

# Focusing on our Mission: Helping People Make an Eternal Difference

1 Timothy 6:11-19

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But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. <sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. <sup>13</sup> In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you <sup>14</sup> to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup> which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

# 1 Timothy 6:11-19, continued

- <sup>16</sup> who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.
- <sup>17</sup> Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.
- <sup>18</sup> Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. <sup>19</sup> In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

# Our Purpose

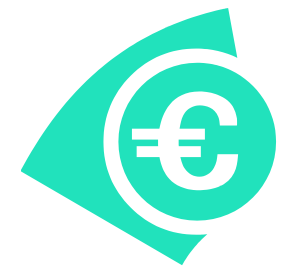
- The Westminster Shorter Catechism: *Q. What is the chief end of man?* The answer is: *Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.*
- Our chief purpose as individual Christians and as a church is summed up in the ideas of knowing God through Christ bringing glory to God.
- To know Him and to make Him known.
- The spiritual nature of the church defines our purposes in spiritual terms: Worship, Evangelism, Discipleship, Fellowship, Service

# Scriptures on our purpose

- Psalm 86:9: "All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name."
- Romans 11:36: "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen."
- Psalm 16:11: "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."
- Luke 2:10: "But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.'"

# Our Struggle

- We each struggle with the worldly attractions – money, power, pride...
- Jesus said, “What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight” (Luke 16:15).
- Our purpose in church is to help people get past their own selfishness and make an eternal difference for God.
- In this passage God commands us to do three things:
  - (1) Engage the enemy,
  - (2) Experience real life,
  - (3) Endure to the end



# 1. Engage the Enemy

**Spiritual soldiers:** “Fight the good fight of the faith.”

**In an ongoing spiritual battle:** “Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power ... We wrestle not against flesh and blood...” Ephesians 6:10-12

**Who need good spiritual weapons:** “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretention that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

# The prepared soldier, Eph 6:14-20



- Belt of truth
- Breastplate of righteousness
- **Feet fitted with gospel**
- Shield of faith
- Helmet of salvation
- **Sword of the Spirit**
- Prayer and teamwork



# How we fight, Romans 10:11-15

- Preach the simple gospel message and ask people to believe
- Pray for the kingdom of God to come on earth in people's hearts. Pray for conversions and transformations.
- Respond to the call to serve (Isaiah 6:8)
- Share your faith where you are (Acts 1:8)
- Send missionaries (Romans 10:14-15)
- Support missionaries, through prayer, giving, encouragement.
- IBC Stuttgart directly supports 9 missionaries (15 including spouses) and partners with four churches.

## 2. Experience Real Life

- “Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses” (1 Tim. 6:12b).
- This is a challenge for us to take seriously the claims of Christianity and live them out in our lives.
- The initial community of our faith experience prepares us for other communities of faith. We experience the life of Christ together and serve Him together.
- God’s method of world evangelization is not just through proclaiming the truth, but by also living it out in our lives and allowing the living Christ to work through us! By taking hold of that which has taken hold of us.

# Quote from Henry Blackaby

God has something for you to do. God invites you to join Him on His mission.

“God sends you where He can best work through you to accomplish His mission ...God knows where to send you to accomplish His mission through you. God is establishing His kingdom locally, globally, and eternally. Only God can determine where you go – unless you think you are smarter than God is or you have your best interests at heart more than He does! Jonah thought he knew his assignment better than God did; look what happened to him!”

# 3. Endure to the End

- “Keep this commandment without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in His own time” (1 Tim. 6:14-15)
- “Without spot” meant not to let the heretical teaching corrupt his proclamation of grace.
- “Without blame” meant not to let the gospel lose its ethical and moral edge.
- It took longer for Paul to explain his meaning because it brought up the sensitive topic of money and giving and generosity.

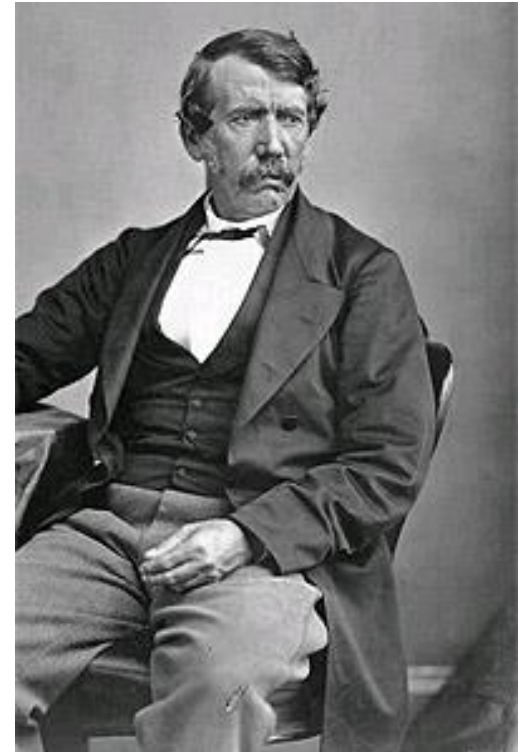
# Warn the wealthy

- Remember, Timothy the man was personally sacrificial but also a bit timid.
- Paul told him in unequivocal terms (es ganz unmißverständlich) to command the wealthy to be generous. And to gently endure in doing this.
- But in so doing he was helping them make an eternal difference for Christ.
- “Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life” (1 Tim. 6:18-19).

# David Livingstone's Legacy

When David Livingstone passed away, his body was returned to England, but his heart was buried in Africa, because that was where his heart had always been. At the foot of a tall tree, simple people in a small village dug a hole and placed the heart of this man they loved and respected.

If your heart was to be buried in the place you loved the most, where would it be? What legacy are you building?



# Principles of spiritual warfare

- The enemy has already engaged us. (1 Peter 5:8)
- The battle is between truth and falsehood. (John 8:32)
- We are also to take the fight to the enemy, proclaiming the gospel of Christ.
- We need grounding in our personal experience of grace (1 Tim. 6:11).
- We need to be grounded in the knowledge and use of the Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17).
- The fight is constant, on-going, and requires faith
- The outcome is not in doubt – God wins! But we may not see complete victory during our lives. (Heb. 11.13)