

# **PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES**

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**ENEMIES OF FAITH**

**STUDY GUIDE**





# **ENEMIES OF FAITH**

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **I Timothy 6:12**

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

## **THEME**

We are called to fight the good fight of faith. If we are to fight, there must be an enemy. The enemies of faith are those things that try to move us from the Word of God.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. We must understand the fight of faith; otherwise, we will not successfully know how to fight the “good fight.”
  - 1. The battle, which is faith versus doubt, takes place in the soul of man. (II Corinthians 10:3-5)
  - 2. The actual battle is reason versus God’s Word.
  - 3. Meditation has a direct influence upon the choice made between reason and the Word of God.
    - a. The material we receive into our hearts has been properly called “food for thought.”
    - b. This “food for thought” is literally our source of meditation; therefore, we must guard our hearts with all diligence, listening only to that which is profitable for us.
  - 4. In our warfare, we must utilize the full armor of God, realizing that our weapons are not carnal. (Ephesians 6:10-18)
  - 5. All thoughts must be brought into alignment with God’s Word.

6. We must control our thinking; God will not control our thinking for us. (Philippians 4:8)
- B. Fighting requires an opponent; consequently, we must recognize our opponent.
1. We know that Satan is our ultimate enemy.
  2. We must constantly be aware of the operation of Satan, recognizing his approach as he appeals to us through our reasoning and our senses.
  3. Our fight is not with Satan per se, for he has been conquered; our fight is capturing thoughts contrary to God's Word.
  4. The Word must be in us in abundance in order for us to successfully overcome our enemy.

## **II. VARIOUS ENEMIES OF FAITH**

- A. Doubt, obviously, is an enemy of faith.
1. Doubt refuses to believe God's Word; faith believes God's Word.
  2. Doubt believes in failure; faith believes in success.
- B. Reasoning is also an enemy of faith.
1. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned; therefore, they cannot be understood through reason.
  2. Reasoning comes forth from the soul, not the spirit; consequently, reasoning cannot discern the will of God.
  3. Joshua and the children of Israel provide an excellent example of reason versus God's Word. (Joshua 3:9-17)
    - a. Joshua told the people to cross the Jordan River, although it was at flood stage.
    - b. Joshua put his trust in God's Word.
    - c. The priests (the spiritual leaders) went into the river first.

- d. The priests obeyed God and defied reason.
  - e. If the nation of Israel had relied on reason, they would have failed just as their forefathers failed.
- 4. We have the written Word, but unless we put the Word in our hearts, we will give place to reason.
  - 5. Once we have put God's Word in our hearts, we must act upon the Word and defy reason.
- C. Senses can also be an enemy of faith.
- 1. We should not be led by our senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, and tasting; we should be led by the spirit.
  - 2. The senses are seated in the body; consequently, they give a physical report.
  - 3. Symptoms operate through the senses, but remember that the spirit and the senses do not always agree.
  - 4. Circumstances are relayed to us by the senses working with reasoning.
  - 5. The senses always give a reasonable report. (We need a spiritual report!)
- D. Fear is an enemy of faith.
- 1. Fear comes by listening to reason. (Numbers 13:27-33)
    - a. The twelve spies all saw the same things.
    - b. Ten spies believed the enemy to be more powerful than God.
    - c. Joshua and Caleb had faith in God and believed the enemy to be less powerful than God.
    - d. The majority ruled; the Israelites followed reasoning and died in the wilderness.
  - 2. Fear comes from Satan. According to II Timothy 1:7, the Spirit given unto us by God is not fear.

3. God has given us a Spirit of power, love, and a sound mind; therefore, we have the ability to cast out fear. (I John 4:18)
4. Fear is the opposite of faith.
5. Fear believes that God's Word will fail.
6. Fear believes that the worst will happen.
  - a. Fear believes in circumstances; faith believes in God's Word.
  - b. Fear believes, but it believes the wrong report.
  - c. All of us exercise faith in something. That faith can either be positive or negative. (Negative faith is fear.)

E. Ignorance is an enemy of faith.

1. We are all ignorant in some areas; ignorance is simply lack of knowledge. (Hosea 4:6)
2. There is a difference between lack of knowledge and willful ignorance. (I Corinthians 14:38)
3. One cannot believe in something he does not know. (Romans 10:14)
4. One who does not know the benefits given unto him by God will not enjoy those benefits.
5. One who is ignorant of the Word will not hear the Word speak in the midst of adverse circumstances. (Remember! Faith comes by hearing.)
  - a. When a crisis comes, what do we hear?
  - b. Our faith is based upon what we hear, not what we have heard.
    - (1) Do we hear the words of the circumstance, or do we hear the Word of God?
    - (2) We will demonstrate where our faith is by our actions.

