

THE LAWS OF LEADERSHIP

1 Timothy 6:11-16

LAW #15 Perseverance Is The Price of Leadership

Gary Collins has put together a book called, *You Can Make a Difference*. And the book basically is the story of several people who've really made a difference. Listen to this one:

“Every half hour or so, especially during the summer, a tour bus makes its way through a quiet neighborhood in Nashville and turns onto Curtiswood Drive. The curious passengers strain to see two attractions that sit side by side: the opulent governor's mansion and the house next door where a gracious and refined lady named Sarah Cannon has lived for more than twenty years.

Sarah grew up in a small Tennessee community and joined a touring drama company more than fifty years ago. When the group reached a secluded mountain town in north Alabama, far from any motels, Sarah was put up in a tiny cabin with a delightful little lady who told endless hillbilly tales to her fascinated guest.

Sarah came away imitating her hostess, and the people in the touring group roared with good-natured laughter. It wasn't long before Sarah took her act on stage. She played to rave reviews before the local Lion's Club and a banker's convention, but the pay wasn't very good, she didn't have a steady job, and she hadn't realized that show business can be a tough business. At twenty-seven she thought her career was over, but then came her big break. She was invited to audition for a famous country music show and was given the opportunity to perform late one Saturday night. The lady was an immediate show business success.

Shortly after her fiftieth birthday, Sarah began to experience a painful arthritis. Several years later she developed cancer and faced a double mastectomy. Despite these setbacks she kept performing, encouraged by her strong Christian faith and by the man who had been her husband for more than forty years.

When asked how she would like to be remembered, Mrs. Cannon quoted from memory: "I shall pass through this world but once. Therefore, if there's any good that I can do, I must do it now, not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Then she added, “If you’ve had a life-threatening disease, which arthritis isn’t but cancer is, you want to be sure that you get the most out of life and do the most you can for others. I feel that I was left here for a reason.”

Now passed away, Sarah Cannon was a difference maker. For half a century she has brought laughter into the lives of millions, including many of those people on the tour buses. They know Sarah Cannon by her stage name: The Grand Ole Opry’s Minnie Pearl.”
(pp. 109-110)

You know, when you see people like this and you hear their story you say, Wow! They went through incredible adversity and yet they continued and they didn’t stop. One of the qualities of leadership and one of the things that you appreciate in people more than anything else is what they’ve gone through to get to where they are. And it is indeed a quality of leadership.

Lincoln on Leadership by Donald Phillips describes Lincoln’s adversities but he also says this in a very brief capsule:

“In one instance, when approached by a general for instructions on how to handle a particularly difficult problem, Lincoln told him to use his own best judgment and then related the story of the old farmer who had the task of plowing a large field laden with many tree stumps!

It was a terrible place to clear up. But after a while he got a few things growing—here and there a patch a corn, a few hills of beans, and so on. One day a stranger stopped to look at his place and wanted to know how he managed to cultivate so rough a spot. “Well,” was the reply, “some of it is pretty rough. The smaller stumps I can generally root out or burn out; but now and then there is [a large one] that bothers me, and there is no other way but to plough around it.” Now, General, at such a time as this, troublesome cases are constantly coming up, and the only way to get along at all is to plow around them.

(p. 111)

Ted Engstrom in the The Making of a Christian Leader says:

“Solid, dependable, loyal, strong leadership is one of the most desperate needs in America and in our world today.

We see the tragedy of weak men in important places—little men in big jobs. Business, industry, government, labor, education, and the church are all starving for effective leadership. So today, perhaps more than ever before, there is such a need for leadership and teamwork to cope with the needs.”
(p. 12)

**Law #15 is: Perseverance is the price of leadership
(chapter 6:11-16).**

**Paul saves the best till last. He does make a strong finish.
And these last two studies are so very special.
Remember last week, Paul was describing some vices.
And primarily he was speaking about greed or the love of money.
Now Paul is going to speak to Timothy about virtues he is urged to cultivate. Let's dig into it. Verse 11.**

V.11 “But as for you, O man of God, be fleeing these things; but be going after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.”

The little word “*but*” forms the contrast to the greedy guys that we looked at in the previous verses.

