

## FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful.

### Why Is Life So Hard

Job 7:1 "Is this not the struggle of all humanity? A person's life is long and hard, like that of a hired hand,

2 like a worker who longs for the day to end, like a servant waiting to be paid.

### The Reason Life Is Hard

Romans 5:12 When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was wounded and crushed for our sins. He was beaten that we might have peace. He was whipped, and we were healed!

6 All of us have strayed away like sheep. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the guilt and sins of us all.

Proverbs 20:9 Who can say, "I have cleansed my heart; I am pure and free from sin"?

### The Results Of Our Rebellion

#### Natural \_\_\_\_\_ And Deformities

Romans 8:20 Against its will, everything on earth was subjected to God's curse.

21 All creation anticipates the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

22 For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

#### Physical Decay And \_\_\_\_\_

Ecclesiastes 8:8 None of us can hold back our spirit from departing. None of us has the power to prevent the day of our death. There is no escaping that obligation, that dark battle....

Ecclesiastes 12:1 Don't let the excitement of youth cause you to forget your Creator. Honor him in your youth before you grow old and no longer enjoy living.

2 It will be too late then to remember him, when the light of the sun and moon and stars is dim to your old eyes, and there is no silver lining left among the clouds.

3 Your limbs will tremble with age, and your strong legs will grow weak. Your teeth will be too few to do their work, and you will be blind, too.

4 And when your teeth are gone, keep your lips tightly closed when you eat! Even the chirping of birds will wake you up. But you yourself will be deaf and tuneless, with a quavering voice.

5 You will be afraid of heights and of falling, white-haired and withered, dragging along without any sexual desire. You will be standing at death's door. And as you near your everlasting home, the mourners will walk along the streets.

1 Corinthians 15:22 Everyone dies because all of us are related to Adam, the first man. But all who are related to Christ, the other man, will be given new life.

#### Emotional \_\_\_\_\_ And Disappointment

Ecclesiastes 1:13 I devoted myself to search for understanding and to explore by wisdom everything being done in the world. I soon discovered that God has dealt a tragic existence to the human race.

14 Everything under the sun is meaningless, like chasing the wind.

15 What is wrong cannot be righted. What is missing cannot be recovered.

#### Relational Distance And \_\_\_\_\_

Ecclesiastes 4:1 Again I observed all the oppression that takes place in our world. I saw the tears of the oppressed, with no one to comfort them. The oppressors have great power, and the victims are helpless.

#### Financial And Vocational \_\_\_\_\_

Ecclesiastes 5:10 Those who love money will never have enough. How absurd to think that wealth brings true happiness!

15 People who live only for wealth come to the end of their lives as naked and empty-handed as on the day they were born.

16 And this, too, is a very serious problem. As people come into this world, so they depart. All their hard work is for nothing. They have been working for the wind, and everything will be swept away.

17 Throughout their lives, they live under a cloud - frustrated, discouraged, and angry.

Genesis 3:17 And to Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate the fruit I told you not to eat, I have placed a curse on the ground. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it.

18 It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains.

19 All your life you will sweat to produce food, until your dying day. Then you will return to the ground from which you came. For you were made from dust, and to the dust you will return."

### Spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ And Darkness

Isaiah 59:1 Listen! The LORD is not too weak to save you, and he is not becoming deaf. He can hear you when you call.

2 But there is a problem - your sins have cut you off from God. Because of your sin, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.

Ephesians 4:17 With the Lord's authority let me say this: Live no longer as the ungodly do, for they are hopelessly confused.

18 Their closed minds are full of darkness; they are far away from the life of God because they have shut their minds and hardened their hearts against him.

19 They don't care anymore about right and wrong, and they have given themselves over to immoral ways. Their lives are filled with all kinds of impurity and greed.

### The Right Response

God \_\_\_\_\_ His Son

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

17 God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it.

We Must Accept Him As The \_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 1:18 For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver.

19 He paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.

20 God chose him for this purpose long before the world began, but now in these final days, he was sent to the earth for all to see. And he did this for you.

21 Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And because God raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory, your faith and hope can be placed confidently in God.

John 16:33 I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

---

#### Provides Hope For Eternal Life

1 Corinthians 15:16 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised.

17 And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless, and you are still under condemnation for your sins.

18 In that case, all who have died believing in Christ have perished!

19 And if we have hope in Christ only for this life, we are the most miserable people in the world.

20 But the fact is that Christ has been raised from the dead. He has become the first of a great harvest of those who will be raised to life again.

21 So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, Adam, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man, Christ.

22 Everyone dies because all of us are related to Adam, the first man. But all who are related to Christ, the other man, will be given new life.

50 What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These perishable bodies of ours are not able to live forever.

51 But let me tell you a wonderful secret God has revealed to us. Not all of us will die, but we will all be transformed.

54 When this happens - when our perishable earthly bodies have been transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die - then at last the Scriptures will come true: "Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

56 For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power.

57 How we thank God, who gives us victory over sin and death through Jesus Christ our Lord!

58 So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steady, always enthusiastic about the Lord's work, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.

Hebrews 11:1 What is faith? It is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. It is the evidence of things we cannot yet see.