

The Good Fight of Faith 1 - Pastor Paul M Hanssen  
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Way back in the eons of Eternity Past, God formed a creature which He named “The Star of the Morning”. He was a magnificent creature. He wasn’t just an angel, he was a cherub which is a war-fare angelic being. Now, at that time there was nothing to war against, there was no opposing force in heaven. There was nothing to come against, but yet God made a “war-faring spirit”. He gave him great wings; wings given for the purpose of extending over the Throne of God, and for protecting the Holiness and the Purity of God’s Presence. This was this creature’s mandate. He was to be the covering cherub of God’s Throne. The covering cherub of God’s Presence. We know him as the creature Lucifer, which simply means the star of the morning; the one who draws back the curtains of every new day and to herald the coming, or rising of the sun (The Son). This was his purpose, to herald the coming, the rising, of the Sun of Righteousness and to protect the holiness and the purity and the Righteousness of God, should there arise any apposing force. He was there covering God’s Presence with my wings. This was his calling. He was full of beauty, he was full of wisdom, praise God!, he was full of pipes and tabrets, he was full of music, he was full of praise, he was full of adoration, God made him like this for the purpose of fulfilling his purpose.

The very thing that Lucifer was called *not* to do, he ended up doing. The very creature that God raised to defend Him, turned against Him. The very calling that he had, the call and mandate to defend the Holiness and the Purity, the Righteousness, the Majesty, the justice of God, and the Throne and the Presence of God, he ended up turning against. The very things he was created to defend he ended up despising.

Lucifer became everything opposite to what God had created him to do. He said, “I’m going to exalt my throne”, which lets me know that God gave him a throne, a seat of authority. God gave him a place of authority. He had authority over the angelic host. He was a voice for the Almighty. When the star of the morning arose and came in, there was a hush within the realms of the angelic host. You can imagine this creature and the majesty of his presence. No, he was not like the Almighty, and he was not like His Son, but that’s what eventually made him jealous. “I’m not happy with my little throne, I want that Throne. I want the Throne of God and the Lamb, I want to exalt my throne above all the stars of God, above all the angelic hosts, I want to be God”, became Lucifer’s mantra.

And it was at that moment that the very thing that he was purposed for was reversed, and a war began that day in heaven. A war was set in motion when God said, “oh no, I’m sorry little star of the morning, but you have got to come down out of the sky. You must get off your little throne. I have to cast you down to the earth because I will not allow anyone to take My place”. Glory be to God.

You and I have also been called and chosen by God, clothed with beauty of His Name, filled with Wisdom, filled with worship, and filled with praise. God has given us wings, as it were, to be covering cherubs of the Throne, the Majesty, the Glory, the Power, the Kingship, the Lordship, the Holiness, the Righteousness of God, and the presence of God. This is my mandate. This is my calling. Unfortunately, the very thing that we are called to do, we do the opposite. Instead of defending the Majesty

of God, we attack it. Instead of defending God's Purity and Holiness, we disdain it. Instead of standing up for the Ancient of Days, His Power, His Kingship, His Lordship, His Honour, His Righteousness, His Beauty, His Holiness, His Majesty; we fight the very things that we've been called to defend. Am I preaching to the right people today?

So, that day when God said, "no Lucifer, this is not how this is going to go down, you are not greater than I. You are not going to usurp your authority over Mine". That is the day the war began. And these next three nights, we are going to talk about that war. Because that war still rages today. And that war will not be finished, until like Paul said in 1 Corinthians Chapter 15, until when the end comes, and He has put down all rule and all authority, and all power, and He's put all enemies under His feet. That's when finally there will be in heaven, and in all creation.....peace. When Jerusalem will come as the radiant peace between heaven and earth, and shine it's brilliance, the radiant eternal light that gives peace to all. Until then, I got news for you, we're in a war. It's not over. You can read books out there today and hear preachers preach stating, "well, when Jesus was on the Cross and He said, it is finished, that's the day it was over. It's all over now, just go ahead and live your life, grace will take care of you. Just praise God and be happy". That's what's taught. Yes it is.