“*But as for you, O man of God.*” Now what Paul is going to do in these remaining verses in the epistle, is to share four exhortations. We will look at two of them today and we will look at two of them again next week in verses 17-21.

The word “*you*” (“*but as for you*”) happens to be the first word that occurs in the Greek text.

Remember what we said last week, that in the Greek text they always emphasize one word at the first of the sentence so it’s in the emphatic position.

“*You.*” “*You*” in contrast to the others “*some people*” in verse 10 are going to chase after riches *but “you, O man of God, be fleeing these things;*” in contrast to those who desire to get wealth. “*But you*” and then he gives him a title, “*O man of God.*”

Now there are only four other people in the Bible that are called “*man of God.*” So Timothy is in great company.

You have Moses, Samuel, Elijah and David.

And now you have Timothy.

It's the honor of being called God's man that Paul focuses on. "*But as for you, O man of God,*" next phrase, "*be fleeing these things.*"

In verses 11 and 12 you have the two verses that deal with the law of leadership that we're looking at.

And there are going to be three imperatives.

If you are fulfilling this law of leadership and this has become a part and parcel of your life,

then you're going to be fleeing,

you're going to be following,

and you're going to be fighting.

Those are the three F's in these two verses that we're going to look at.

All three of them happen to be in the present tense.

That means something going on now and it needs to be going on all the time.

So you can translate it "keep on fleeing,"

"keep on following,"

"keep on fighting."

Something you need to be doing all the time.

"*But as for you, O man of God, be fleeing*" what?

"*these things.*"

And the “*things*” that he is talking about, are the greed and the accumulation of wealth, the love of money and its evils that we looked last week.

Timothy, as a man of God, let there be plenty of space between you and “*these things*” so you don’t get caught up and distracted by “*these things*.”

Now is that a legitimate warning?

Is that a good warning?

Are there any biblical illustrations of people who didn’t listen to what he’s telling him about fleeing “*these things*?” Stop and think about it. There are some incredible ones.

Look at Judas Iscariot. I mean, when the chips were down it’s get all you can, to heck with Jesus.

“I’m going for what Judas can get.”

And he chooses silver to the Savior.

And as a result, he ends up a suicide. It’s serious business.

Ananias and Sapharia. We talked about them last week.

I mean those turkeys sold that real estate deal and then told everybody that they were giving the whole thing and they kept back some for themselves. Both of them became instant fatalities.

And then I think probably the saddest verse in the New Testament is 2 Timothy 4:10.

In the last words of Paul to Timothy in the last chapter he says, Demas has forsaken me because of his love for this present world.

You know, Demas just couldn't pay the price of continuing to serve.

But he had his eyes on a special little condo in Thessalonica and decided he was going to settle in there.

And he could have his own two-camel garage and decided that was the place for him. So he settled down.

And for the love of this present world, he did.

So what is he saying? "*Be fleeing.*" Show them your heels.

Push the panic button, man. I'm outta here.

This is not my lifestyle. "*Be fleeing these things.*"

Fleeing is not weakness. You certainly see that in Genesis 39 when Joseph flees the situation with Potiphar's wife.

v. 11a "*But as for you, O man of God, keep on fleeing these things, but*"

Don't just flee in any old direction, be going after something. That's the next thing. You're fleeing on one hand but on the other, the second imperative, is you're going after 6 things. You're going after: "*righteousness*," "*godliness*," "*faith*," "*love*," "*patience*," "*gentleness*."

Now let's take a look at those six words for just a minute. You know, when you take these six things, if you're a leader who's worth your salt, these are your focus. This is your vision. This is your passion. This is your job description. These are the things that are worthwhile. Go for it! Grab it. Cultivate as many of these as you possibly can. You can say "keep on going after these things." Because you never will completely arrive but keep on going after them. What are they?

First of all "Righteousness." What is "*righteousness*?" Well, you can see the word "*righteousness*" in the Bible, and you always see it from two perspectives. You see it on the horizontal, down here, and you see it on the vertical.

Theologians use the term, every person has a righteous state and he has a righteous standing.

**Romans 1:17 says: “*We are declared righteous.*”
The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us.**

That’s my standing before God.

The minute I become a Christian I’m declared perfectly righteous and that can never change.

