bunch of radios all tuned to the same station. Just then I heard the announcer say, now we go to WKZ, at the Viewmont mall, with your opinion. Asking what do you think about Nancy Reagan's choice of wearing mink coats. Then they played the man who was at my counter, talking. I thought "Whoa," I stopped and listened, waiting for them to play my comments. And then it ended, and they never played what I said!

Now it has gotten worse. A few years back when they legalized homosexual marriages, channel 16 announced a public polling site to record your opinion about the matter. They announced they set up a website, where you could vote on whether you were for it or against it and then there was a place where you could make a comment about why you voted for or against it. So I went on and voted no, and gave my reason why. After I did that I went back to the site to see what other people said, and my comment was taken down and my vote was taken down.

Then I asked Ken Knapp to write in a complain that he had a friend who was censored, and his vote was taken down and his comments were taken down.

Now we recently we had our video removed from Youtube.

And now we have the president of the United States censored.

Look, I don't agree with the violence that happened in Washington, but neither do I agree with the violence that happened with the Antifa group. But who controls the narrative? The media will cherry pick what they want you to see to support what they want you to think.

Just like the George Floyd narrative, the media kept playing over and over again the last few minutes of what happened, but never played how long he resisted arrest and how hard they tried to get him into the police car.

Now this I know. There are a lot of people upset about what is going on in our nation today, and people are frustrated and many of them actually are going to express their frustrations in various ways. Some are going to express their frustrations in anger and maybe even violence. Now the real question is what can we do about what we see happening?

The thing we should know that the world does not know is this:

II Corinthians 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

II Corinthians 10:4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

II Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

II Corinthians 10:6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

Our battle is not in the flesh. You can't riot and storm the capital to change ideas, imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. Our war is a spiritual war. And the battle ground is the hearts and minds of people.

I believe that everything that is happening in our country today is preparatory for the end times. We can see how this world is being primed for the kingdom of the Antichrist. All they have to do is spin the narrative and make people think that Christians are the dangerous people. Christians are these people who storm the capital and trample down police.

Never before in the History of mankind has a government had such control of its people. How many of us are dependent on communicating with technology?

We all have cell phones that can be turned on or off by the powers that be.

We all seem so dependent on computers, and emails, etc.

The truth is, we send emails out to notify people, and most people do not even check their emails anymore. They check facebook!

You can be banned from facebook if you say things they don't like.

You can even have your email account banned.

We can see how the government of the Antichrist can take over the world finances and usher in the mark of the beast.

We can see how easily the government can persecute Christians.

Now what should we do as Christians?

This is what I want to address this morning!

We now have entered a new year, 2021. We certainly are in the end times and Paul the Apostle gave some advice to Timothy that is pertinent to us today.

Paul knew that the Lord was going to take him home really soon.

Now I would think that knowing his end was near, Paul would have wanted to share the most important things necessary for Timothy to hear.

And I would assume that in his advice to Timothy, the urgency of that advice should ring clear in our hearts and spiritual lives as well.

Paul uses his life as an example to follow.

I wonder how many of us, as our life nears its end, will be able to be as confident as Paul was that others should follow our example.

His words of advice to Timothy should challenge us to search our own hearts and lives.

Note what he says.

II Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

II Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

If the Lord returns in 2021, or if the Lord takes us home in 2021 will we be able to say as Paul did.

II Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

II Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

What can we glean from this by way of advice for us in 2021?

I. HE SAID I FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT.

Oh that when the Lord comes,
Oh that if we find ourselves on our death bed,

CAN WE, WILL WE BE ABLE TO SAY,

I FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT.

What is it to fight the good fight? THE GREEK WORD SOUNDS SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR TO A SIMILAR WORD IN ENGLISH.

AGONIZOMAI.

agonizomai, ag-o-nid'-zom-ahee; from 73; to struggle, lit. (to compete for a prize), fig. (to contend with an adversary), or gen. (to endeavor to accomplish something):-fight, labor fervently, strive.