Mainstream Christianity says, "Oh saints, it's finished, the battle is over, you don't have to fight anymore, live your life, praise God, claim this and claim that and be whoever you want to be, however you want to be, the battle is won". That's not what Jesus meant when He said "it's finished", because it isn't finished. When Jesus said it was finished, He was proclaiming that the Old Order was finished, and the New Order was now beginning, and that was evidence, because when He said that, the earth began to shake and the veil in the temple was rent in twain and the way from the old to the new was opened.

That is what was finished. The Old Order was swallowed up. The Old Order was done for and we crossed over into a new covenant. You see, Jesus only lived a few moments in the New Covenant in His flesh. That's right. He was born under the Law, He was circumcised under the Law, He grew up under the Law. His whole ministry was under the Law of the Old Covenant, but through the process of all of that, He was trying to reform the minds of the people, preparing them for something new that was about to come, called the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God! This concept had not yet been instilled within them. And so He cried "it's finished". And a new day began, a New Order began, but the war continued, and really just revved. The day that the Blood spilled on Calvary was the day that an overcoming power was released. The day His Blood spilled on Calvary is the day we got equipped for the battle. The day that Blood spilled on Calvary is the day we were able to stand up and say, "get behind me Satan"! It's the day we could put him under our feet. Glory to God!!

But it's not over, and I'm here to tell you tonight, that the closer we get to the coming of the Lord, the more intense the battle is going to become. I hope by God's grace and mercy, through these next couple of days, God will in-still in you a fervour, a passion, a fire and a determination to go to war. If God's people do not rise up in this generation and become the army that He is breathing on us to become, and calling us to become, let me tell you something, you are going to be snuffed out with the

spirit of the Antichrist that is rising in this world today. Oh bless the Lord oh my soul! That Anti-Christ spirit that is on almost everything you see, everything you hear, everything you touch; Anti-God, Anti-Truth, Anti-Purity, Anti-Holiness, anti-everything that's God. It is an Antichrist spirit that dominates in the world today. It's in government, it's in our school system, it's in our homes, it's on our TV's, iPads, iPhones, Samsungs, smartphones, laptops, magazines, books, and media in general. Hollywood has got one purpose, and that is to bring God down. Hollywood is full of an Antichrist spirit, while God's people sit back and say, "it's all finished", it's ALL finished!!!; while God's people are fast asleep and snoring, waking up every now and then, saying, "it's all finished". Wake up – IT IS NOT FINISHED! The war is not over!!!

I have never seen the day of such a sleeping and sluggish church as we see today. We are in contact with many people, ministers, friends of ours, and when you talk to these men and women of God and saints of God, it is very evident to hear in their comments, in their argument, and in their stance, that the Serpent has been busy biting, deceiving and blinding God's people in this generation. That's the truth. And God's people are being lulled to sleep by this spirit that is roaming in the earth and going into homes and churches and families and marriages and wherever you want to look; that spirit is there. And you can say to me, "oh, do we have to war, do we have to fight?" And I will respond with, "what is wrong with you?", "When did you fall asleep"?

When did you ever need to stop fighting? See, most people in the world today, in general, generally speaking, they are peace seeking people. Nobody wants war with their neighbor. If you want war with your neighbor, you need to get your head examined, something is wrong with you. Nobody wants war with their neighbor. Normal people are peace seeking. They want to be quiet and at peace, and just grow old quietly and live a nice life, and have a nice home and get a Social Security cheque and everything is sweet and wonderful; nothing wrong with that. However, that sluggish, apathetic spirit that is out there in the world has spilled over into the spiritual realms; let's just be comfortable, let's not have war, let's make everyone to feel at ease. And in our attempt to have peace, we have laid down the very things that God is called us to defend.

