

## **War The Good Warfare**

“This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which led the way to thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience...” (1 Timothy 1:18).

What a charge to give an evangelist! Are not Christians to “Follow after peace with all men”? (Hebrews 12:14). Are not Christians to exercise love, as noted by the Apostle Paul, saying, “Love suffereth long, and is kind” and “is not provoked”? How then does the Apostle Paul instruct the evangelist Timothy to “war the good warfare”?

This passage, like many, must be considered alongside passages of similar context. Paul also said, “If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men” (Romans 12:18): the key being, “If it be possible.” However, the fact remains, that “as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses,” there will be men who “withstand the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate, concerning the faith” (2 Timothy 3:8). Along with these and other such men, of whom the Apostle Paul said, “I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent” (Romans 16:17-18). The evangelist must be ready to “war the good warfare,” and not only the evangelist, but also brethren are to “mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned.”

Satan, as we know, is our enemy. Satan, described as “a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8), is “an adversary” of man: “Satan is not simply the personification of evil influences in the heart,” (Vine’s), nor is the term Satan used in a figurative sense to denote such evil influences, but is a real being set upon the destruction of man. This is affirmed, not only by the temptation of the Lord, when the devil said, “All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me,” but also by the Lord’s words to the wicked, saying, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41): That the Devil and Satan are one and the same entity, was expressed by the Apostle John, saying, “And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan” (Revelation 20:2).

The fact that the child of God is involved in warfare should always lead our thoughts and actions. There’s a spiritual song that says, “This world is not my home, I’m just a passing through, my treasures are laid up, somewhere

beyond the blue.” If this is indeed one’s goal, then understanding the reality of spiritual warfare will give a sense of gravity to life, and the child of God will be ever diligent to “resist the devil, and he will flee from you” and “draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you” (James 4:7-8).

Remember the Apostle Paul’s final words to Timothy, saying, “For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:6-8).