

## 1 Timothy 6,11–16

*But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen*

Let me share a few perspectives from this reading:

First of all ... ***the good confession.***

The expression is mentioned twice in the text: the good confession of Jesus and the good confession of Timothy.

How did Jesus make the good confession in front of Pontius Pilate? Well, we remember how Pilate asked Jesus about his status as a king and about his kingdom. Jesus replied: *You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.* Indeed, Jesus made the good confession, He is the Son of God, the Saviour, the King of the truth.

Timothy is urged to fight the good fight of the faith and to take hold of the eternal life in accordance with the God-given call. The process is explained as follows: ... *when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.* This testimony reminds us of what is included in the promise given at the pastor's ordination: the confession before God Almighty and with the accountability, as far as the ministry is concerned, before God on the judgement day.

The apostle also puts emphasis upon that there is correspondence between confession and ethics: ... *pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.*

So far ... ***the good confession.***

Secondly: ***Keep the word and forward it in mission outreach.***

Paul encourages Timothy ... *keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Scripture is full of admonitions; stick to the word, keep closely to the testimony, God's teachings, and so forth. Remember for example Psalm 119. The Book of Revelation is dealing with the same theme and issue. The angel, the church leader, in Philadelphia is given a promise: *I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you*

*have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. Later on he is informed: Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.*

Keep the word ... kept my command ... hold on to what you have ...!

***Keep the word and forward it in mission outreach.***

Thirdly: ***The invisible will become visible.***

Our passage ends with a doxology, thanksgiving and praise to God in His power and glory: ... *God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever.*

This is a wonderful statement and promise, the invisible will become visible. In due course the Lord will reveal his glory ... *what no eye has seen ... the things God has prepared for those who love him.*

The apostle John has a testimony concerning this matter in one of his letters, *Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

***The invisible will become visible***, when we will go from faith to sight – when we will be away from the body and be at home with the Lord.

Let us pray: *Heavenly Father, we do thank and praise you, especially for the good confession of your beloved Son Jesus Christ, including his suffering and death for our sins, and his resurrection for our justification. We also respect and honour the good confessions of your apostles, servants and witnesses throughout the history of the Church. We ask you – grant us your Holy Spirit, your grace to make the very same good confession in accordance with your Holy Word. We furthermore ask you, through your grace, to keep us closely to your Word, in order that we, according to your given commission, might proclaim the Gospel to people near and far away: here in Finland, in Sweden and all Nordic countries – to the end of the world. We thank and praise you, that the invisible in due course will become visible, that your people – when Christ will return in glory and through the resurrection – will encounter with you, see you face to face in glory. Lord, we do long and look forward to that day!*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.*