I will walk with anybody, I will walk with you, I don't care what you look like, what you sound like, what you be like, I don't care. If you want to walk with me, I will walk with you. But, DON'T try to change my destiny. Do not touch the Truth I love. If the peace and harmony comes at the cost of compromise, I don't want the peace. Praise God. I love anybody in the body of Christ, it is all the Lord's Body. God has ordained a body in His Church and they are all throughout this city, all throughout our nation, and all throughout the world, praise God. People from different backgrounds and callings and colours, creeds and cultures; all belong to this universal body. And some are called to there and there and there and there, and somewhere else, and I will honour every part of that body. But if some cell from that part of the body wants to come and attack me, where I am and what I know to be the Truth, well, there are cells in me that are going attack back. These defensive cells will say, "oh no, you are not going make me sick, I don't want that cancer, I don't want that sickness, I don't want that disease, get away from me!" Glory to God, Hallelujah!

You know what's wrong with the church today, and I say this with all due respect to the church in general; there is no fight left in our faith. We want the faith, but we don't want the fight. But after tonight, and tomorrow, and Friday, I believe we're going to see a great army rise up. Because I know, this is what God is doing in His church today. There must be warriors. There must be warriors. You say, well, I'm just not called to shake and jump, I'm not even talking about that. That's not the warfare I'm talking about. You can shake and stomp and roll and twirl and you can do all of those things, and the devil looks at you and say's, what are you doing and mocks you, because that's not where the battle is. The battle is out there, the battle is in here (in your mind). You can come to church, as filthy as a rattle snake, having crawled through a mud puddle and then come and shout and stomp and roar and go out just as filthy. And the devil looks at you and says, "you're a joke".

But, if out there(outside) and in here(my mind), you are making a stand for something, when nobody sees you, when you are alone, when the only eyes upon you are the eyes of God, and the tempter comes, and temptation comes, and you make a stand and you say, "I will not, I will defend the holiness and the purity of the Almighty God." Hallelujah!!! If you do that and you come in the house of God and with that kind of anointing on you, you start to stomp and roll and get your hair swaying and your arms flinging, then the devils begin to tremble and they begin to flee, because you got a power on you. Hallelujah! Thank you Lord! Praise God! When the Devil sees you walking in the door he's like, "I remember that one yesterday on the battlefield. I had an encounter with that sister yesterday on the battlefield. I had an encounter with that brother last week on the battlefield, I'm not hanging around here, Goodbye!" Praise God. Oh Jesus, that God may raise up warriors, soldiers, people who are not ashamed to stand for something in this generation!

I'm going to read in 1 Timothy chapter 6. I'm writing a book right now, called the Christian life a war zone. What I'm teaching you, is in this book. It's become so alive to me and so real; the need to stand. I look at the world and what's going on in the world today, and this is unbelievable, how the enemy has been allowed to creep into our lives, so subtle, into our homes, into our marriages, into our families, into our churches, into our thinking, into our demeanor, into society at large, and I'm like where is the church, where's the body of Christ, where are the people of God, is there anybody saying, oh no, and making a stand for something?

1 Timothy 6:6 *But godliness with contentment is great gain.....*

"We could have revival on that verse."

*7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

*8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

*9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, (hello, they fall into many unwise, that means an injurious desires, or lust or desires that will hurt you; that will hurt your life; they will not enhance it; lusts and desires for things that we think are going to make us happy, but actually they're going to hurt you, they will injure you) which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

10 *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred* (or they have gone astray, they have been seduced; it means, they have departed) *from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

11 *But thou, O man of God,* (are there any men or women of God in here? If you are a man or a woman of God, shout to the Lord. Oh come on, let your voice be heard) *But thou, O man (or woman) of God, flee* (now, that word flee, means to run, it means to escape from, it means to shun, it means to resist,..... get out of dodge). *But thou, O man of God, flee these things* ..... (flee away, run away, shun, escape) *and follow after* (or pursue - it means to put on some passion. When you pursue something, you can follow something. You can just follow, but when you pursue, there's a fervour, there is a fire, there is a passion. When you pursue something, you are pressing, you are striving, you are warring, you are fighting, you are breaking through).

Now, he mentions two things here, **flee and follow after**, and these two things are done with one action. While you're fleeing, you are pursuing. While you're running from the things of the world, you're pursuing the things of God. While you are putting the temptations of the world behind you, praise God, and escaping, and shunning, and running away from, you are running *from something* and *towards something else*.