But now what’s my state?

Well my state is a long ways from my standing.

Because I’m still living down here in this sin-cursed world.

And I’m far from what I ought to be.

And one of the primary motivations of a believer ought to be in closing the gap. You’re trying to bring your state in accordance with your standing, now you’re never going to get there. So don’t think you’re going to arrive before you get through.

Because Philippians 1:6 says, “*You can be confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will continue to perform it until the day of Christ.*”

But your #1 focus is to follow after this “*righteousness*” and close the gap and be pursuing of this.

Second word is “Godliness.” Now when they say, “*Oh he’s such a godly person.*”

We are not thinking of his character, we are thinking of his conduct. We are thinking of things that this person does.

Now how do you become godly?

2 Corinthians 3:18, “*We all, with an open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit.*”

It’s what we are as a result of an ever deepening relationship. We are pursuing what pleases Him.

And the more you walk with Him the more you please Him.

You ought to know as a result of reading His Word and spending time in His presence the things that delight His heart. Godliness is the result of that. It’s just simply the product of an ever-deepening relationship with Him.

Third word is the word “Faith.”

Now this word means that you are learning to trust Him more. That delights His heart. When you see an adversity and unexplainable circumstances, trusting in Him more. It’s not like you’re running around trying to get more faith in order to make God do something that you want Him to do for you. Faith is just simply increased by recognizing that your level of trust is increasing because the Father can handle it. And that you are walking in His way. So be pursuing faith.

Fourth word: “Love.” Now this is agape love.

This is not phileo love, friendship love or aros, lustful love.

This is self-sacrificial love.

And it is a fruitage of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:22. It’s 1 Corinthians 13. It’s John 13:34-35, “A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another. The world is going to know you by this love you have for one another.”

Now the fifth word is the word that describes the law of leadership. Now you notice it is translated patience but I sure bit my tongue when I translated it that way.

What is the difference between *patience* and *perseverance*. Greek scholars have translated this word and it occurs 49 times in the New Testament as *patience*. “*For you have need of patience.*” “*For you have need of patience.*”

And over and over you see it translated that way.

You know, patience is a good word isn't it?

But what does patience communicate to you?

You're having a real tough time so you just hunker down and let it rain on you.

You know, you don't do anything with patience. It's passive.

I like perseverance. It's a whole lot better because perseverance is the struggle. Perseverance is active.

Perseverance is the quality of life that I don't care what happens, I'm not throwing in the towel and I'm not quitting.

That's the quality of leadership.

And that's what this word means.

The Greek word *Hupomeno*. Remain under the stress.

We need Christian leaders who don't care how high the mountain is,

**don't care how difficult the conflict is,
they don't care how long and how hard the circumstances
are, they won't quit because it's not in their vocabulary.
That's the word that's used here. I want to tell you
something, you delight the heart of God when you hang in
there. And when you stay by the stuff and you persevere.
Let me describe it this way:
It's steadfastness in the midst of adversity.**

Now the last one is the word "Gentleness."

**This is the only place this occurs in the New Testament.
But there is another word translated gentleness that is a
manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).**

**Gentleness is seen in 2 Cor. 10:1. Paul says, "*I came to you in
the gentleness of Christ.*"**

**It's the word in 1 Thess. 2:7, "*We were gentle with you like a
nursing mother.*" It's the fruit of dealing with our
selfishness.**

**When you are broken and the self is put aside, you are going
to become a gentle person. The "*gentleness*" is the result of
dealing with selfishness.**

Let's go to Verse 12

“Fight the good fight of faith; Take hold of eternal life to which you were called and confessed the good confession before many witnesses.”

So Imperative #1: *Keep on fleeing these things.*

for I shall rest in the joy of my Lord.”

(From Descending into Greatness by Bill Hybels and Rob Wilkins, p. 163, taken from a plaque on Lorrie Shaver’s bedroom wall)

You know, that’s it.

A person who’s persevering and is “*fighting a good fight.*”

Maybe you’re sitting here thinking, “*Well, I didn’t even know we were in a fight.*” Well you may have a problem.

You know, the Bible teaches us that we are.

We have a war on three fronts. And a leader recognizes this.

We’re fighting the world, the flesh and the devil in this.

