

Battle Scarred

August 25, 2024

II Tim 4:6; II Cor 11:23

No.2

In our series, "The Hidden Life" we are looking at the reality of our relationship with God, especially during the things, the hard things that we go through.

It is the testing of our faith, that reveals the reality of our faith.

Like many people have done, and all people will do, the Apostle Paul finds himself at the end of his life.

Did you ever wonder what your thoughts will be if you get the opportunity to die on your deathbed.

Fortunately,

We have the thoughts of a great man of faith.

The Apostle Paul is nearing the end of his life.

An honest approach to a real life situation.

II Tim 4:6 *For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.*

"poured out" *spendo* - as a libation, devote, (spend)

The Roman meal ended with a type of sacrifice. A cup of wine was taken and poured out to the gods.

ie.

The day is ended; it is time to rise and go and my life must be poured out as a sacrifice to God.

Paul didn't think of himself as going to be executed.

Rather,

He thought of himself as going to offer his life to God.

v.6 *the time of my departure has come.*

"departure" loosening an animal from his

burden

pulling up the tent stakes

loosening the ropes off a ship's

mooring

All of these signify true freedom from toil.

Paul is not afraid to sail out into the deep sea of eternity.

The Apostle Peter also understood this reality:

II Pe 1:14 I know that *that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.*

Perhaps,

Peter is reflecting on a previous conversation Jesus had with him;

Jn 21:18 *Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow*

old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."

*V.19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He **said to him, "Follow Me!"**

3 important factors here:

1. Death will come
2. Death is for God's glory
3. So follow Jesus until it does

Here;

Paul is passing the baton to Timothy.

Every generation must continue the work of the previous generation.

Now; he talks about his battle scars.

I Tim 4:7 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;*

Three things Paul mentions:

1. the fight – he fought it
2. the course – he finished it
3. the faith - he kept it

1. I have fought the good fight

"Fought" *agonizomai* – contend

labor fervently

we get "agonize"

it's a "good" fight – *kalos* – observable good

The origin of our conflicts

Eph 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

"struggle" *palle* – wrestle,

from *ballo* – to throw

When someone throws you, you get hurt.

A wrestling match is two people in a contest, each one trying to pin the other.

Some of you have been there; some are there right now.

Sometimes it gets more intense.

I Cor 9:26 ... I box in such a way, as not beating the air;

A missed punch is an energy drain.

Ask yourself, "What have I been swinging at lately?"

"What am I fighting that is a complete waste of time?" Pick your battles. Something are not worth fighting about.

2. The course *I have finished the course,*

This is a course runners follow

I Cor 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Have a winner's attitude.

Paul said, I ran my race; and I finished it.

I didn't quit. I wasn't bought.

And how did he do it?

How does one finish the race, especially when it goes uphill and it gets so hard?

Heb 12:1-2 says;

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance (burden) and the sin (apostasy/unbelief) which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Keep your eye on the finish line

v.2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

1. He fought the good fight

2. He finished the course

Now;

3. He kept the faith

Keeping the faith is so important when you're in a battle.

Here is something you may have not considered: FAITH PRODUCES
BATTLE SCARS

Jesus wasn't shy about telling those who wished to follow him to "count the cost."

II Cor 11:23 Paul is comparing himself to the other apostles:

Are they servants of Christ?--I speak as if insane--I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.

v.24 *Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 195 lashes in all*

(imagine what his back looked like)

v.25 *Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.*

v.26 *I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;*

Many of you can identify with this:

v.27 *I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.*

v.28 *Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.*

He wasn't just self-concerned but he was also concerned with the welfare of others.

I like this part:

v.31 *The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.*

Battle scars:

Faith produces them.

We live in a world of sin and death.

Man has a sinful nature.

Satan deceives the whole world.

You are going to get hurt!

When King Arthur's knights returned from the crusades he lined them up and inspected their wounds.

If he came across a knight that had no wound, he told him, "Go back and get your scar."

God will not look you over for medals, degrees or diplomas, but for scars.

Is there a more noble decoration and sign of faithfulness and loyalty than a scar received for the One you are serving?

You're in heaven, surrounded by a company of the faithful.

Would you like to be there and see yourself as the saint who never knew sorrow?

NO! You would be a stranger in a sacred brotherhood.

Therefore,

To be in the battle on earth is to join the faithful in heaven. Scars are a sign of loyalty to God and they signify you stayed in the battle. They put you in good company in heaven.

Fight the good fight, finish your course, and keep the faith.