See, we all want God. Is this not why you are here? Because somewhere in here, somewhere inside of you, there is a hunger for God. So we all want God. We want His Presence. We want to go and be the covering cherub of His Throne, we want to get that close to Him, where we have that fulfilling mandate of defending the very Majesty of God with our lives. Yes we do, we long for it. God instilled that in you when He called and chose you. But what we failed to realize, is that to do that, you've got to *flee to pursue*. You have got to leave something behind to get to where you going. You can't get to one place without leaving the other place. You can't play it both ways. And God will allow you for a season to zig zag, back and forth, between the things of the world and the things of the Almighty, like oh, I love this thing, but, I love this too. And back you go..... "oh, I have got to flee today"..... "Oh I love you Lord, I love Your Presence." And He blesses you, He pours out on you. And then back and forth you go. If I'm talking to you, shout Amen! Praise God!

But, it doesn't work like that for very long because you cannot serve two masters. You cannot genuinely love God and His Throne and His Majesty, and His honour, and His beauty and His Holiness and His Righteousness, and His Kingship and His Lordship, and all that He is, the Great Ancient of Days; you cannot approach unto that Presence and then keep turning around. There comes a day that you get that close, where you are either going to stick with it and flee and run to, or you are going to turn back, and you will never be drawn in again.

The Lord told me a few months ago, just before Christmas, He said, son, you are living in the days of My Longsuffering. *This is the season of God's Longsuffering*. He showed it to me like an elastic band that keeps on stretching out.... keeps on stretching out. God has Longsuffering on me and on you and on His people; but there comes a day when He's going to let go, and when that happens we are going

to wonder what hit us, and where am I now? Am I there glued, stuck to the Throne of God as His covering cherub, or am I on the opposite court as an opposer to the very thing I'm called to fight for.

But thou, O man of God, flee these things, run as fast as your little legs will take you, and follow after, pursue with fervour and fire, praise the Lord, after Righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Pursue after the characteristics of the Nature of God. Pursue to be like Him. Pursue with fervour and zeal, not the things the flesh lusts after, that will injure you, but the things of God. It makes you feel good for a moment, the carnal stuff, but it is injuring you. It is injuring your walk with God. It is injuring your approach to God. It is injuring your destiny. It is blinding your vision. It is putting your spirit to sleep.

He said, flee those things and pursue after the character, the righteousness, the holiness, the love, the patience, the meekness of the Almighty God. Hallelujah! Fight....., that's what He said. Fight the good fight of faith. Now, I don't believe that was written there from Paul to Timothy, just for Timothy. It was there for you and for me. It was there because of what Timothy was facing as a young evangelist. We are facing the same in our own journey and walk with God.

*Fight, he said, flee, pursue, and fight. I'm going to fight by fleeing and pursuing.* I'm going to war against the things that want to pull me back, like a magnet to the things that want to bind me and hinder me and blind me, praise God, and put shackles on me. And they look so beautiful and so wonderful and glorious, for the moment, but you don't understand that while you're reaching out to fulfil these lusts, down on your feet, secretly there's a little devil coming from behind with shackles and chains and binding up your feet and the next time you think you want to pursue and run after God, you trip over. This is what happens, because your feet have lost their run.

There are people sitting here in this sanctuary tonight..... there was a time you had a run in your feet. There was a time you had fire on your feet, and there was not a problem for you to flee from, and pursue after. But you find your feet bound today, and you find every excuse that you can come up with, as to why,.....not realizing that the reason why is because you turned your back on the very thing God called you to defend.

I understand what I'm saying, because you see, you're not alone in the boat. We've walked there. We understand the pull. Well, let's just follow peace with all men, doesn't the Bible say that, and I believe that, trust me. I'll do everything in my power to walk with anybody. I don't care. God's put us on the test on that more than once, oh yes. But you see, isn't that what Jesus did. Didn't Jesus fellowship the publicans and the sinners, but did they ever deter Him? Did they ever change His vision of heading up to Jerusalem? Never! Did they ever take Him away from His vision of fulfilling His Father's purpose? Never. The contrary happened. He influenced them. They did not influence Him. And as long as He was influencing them, He said come, follow Me, walk with Me. I want to take you somewhere. He kept walking with them, not a problem.

