

2 Tim 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

When look to the Scriptures for
“the good fight”, we immediately
recognize it as “the fight of faith.”

1 Tim 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

We have been called to fight the
good fight.

II Th 2:13 But we should always
give thanks to God for you, brethren
beloved by the Lord, because God
has chosen you from the beginning
for salvation through sanctification
by the Spirit and faith in the truth. 14
And it was for this He called you
through our gospel, that you may
gain the glory of our Lord Jesus
Christ.

God has called us, as brethren
loved by the Lord, by the gospel
— we are to believe — have “faith
in the truth.”

When we take hold of the eternal
life, we make the “good
confession”.

Rom 10:9 that if you confess with
your mouth Jesus as Lord, and
believe in your heart that God
raised Him from the dead, you
shall be saved; 10 for with the
heart man believes, resulting in
righteousness, and with the mouth
he confesses, resulting in
salvation.

Paul goes on to say, “I have finished the course.”

There are two possible “courses” for us to run. One is “the course of this world.”

Eph 2:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

The other course is to walk in
Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 13:5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you – unless indeed you fail the test? 6 But I trust that you will realize that we ourselves do not fail the test. 7 Now we pray to God that you do no wrong; not that we ourselves may appear approved, but that you may do what is right, ...

To “do no wrong ... but ... what is
right.”

In order for a ship to “stay the course,” it is necessary to make a large number of usually small corrections. The course must often be checked and compared to the maps. Alterations in response to wind and current must be made to “stay the course.”

If you've ever read a book or seen a movie about sailing ships across the sea, you know that it was easy to lose your way when the guiding points in the sky could not be seen. One of the most important things to a Captain were the charts. Without them you were lost.

The course faith of which Paul speaks requires frequent checks on our lifestyle and adjustments as we find we have strayed from “the course.”

Think about your life and the points which guide you. The only way to make it to the destination is to keep the course, and if you have to make a detour, return to the course.

“To keep the faith”.

Rom 2:7 to those who by
perseverance in doing good seek
for glory and honor and
immortality, eternal life;

Paul didn't keep the faith for just a little while. Of those who are baptized, over 50% fall away.

Most within the first year.

Others may linger for several years. Paul kept the faith – until death.

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That fight of faith is a fight for
the faith.

Jude 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

Acts 6:8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. 9 But some men from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen. 10 And yet they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

Acts 9:22 But Saul kept
increasing in strength and
confounding the Jews who lived
at Damascus by proving that this
Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 18:27 ... and when he had arrived, he helped greatly those who had believed through grace; 28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

As we reflect on what Paul did
“for the gospel”, we recognize
that we must “strive for the faith
of the gospel.”

Phil 1:27 Only conduct
yourselves in a manner worthy of
the gospel of Christ; so that
whether I come and see you or
remain absent, I may hear of you
that you are standing firm in one
spirit, with one mind striving
together for the faith of the
gospel;

As we examine our course, we need to see what kind of corrections we need to keep the faith.

The earth seems to be shifting beneath our feet
– the fight against abortions has long been lost
– homosexual unions on the front pages of every paper – there is no item of sexuality that is not discussed on the nightly news or in multiple TV shows – we see the opposite sex dressed in clothes that were once seen only in bedrooms on a regular basis on TV – language has sunk to lows of garbage

I'm sailing for home on the old
ship of Zion.

I see the banks along the shore
above the misty foam.

Savior guard my footsteps till
I'm safe within the harbor.
and dangers ne're will threaten
where Satan comes no more.

Where have you placed your trust? Are you still focused on the old ship of Zion – the church of our Lord? Or have the distractions of the world, TV, sports, cars or jobs, made you overlook the needs of the ship and its sailors?

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, (23) to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, (24) and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, ...

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Will you be with him there?

Act 22:16 And now what are
you waiting for? Get up, be
baptized and wash your sins
away, calling on his name.'