And so he tells Timothy, “*fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of eternal life to which you were called and confess the good confession before many witnesses.*”

Now whereas you had two present imperatives in the previous verse, you have one more present imperative and a aorist imperative here and I’ll explain the aorist in just a minute.

So you have 3 present imperatives.

Understand, imperative means it’s a command.

Three commands in the present tense.

v. 12 *“Keep on fighting the good fight of faith.”*

Why is he saying that to Timothy?

You see, the only way he can say that to Timothy, is because he’s already fighting. He just needs to keep on doing it.

2 Timothy 4:7: *“I fought a good fight, I’ve finished the course, I kept the faith;”*

God delights in finishers, Timothy.

Keep on fighting the good fight.

Now you may say, well that sounds like military terminology. You could take it that way.

But really it’s an athletic terminology.

It’s the word agonizo. We get the word agony.

And any athlete knows the word agony. The agony of defeat.

It’s a struggle, it’s a strain, it’s every nerve.

We need to recognize the fact that we are in a war and that we’re putting everything we have into it.

William Bennett wrote a book called The De-Valuing of America: The Fight for Our Culture and Our Children. Listen to this. This is the neatest thing. It's called "Reflections on being in the fight:"

"Who am I? If you believe what I've been called in print, I am: a medieval knight jousting against an immoral world; Knight of the Right; the Reagan administration's principal breaker of crockery; a bull in a china shop; a black sheep; the Lone Ranger; a loose cannon; a Neanderthal; a bully with a pulpit instead of a leader in a bully pulpit; the man who put the bully back into the pulpit; the cowboy in the capital; a noisy ideologue; a motor-mouth; a pain in the neck; sexist; imperialist; bourgeois; ethnocentric; selfish; solipsistic; [whatever that means] secretary of ignorance; secretary of private education; secretary smarty-pants; secretary of religion; heaven-sent to silence the heathen; an ayatollah; Bennett the Hun; propagandist and ideological gangster; an ideological samurai; a divisive fearmonger; elitist; populist; someone who rushes in where politicians fear to tread; a political pimp; a husky brawler; a walking rock and roll encyclopedia; philosopher and tough Irish cop; a pit bull with a brain; a tornado in a wheat field; someone

who combined the ideals of Erasmus with the tactics of an alley fighter; the Cabinet's resident Dennis the Menace.”
(p. 225)

**Now after that big list, you'd think he's saying,
“Please pray for me and feel sorry for me.”
Do you want to hear what he says?**

“During ten years in politics, I have been called a lot of things and I've been at the center of some political storms. But I have had a great time, and I have no large regrets.”
(p. 225)

Fourth command then is in the aorist tense and could be translated like this: *get a grip on the eternal life to which you were called, and confess the good confession before many witnesses.*

You might think, “Is there a sense of him losing it?”

No, not at all. Paul's just saying, get a real good hold on your relationship to Christ because there's going to be a lot of pressure to knock your relationship to Christ out of your hand.

Now, let me put two other verses beside this.

Although the same words are not used, the thought is there.

Philippians 3:12-14:

“Not that I have already obtained it, or laid hold of it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which I was also laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Phillip Keller wrote a book called Sky Edge. It’s an old man who has retired to the mountains and in the mountains he is now reflecting on many of the lessons of life. Listen to what he says:

“There has to be that deep grounding of our lives in the very bedrock of Christ’s character if we are to endure the blasts of adversity.

Christian leaders speak too easily, too glibly, too romantically of “getting onto higher ground with God.” It is

almost as if they are inviting their listeners to take a stroll into a summer rose garden.

To get onto a higher life with the Risen Christ demands great discipline from the disciple. It calls for separation from the world's soft and cozy associations. It means strong self-denial, standing alone in noble, lofty living. It entails suffering, sorrow, pain and the drastic endurance of adversity."

(p. 84)

Now let's look at verse 13.

V.13 "I am giving you a charge in the presence of God, who causes all things to live, and Christ Jesus, the one who in His testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession;"

Paul is saying, "*I'm getting ready to charge you young Timothy and I want to charge you in the presence of God the Father*" Who does what? "*Who causes all things to live.*"

He's the source of life.