Oh, but the Pharisees! There is one spirit I cannot tolerate, that Pharisaical, hypocritical, legalistic, bondage spirit that says "I'm better than you and I'm holier

than you and I'm more righteous than you and I dressed right and I look right, and I act right and I've got everything right. I pray three times a day, I read twenty five Scriptures in the morning, thirty at noon and fifty at night. I fast three times a week and sometimes four times. I go to prayer meeting, I go to Bible study, I go to Sunday morning and I go to Sunday night, and I'm in the Bride".

And then there's this one, "Oh my God",..... while smote on his breast....., "Oh God, forgive me, I'm a sinner. I want to turn away ..... I want to turn away!" I wish somebody would praise the living God here tonight! Praise God Hallelujah. Jesus..... Jesus.....Jesus. I bless you Lord, I bless you Lord. Thank you Jesus. Don't lose the fight in your faith. Fight the good fight of faith.

1 Timothy 6:12 *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

Wait a minute. Isn't Eternal Life a free gift? So why do I have to fight for? Isn't Eternal Life something that I receive by faith, by believing in my heart and confessing with my mouth, that Jesus is my Saviour and that's it, that's what the Bible says, that's right, it's what it says. But yet Paul said to Timothy, fight the good fight of faith and lay hold; it means to seize, to capture it .....Eternal Life. You see, Eternal Life was given to you as a gift, but *Eternal Life is maintained by war.*

See, if you think, "once saved always saved" is in your Bible, you better think again. Because there are many people who have been saved, who are going to hell tonight. Do you know why?, they stopped fighting. They stopped fighting the good fight of faith. They stopped seizing that Eternal Life that God had put before them. They stopped pursuing the vision, they stopped running after, they stopped striving for, they stopped fleeing from and pursuing to, and so they lost out on the very thing that God originally gave them. This great gift of Eternal Life. Hallelujah. Fight the good fight of faith and lay hold of Eternal Life. Maintain your course, maintain your destiny. Hallelujah.

All right, let me take you one more place. Go to Ephesians Chapter 6. You know that's the great chapter of the armour of God, and many beautiful and powerful lessons in this chapter. Thank you Lord. So we talked about the good fight of faith, which is to lay hold of that Eternal Call, that Eternal destiny, that Eternal purpose that God has instilled in you from Eternity Past, which is bringing you to Eternity Future to your ultimate call and destiny, which is to defend God.

My only purpose in life is to defend God through my praise, my adoration, my worship, and my love. Defend His Throne, defend His Kingship, defend His Authority. I wonder how many people in the world today, I often wonder this, how many of God's people truly are fulfilling their mandate? We defend our own purpose very readily. We defend our own will, we defend our own cause and our own reason. We defend our mistakes, we defend everything, we are quick to defend ourselves. All those wings come up, and we always shadow ourselves with all kinds of words and ideas, and things coming out of our mouths and make sure everybody knows. You know, I am righteous and you are not! It's your fault whatever it may be.

We are quick to defend ourselves. Where does that defence mechanism come from? God gave it to you. But not for you to defend you, but for you to defend God! Did you ever see Jesus defend Himself?, but He sure did defend His Father. Oh Yes!!! He was a Lamb when it came to defending Himself, but He was a Lion when it came to defending His Father. Hallelujah! He went into that temple like a raving maniac, made a scourge of small cords, fire in His eyes, kicked over those tables, whipped out the sellers..... “what’s the matter with you all. My Father’s house shall be a house of prayer, you’ve made it a den of thieves”, He said. Hallelujah! But when they reviled Him, He reviled not again, like a lamb led to the slaughter. Never lifted up a finger to defend Himself, but always defended His Father. I am called to the same purpose. Oh, how I have failed in my purpose. For years I defended my position, my ministry, my title, my preaching, my doctrine, my mistakes! And then we know how to war, oh yes, then we know how to pick up the phone. Then we know how to go to somebody before service starts and put the finger in their chest .....! But then, when the Majesty of God has been put to the ground, who comes to the defence? Who stands up then and says, “do not make my Father’s house a den of thieves. Do not profane and defile the Holiness and the Majesty of God in the temple”. This is the temple..... me and you, we are His Temple. Hallelujah!