Definition:

to enter a contest: contend in the gymnastic games
to contend with adversaries, fight
metaph. to contend, struggle, with difficulties and dangers
to endeavor with strenuous zeal, strive: to obtain something

Issac Watts wrote that great hymn "Am I a soldier of the cross."

In 1721, while preparing a sermon regarding spiritual warfare, based on the passage "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." (I Corinthians 16:13), Watts wrote the hymn Am I a Soldier of the Cross? to accompany his text.

Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His Name?

Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord.
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,

Supported by Thy Word.

The problem we face today is that most Christians are looking for a utopia on Earth. As long as Jesus is not here, there will be battles to fight.

Many stop fighting.
Many stop struggling with sin.
Many give up and get tired.

PAUL FOUGHT TO THE VERY END. WILL YOU?

I hear people say.

I'm burned out serving the Lord.

Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?

I've heard people say I'm tired of fighting.
Is there a choice in a war? You fight or surrender.
Will we surrender to evil?

To fight the good fight is to keep serving the Lord till he takes you home. WILL YOU FIGHT? WILL YOU KEEP FIGHTING?

Paul fought the good fight until he was taken home in Martyrdom.

Instead of fighting the good fight we see:

People wanting to be entertained.
People wanting to be lulled to sleep.
People want to have their ears tickled.

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord.
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy Word.

Why is our nation given over to debauchery, immorality, absurdities?

IT IS BECAUSE MOST CHRISTIANS ARE NOT FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT.
CHRISTIANS HAVE GIVEN UP THE FIGHT.

What is that fight all about?

1. THE GREATEST FIGHT IS THE BATTLE FOR THE SOULS OF MEN:

Look, read the Bible. According to the Bible, this world is not going to be saved, it is only the souls of men that can be saved. America is only as good as the people that make it up. If the people are corrupt, the government will be corrupt.

John Jay was an American statesman and Founding Father who served the United States in numerous government offices. He later served as the first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court and the second governor of New York state.

He once said,

Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation, to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.

Now how does a person become a Christian? Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. The problem we have today is we have a lack of Christians in our country who have discernment about who to elect.

The idea of giving the vote to anyone and anything is what is destroying us from within. We do not have voting we have mob rule. Read the history of voting in this country, there were strict qualifications for who was allowed to vote. Today people are being bought off to vote by doling out handouts. People do not even need identification to vote. We hand out ballots like a person would hand out leaflets at a concert. As we cheapen the electoral process there is bound to be corruption. The democrat party has gotten harvesting votes down to a science. And the American people let it happen. So are we going to change America through the voting process? I know a lot of Christians that voted for some terrible politicians. I just shake my head!

In many respects I can't change what has happened.

I can't change YouTube.

I can't change facebook.

I can't change twitter.

I can't change google.

All that is beyond me.

But I certainly can try to have an impact on my relatives, my neighbors, and my friends.

There are a lot of people frustrated about what they see going on in our nation.

They think our constitution is the answer.

They think the integrity of the vote is the answer.

This is the final frontier for the way things take place in our country. If the democrats implement what they want to implement, they will open our borders, give illegals the vote, keep mail in ballots going. They want to give felons the right to vote, open our borders to everyone to vote. Censoring is being wholesale approved by major big tech sources in retaliation for conservatives supporting Trump.

If this is the case, we will never see another conservative president elected. They will control the vote, they will control the narrative and means of communication, and on and on we go.

It is like what was going on at the tower of Babel, the Lord said, they would succeed. Biden as much as quoted this, he used these words, "We can do anything as long as we are unified..." Unification is more important than truth and integrity. This is all leading to a one world government, one world religion, one world economy, and soon wholesale persecution.

Genesis 11:6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

There is nothing wrong with unity, until that unity seeks to overturn God's word. Wholesale abortions, rejection of God's creation and distinction of the sexes, radical environmentalism, in essence is pantheism, is disguised as science. The globalist, agenda which is leading to the kingdom of the Antichrist, and on and on we can go. These are going to be ushered in now that the powers that be have control of the narrative and can manipulate the voting system, with wholesale mail in voting with no accountability.