- (3) We believe; therefore, we speak. What we speak reveals what we believe.
  - (4) Faith is the substance that will produce the manifestation; it is not the manifestation, per se.
6. If we know that faith comes by hearing, then it is important that we know how to get the “hearing” that produces faith.
- a. Hearing comes by the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)
  - b. We must keep the Word fresh in our hearts so that it may constantly speak to us.
  - c. “I believed, and therefore have I spoken” is a spiritual principle of which we must make ourselves aware. (II Corinthians 4:13)
  - d. What we have in our hearts in abundance is what we will hear. (Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Matthew 12:34)
  - e. The heart is the critical area of man’s life.
  - f. Since faith comes by hearing, we must be sure that we are hearing the right message.
  - g. Hearing precedes faith, but the hearing that produces faith is internal, not external.
- F. Wrong confessions in both praying and saying hinder us.
- 1. We are snared when we speak contrary to the Word of God. (Proverbs 12:13)
  - 2. The tongue of the wise is health. (Proverbs 12:18)
  - 3. Our words can work for us, or they can work against us. (Proverbs 13:2)
  - 4. Our words have the power to heal or to hurt. (Proverbs 15:2 & 4)
  - 5. Our words will be pleasing to God when we say what He has already said. (Psalm 19:14)

6. May the Lord set a watch at our mouths and keep the door of our lips. (Psalm 141:3)

G. A sense of unworthiness is an enemy of faith.

1. Some people refuse to receive because they do not feel deserving.

a. None of us deserves remission of sin, but it would certainly be foolish to reject salvation just because we feel undeserving.

b. As long as we are “in Christ,” we are worthy through His worthiness.

2. One who operates in the area of unworthiness is trying to receive from God by works.

3. Jesus is our worthiness; therefore, we must consider Jesus, not ourselves. (II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 4:24)

H. Pride is an enemy of faith.

1. We are proud when we expect to receive because of who we are or what we have done.

2. We are proud when we are too embarrassed to say what God says.

a. Pride will hold us back and keep us from receiving God’s best.

b. We should always operate in God’s best; consequently, we must see ourselves as God sees us, and we must say about ourselves what God says about us.

I. Impatience is an enemy of faith.

1. Patience is a working partner to faith. (Hebrews 6:10-15; 10:35-36)

a. We receive the promises of God through **faith** and **patience**.

b. We must stand until we receive that for which we are standing.

- c. If we are confident that God cannot fail, and if we know what God has already said about the matter, then we can rest assured that it will come to pass. (“For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.” Psalm 119:89)
    - d. Those who wait upon the Lord renew their strength. (Isaiah 40:31)
  - 2. Let patience have her perfect work. (James 1:4)
    - a. Tribulation (pressure) works patience. (Romans 5:3)
    - b. Patience matures and perfects us.
    - c. Impatience works against us; therefore, it is an enemy of faith.
  - 3. Patience is fruit of the spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
  - 4. We must not grow weary in well doing. (Galatians 6:9)
  - 5. When we have done all we can do, we are to stand strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.
- J. Rebellion is an enemy of faith.
  - 1. Rebellion is **refusing** to believe or act upon the Word of God.
  - 2. Tradition can cause people to reject the benefits of God’s Word. If we allow men’s traditions to take pre-eminence over God’s Word, we are in rebellion.
  - 3. In scripture, rebellion is compared to witchcraft. (I Samuel 15:22-23)
    - a. Both rebellion and witchcraft are disgusting in the sight of God.
    - b. Both rebellion and witchcraft draw their information from a source other than God.
    - c. Both rebellion and witchcraft are demonic.
- K. Substitutes for faith can also be enemies of faith.
  - 1. Hope is often used as a substitute for faith.

- a. Hope sets the goal, but it does not provide the substance to obtain the goal.
  - b. Hoping and praying are not worth much because substance is lacking in the prayer. (Mark 11:24)
  - c. Faith is the substance; hope is the goal. Both are necessary.
  - d. Any substitute for faith is an enemy of faith.
2. Believing instead of knowing is a form of hope that works against faith. (II Corinthians 4:13)
- a. “I believe He can if He will” is not a faith statement.
  - b. “I believe He will someday” is not a faith statement.
  - c. Faith knows; therefore, when you pray, believe!
  - d. Faith is **always** present tense!
- L. Mental assent, which is really faith without works, is an enemy of faith.
- 1. Faith and works must be coupled together. (James 2:14-26)
  - 2. Mental assent substituted for faith will stop us from receiving.
- M. Wavering is an enemy of faith. James says the double-minded man will not receive that for which he prays. (James 1:5-7)
- 1. We cannot afford to waver; the cost is too great.
  - 2. We cannot think both the world’s way and God’s way and expect to get positive results.

### **III. SUMMARY**

- A. If there is a fight of faith, then there must be an enemy of faith.
- B. The enemies of faith are born of reasoning.
- C. The fight of faith is in the realm of the soul.

- D. The enemies of faith are all defeated by the Word of God.
- E. We must cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the Word of God.
- F. We must guard our thought life!

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

- A. God has told us to fight; therefore, we must equip ourselves for the task at hand.
- B. We are more than conquerors through Christ.
- C. The only good fight is the fight we win.
- D. We overcome by the Word of God and the blood of the Lamb.
- E. The fight of faith is offensive.
  - 1. We are told to fight rather than to defend.
  - 2. The Word of God is the Sword of the Spirit.
- F. Let's fight the good fight of faith and enjoy the benefits that God has given unto us.