See saints, God wants to raise up an army, an army of believers who will stop being so self-centered where it’s not about me, not about my will, my purpose, my comforts, my desires, my wishes, my throne, my kingdom, or my majesty!!! But it is about God. God’s Kingdom, God’s Throne, God’s wish, God’s desire, God’s reason, God’s Purpose, God’s Plan, God’s Will, God’s Honour, God’s Righteousness, God’s Purity. God, God, God! Where your life becomes filled with God. Where God is All in all! This is the purpose you and I were made ..... it was for Him, not for ourselves! There’s nothing in God’s Word that ever says, “God made you for you”. Nothing. I’m made for Him. He put His Name on me. The Word of Gods says in Isaiah, “those whom He had put His Name upon, for His Glory”. To carry His Majesty, and His Glory, to be Throne bearers, Hallelujah. To carry on our shoulders, the Righteousness and the Majesty and the Holiness of the Almighty God!

And we think we’ve made it somewhere; oh no, we have not come close yet, but, I do believe that in these last days there is going to be an awakening. I do believe that in these last days there’s going to be a shaking. I do believe in these last days there’s going to be a mighty call that’s going to sweep through the Kingdom of God, and people are going to start waking up again and people are going to start fleeing from and pursuing after. They are going start laying down the world, one more time, but not because of a religion, not because of a rule book, not because somebody told them to do so, but because they have a hunger and a desire for the purity and the holiness and the righteousness of the Almighty God.

I do believe that in these last days, God is going to start to pour out His Spirit. I believe the new wine is going to start to flow. I believe there’s going to be a breath placed within the people of God who long for God and a hunger for God, and He’s going to draw them to Himself in a way like we have never experienced before, and it won’t be because of your church, it won’t be because of a doctrine, it won’t be because of a religion,..... it will be because you have found Him; Him whom your soul loves. Hallelujah.

And when that takes place, it will be *no problem to flee and pursue*. It will be no problem to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold of that Eternal destiny and call that God has positioned within your spirit from Eternity Past. You didn't put it there, God did. You didn't choose yourself, Jesus said, "you didn't choose Me, I chose you". Hallelujah. That's what He said. So people, there are some of you, I know, because I just feel it in my spirit; there are people sitting here tonight, you're walking on thin ice. That's not a call of doom, it's not a call of judgment, I'm not here to judge. God is not even sending out a call of judgement . If it was a call of judgement, we wouldn't be sitting here. It's a call of His Mercy. "Come to me, turn away and flee from those things that you know are so easily besetting you. Turn away from those things that you know are so easily weighing you down and binding your feet to where you cannot run and pursue after Me".

It's a choice, if you feel the call, because you can't come unless He's calling. It's not a decision you've just made all of a sudden one night..... and boom! But I know, standing here tonight, and knowing what the Spirit is putting in my own spirit, and the Word He's given me to share with you these next days. I know there are people here God is calling. And He said, come on, I've waited, My longsuffering has been extended upon you, now I'm asking you, turn. Turn and flee and pursue and fight the good fight of faith, that you may lay hold on that great Eternal price and vision that is set before you.

I want you all to bow your heads for a few moments. There is such a spirit of conviction in here tonight. I almost see it like bouncing. I see it bouncing around. It's bouncing on heads and hearts of people. Thank you Lord. And you feel that tug and that pull in your heart, and you say, oh but brother, what does it mean. Do I have to give something up? Yes, Only one thing, *yourself*. That's all.....that's all. *You cannot gain Him and keep you*. You gain Him by abandoning yourself. You gain that presence that your heart is longing for. A place where you melt like butter in the sun, in the rays of the face of God. If this lesson has touched you tonight, and you know God's calling you, and you know this is your day, and this is your season to flee from and pursue after, then stand up.