Like in the Days of Noah, and in the days of the tower of Babel, there is only one person that can overturn this, and that is God Himself.

So in the meantime, the fight that we need to fight is the spiritual fight for the souls of men. We need to start rescuing the lost. Turn up the heat on personal witnessing.

Jesus said,

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

How did Christianity overturn the most powerful Kingdom of the world? Not with a sword, but with conversions and the power of God. What destroyed the church is when it got married to the state and corruption entered in.

What we need is the power of God, like Paul had, that when he was in chains and preached to Felix in Acts 24:25, it says,

Acts 24:25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled..

2. *No Government Can Hinder This Work Because We have God On Our Side.*

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

This is our commission. And we have all authority, and power in heaven and in earth for this commission. Nothing can stop us unless we just don't do it, and surrender.

This is the fight we are commissioned to fight and we need no permit to do it. We need no permission to fulfill it. Just go and be a witness for Jesus. This is what we need to do.

II. *PAUL SAID HE FINISHED HIS COURSE. ARE WE GOING TO FINISH OUR COURSE?*

II Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

God has given each of us a course to run. A job to do. A fight to fight.

A race to endure.

Some people just plain quit on God before they are finished.

There is no way to fail for God except to quit!

Isaiah 40:29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

Isaiah 40:30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Some people never stick to anything long enough to accomplish anything.
God wants us to finish what He told us to do.
God has a course for us to run and we need to run it to the finish line.

Jesus gave a parable about a fellow who was condemned because he didn't finish well. He made all kind of excuses and none of them will hold up in that day of Judgment! This is the parable of the servants who all received one talent.

Matthew 25:24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

Matthew 25:25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

Matthew 25:26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

Matthew 25:27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

Matthew 25:28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

Matthew 25:29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

Matthew 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Been at Elkdale Baptist coming up to 38 years and I still have work to do to finish my course.

We don't finish till we cross the finish line.
THE FINISH LINE IS OVER THERE OR IN THE AIR.

My retirement is over yonder in eternity.

Revelation 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Are you setting aside a retirement fund in heaven? That's the most important fund of all. I pray God gives me the strength to serve Him till the day He takes me. People have given up, they have quit! The race is not to the swift, not to the strong, but to those who endure!

What is your course? For me it is being his faithful servant till the day He takes me home to be with Him! God has given me a job to do and I will do everything in my power to keep doing it!

III. PAUL SAID HE HAS KEPT THE FAITH.

The faith involves a set of beliefs and doctrines. These have been handed down to us from Jesus Christ, and through His apostles. We have the faith recorded in the Bible. We need not wonder what the faith is. We have it in writing!

These doctrines should not change, they are the same that have been handed down to us from the Apostles who received them from the Lord Himself.

Today we are seeing a change in what we would define as the faith. We are seeing social upheaval and a grand experiment in morality.

We have the leaders of our nation, declaring the Genesis of God's creation irrelevant for today.

GEN 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

GEN 5:2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. (or man)

How is it that congress can hire a so called preacher to attack that truth the first day of the congressional openings?!

All mankind were created in God's image. An attack on that is an attack on God Himself.

What is the faith? It is the Scriptural teachings of Christ and the Apostles as set forth in the word of God.

PAUL WARNS:

II Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

II Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

II Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

II Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

The faith involves preaching the word of God.

When it is in season to do so.

When it is out of season to do so.

We are living in a day when preaching is considered out of season.

Out of date.

People say the Bible was written for a different culture.

Things are different now.

This is what Paul meant when he said PREACH THE WORD KEEP THE FAITH.
WHEN IT IS IN SEASON OR OUT.

When it is convenient and easy to do so.

When it is inconvenient and difficult to do so.

PREACH THE WORD.

Paul at times made tents so he could support those that traveled with him.
In other places there was support from the Christians and churches.

YET PAUL PREACHED THE WORD.

NOTE HOW PAUL SAYS.

By the word of the Lord. This was a prophecy given that in the end times there would be a falling away from the faith.

II Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

Paul said.

Acts 20:27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Acts 20:30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

II Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

I Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
I Timothy 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

The Holy Spirit has predicted this falling away.

And we are seeing it even today.

In the midst of this falling away the Lord commands us to keep the faith.

Stick to the stuff.

Don't move.

Don't be swayed.

WE LIVE IN A DAY WHEN THERE IS A REDEFINING OF EVERYTHING.

II Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Redefine male and female.
Gender neutral mentality.
Redefine marriage.
Redefine God's creation.
Redefine man's God given dominion and authority.

IV. CONCLUSION:

II Timothy 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

II Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

II Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

The time of departure is near.

Around 28 years ago I got a birthday card when I turned 40.
Each year I cross out the number, 40, 41, 42, this year it will be ____.

It won't be long, our departure is at hand.

Either we will meet there or in the air. It will not be long.

When I first came to the church, I would hear men of God preaching in their 60's, always talking about how they know it will not be long before they met the Lord. Now I am in my 60's.

Note what Paul says about meeting the Lord.

II Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

SONG SAYS IT.

LET US FIGHT THE FIGHT AND FINISH OUR COURSE, AND KEEP THE FAITH FOR THE LORD.

If we do, someday we will be able to say I am ready to meet the Lord.

The Bible says,

Revelation 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

What works will follow us when we go and meet the Lord?

Only those things for Christ.

Only those things done in obedience to His word.

Only those things we do that are good works according to His word.

Only people who have been affected by our lives.

1-9-21 Evening Message

Intro: I have been preaching messages from this pulpit for over 37 years.

Wed, SS, SM, SE, 4 Messages a week x 52 weeks =208 messages a year.
208 x 37 + over 7600 messages. Used to have a Christian school and every morning we would have devotions with teachers and then chapel on Fridays. Sometimes we had chapel every day with the kids.

We have been doing our yearly calendar now since 98 I think maybe even as far back as early 90's, but back then we had to take our printing to a quick print place.

Remember thinking as a kid what would the year 2000 be like? I'd be 47.

Boy that sounded old to me. And now it is the year 2021. Back then we thought we would be in the age of the Jetsons. Instead of our outer space experiences we have entered the realm of cyber space!

**GETTING A HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE.
NOW AS WE ENTER ANOTHER YEAR I THINK WE NEED
TO GET A HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE.**

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Colossians 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Question we need to ask ourselves is how does God see things?

Imagine, with God there is no time. No beginning or no end.

The more we can view things from God's perspective the better our lives will be.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WE FACE?

1. Finances.
2. Health.
3. People problems.
4. Political tensions and possible infringement on our liberties.

What is God's perspective on these problems?

SEEING THINGS FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE.

I. **GOD SEES THAT WE ARE TOO TROUBLED BY THINGS WE BRING UPON OURSELVES.**

Luke 10:38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

Luke 10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

Luke 10:40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

Luke 10:41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

Luke 10:42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

1. **We often choose to frustrate our schedules and lives with meaningless activities and concerns.**

Who is going to remember what was served at that meal that Jesus attended?
What will matter in eternity?

2. **Why do we choose the lesser thing and neglect the greater things?**

- A. **It is because temporal things seem more pressing at the time.**
- B. **It is because temporal things are easier to get consumed in.**
- C. **It is because temporal things seem to press upon us.**
- D. **It is because the devil is there to tempt us with temporal.**

3. **HOW DO WE MAKE THE BETTER CHOICES CONCERNING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DAY?**

Luke 10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

Luke 10:41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

Luke 10:42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

All proper and eternal choices must be based on the teaching of Jesus and prayer.

Mary put sitting at the feet of Jesus first.

Imagine, even in the day that the early disciples lived, it was easy to take for granted the time spent with the Lord and time spent on mundane worthless activities.

3. *WHAT WAS THE GREAT EVIDENCE THAT MARTHA HAD CHOSEN THE LESSOR THING?*

We can apply this test to our lives to see if we have chosen a wrong thing in our lives:

A. *Note she became critical of Mary.*

When a person is doing right they are too busy to be critical of others.