He's the reason you have physical life.

And He's also the sustainer of life, Timothy.

I'm challenging you in the presence of God that you do these things. You have a good witness.

Let's look at John 18:37. "Pilate said to him," "So you are king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Now what's the *charge*?

The content of it is in Verse 14.

V. 14 "to keep the principles stainless, above reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,"

The *principles* are divine truth. It's the Scripture.

Keep them stainless my friend!

Keep the *principles stainless* and then pass them on.

Be *above reproach* and do this until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now when you come to the last two verses Paul starts singing the doxology.

Verse 15. *“which in His own time He shall show forth (what)—the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who are reigning as kings and Lord of those who are ruling as lords;”*

**Now we focused on the Son in verse 15,
He’s King of kings and Lord of Lords,
now it’s the Father in Verse 16.**

Verse 16. *“Who alone is having immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; whom no man has ever seen nor is able to see, to whom be honor and power forever, Amen.”*

There’s 3 things that are said about Him:

He’s immortal, He’s inscrutable, and He’s invisible.

He’s immortal in that He is the author of life.

He’s gained victory over life in the resurrection of Christ.

He’s inscrutable. This means he is inhabiting in light and is unapproachable.

He’s “dwelling in unapproachably whom no man has ever seen, of course, nor is able to see. To whom the honor and power forever and ever. Amen.”

What a great doxology. (a liturgical expression of praise to God)

**Listen to this from, The Making of a Christian Leader
by Ted Engstrom.
(p 120)**

**“The World Needs Men...
who cannot be bought;
whose word is their bond;
who put character above wealth;
who possess opinions and a will;
who are larger than their vocations;
who do not hesitate to take chances;
who will not lose their individuality in a crowd;
who will be as honest in small things as in great things;
who will make no compromise with wrong;
whose ambitions are not confined to their own selfish
desires;
who will not say they do it “because everybody else does it”;
who are true to their friends through good report and evil
report, in adversity as well as in prosperity;**

who do not believe that shrewdness, cunning and hard-headedness are the best qualities for winning success; who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for the truth when it is unpopular, who can say “no” with emphasis, although all the rest of the world is saying “yes.”

There are 10 lessons that come out of this study.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

#1: There are things that we ought to be constantly fleeing in our lives.

#2: There are 6 things we ought to be constantly following after: righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.

#3: We need to keep on fighting the good fight of faith.

#4: It delights the heart of God when He sees His children persevering.

#5: Perseverance is the price of leadership.

#6: Let your life and your lip give a good confession for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

#7: Timothy is charged to keep the principles stainless and above reproach until the coming of Christ.

#8: Jesus Christ is going to come in His own time.

Lesson #9: The Savior is the Supreme Sovereign.

#10: Immortality, inscrutability, and invisibility characterize the Father.

STUDIES IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

PART II - 1 TIMOTHY 4-6

"The Laws of Leadership"

Key verse 4:12: *"Let no one look down on you (think little of) because you are young; but keep on becoming an example of the believers in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity."*

LAW NUMBER FIFTEEN-Perseverance Is the Price of Leadership

1 Timothy 6:11-16

Key verse 6:11

Notes

v. 11 But as for you, O man of God, be fleeing these things; but be going after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

v. 12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and confessed the good confession before many witnesses.

v. 13 I am giving you a charge in the presence of God, who causes all things to live, and Christ Jesus, the one who in His testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession;

v. 14 to keep the principles stainless, above reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

v. 15 which in His own time He shall show forth—the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who are reigning as kings and Lord of those who are ruling as lords;

v. 16 Who alone is having immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; whom no man has ever seen nor is able to see, to whom be honor and power forever, Amen.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read 1 Timothy 6:11-16 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. What six things does Paul command Timothy to go after, according to verse 11?**
- 3. What "fight" is Timothy to fight?**
- 4. What is Timothy to "take hold of," according to verse 12?**
- 5. In whose presence is Paul giving Timothy "a charge," according to verse 13?**
- 6. How long is Timothy to stay at it, according to verse 14?**
- 7. When is Christ going to be revealed, according to verse 15?**
- 8. How is the Lord Jesus described in verse 15?**
- 9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?**
- 10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**