Application: When you become critical of others it is often because you are discontent with your own life.

When we are discontent with the way we are living or the things that we have chosen to do, then we often look at others and become critical because we think it is their fault we are struggling.

I often tell a wife whose husband is always getting angry at her, he is not angry at you, he is angry at himself. When a husband gets angry at his wife for no reason it is evident he has a Martha spirit. He is frustrated with his life and discontent with himself. Husbands, love your wives as you love yourself. Sometimes a husband who is discontent at work lashes out at his wife because he is frustrated at work. Choose the better thing and life will be better for you and then will be better for those around you.

B. *She became frustrated and unfulfilled in her work.*

She was cumbered about much serving and her daily chores and tasks.

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Matthew 11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

II. GOD LOOKS AT THE END OF OUR LIVES AS BEING MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE BEGINNING.

IT IS MORE IMPORTANT HOW YOUR LIFE ENDS THAN HOW YOU START.

Ecclesiastes 7:8 Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

This morning we talked about finishing our course. Imagine serving the Lord all your life and when you get old, getting bitter and falling away. THAT WILL BE HOW OUR LIFE ENDS. Don't let that happen!

At my senior recital I played the Rachmaninoff: Piano concerto no.2 op.18.

I was playing the 3rd Movement, one of the hardest piano pieces ever written. I had my piano teacher say that he had heard professional classical pianists butcher it. I was playing with a sound track called music minus one. This was an orchestra track you could buy with the piano part missing. When the piano played without the orchestra they put a tick in the background for the pianist to know what speed they could play their Cadenza Solo part. So I edited the recording and put the tick in one track and put the tick in an ear piece so the audience could not hear the annoying tick. Now the piano piece was the last piece of the recital. Previous to that I played about 40 minutes worth of music. Some on the organ some on the piano. So what happened is that when I went to play this piano piece after playing 40 minutes of other music from memory, I sat down at the piano and nodded for Steve Haglin to start the tract. I sat prepared to play this, the most difficult piano piece ever written for the piano by Rachmaninoff.

BUT I FORGOT TO PUT THE EAR PEACE IN MY EAR, SO I BUTCHERED THE INTRO OF THIS PIECE. I TIRED TO PLAY THE HARDEST PIANO PIECE EVER WRITTEN WITH ONE HAND!! But everyone thought it was great because I ended well.

Ezekiel 18:26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

Ezekiel 18:27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

Ezekiel 18:28 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

Ezekiel 18:29 Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

Ezekiel 18:30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Ezekiel 18:31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Ezekiel 18:32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

In God's thinking, it is more important how we end than how we start or what we did in the middle.

The world doesn't look at the way a person ends their life as much as what they did in their prime. God sees that the way we leave this world is more important than the way we came into it!

Luke 12:16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

Luke 12:17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

Luke 12:18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

Luke 12:21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

III. *IT WOULD DO US GOOD TO TRY TO VIEW EVERY ACTIVITY OF THE DAY THROUGH THE WILL OF GOD.*

James 4:13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

James 4:15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

James 4:16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

In this life one thing is for sure. We are all going to face meeting the Lord some day, and we do not know when.

How many friends and relatives do we know who have gone to meet the Lord?

Art Demuysere.

Bob Tinsley.

Year ago when I turned 40 I had a first cousin die. His name was Philip Bissol.

Cousin Philip. When I turned 40 I developed a polyp (which is a small tumor) on my neck. He developed a tumor under his arm. He died and I lived!

Feared it was cancer. At the same time my cousin got cancer and died.

If tomorrow you developed cancer, how important would all your concerns and frustration and problems be?

Do we really have problems?

What is our life? It is but a vapor that appears today and is gone tomorrow.

The most important thing we can do is play out our parts well in this life!

END WELL.

As we said this morning.

LET US FIGHT THE FIGHT.

LET US RUN THE RACE.

LET US KEEP THE FAITH!!