

# Paul's Four Major Accomplishments

## Introduction

**1. It is a great thing when we have a feeling of accomplishment in our life. When we look at the life of the apostle Paul we can see at least four major accomplishments in his life.**

- A. Fought the good fight.**
- B. Finished the race.**
- C. Kept the faith.**
- D. Gained the crown of righteousness.**

**1) He mentions these four accomplishments in 2 Timothy 4:6-8:**

2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. **(7) I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. (8) Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,** which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

**2. In this lesson I hope to be able to accomplish three things:**

- A. Gaining an understanding of each of these statements.**
- B. Recognizing what is required in sacrifice and labor to be able to accomplish these things.**
- C. Developing a firm desire to accomplish these same things in our own lives.**

## Fought the Good Fight

1. This statement suggests a war. Paul had admonished Timothy to “war the good warfare” (1 Timothy 6:12).
2. This war is not a carnal war but a spiritual one.
  - A. It is a fight against the devil, sin, and false teaching.  
**2 Corinthians 10:4-5**

Ephesians 6:11-12 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. **(12)** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

- B. For a soldier of the cross to successfully engage in the fight, he must be properly equipped. Paul states:  
**Ephesians 6:13-18**
- C. Like a soldier, the Christian has armor. His armor is:
  - 1) Truth - By it he is made free.

John 8:32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

- 2) Righteousness - Not of men or the law of Moses, but of faith in Christ Jesus  
**Philippians 3:9**
- 3) Peace - Which passes all understanding  
**Philippians 4:4-7**
- 4) Faith - That God is, and that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, based on the testimony of the Bible.  
**Romans 10:17**

5) **Salvation - Forgiveness of past sins**  
**Acts 2:38**

6) **Word of God - The Bible**  
**2 Timothy 3:16**

Matthew 4:3-4 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." (4) But He answered and said, "It is written, 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

7) **Prayer - An important piece of the armor for the Christian**

James 5:16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

**D. No one can fight the good fight and win without this armor. We must put it on!**

**3. The type of warfare Paul fought was both defensive and offensive. He defended the faith against false doctrines.**

Philippians 1:17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.

**A. He took the offense to carry the gospel to those who needed it, teaching both publicly and privately**

Acts 20:20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,

**4. Paul was a good soldier of Christ and he urged Timothy to be one also. In order for one to be a good soldier today, he must:**

**A. Be well disciplined**

**1) He learns to be obedient in all things. He takes orders well and obeys them completely.**

Hebrews 5:8-9 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. **(9)** And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to **all who obey Him,**

**B. Be willing to sacrifice**

**1) Paul urged Timothy to suffer hardships as a good soldier. Paul suffered many things for the cause of Christ**

**2 Corinthians 11:23-28**

**C. Be steadfast**

**1) Paul told the Corinthian Christians:**

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

**D. Be faithful unto Death**

**1) A good soldier never deserts his post. Jesus said:**

**Revelation 2:10**

## Finished the Race

1. **Paul finished! This is quite an accomplishment because many make a great start but quit before they reach the finish line.**
  - A. **In Paul's day, the Greeks engaged in running races. A day would be appointed, the race course would plainly be marked for the contestants, each would lay aside anything that would hinder their running, judges would be appointed to award prizes to the winners, and usually a great crowd gathered to watch the race.**
2. **Paul likens the Christian life to such a race in three passages of scripture:**
  - **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**
    - A. **Here we learn that self-control is necessary if we expect to finish the course.**
  - **2 Timothy 2:5**
    - B. **One may run faster than all the others, but if he does not abide by the rules of the race, he will be disqualified and lose though he were the fastest.**
  - **Hebrews 12:1**
    - C. **The Greeks would train for the race wearing weighted shoes. At the race, they laid them aside so they could run faster.**
      - 1) **So also, the Christian is to lay aside any hindrance to his progress in the gospel. He also is to run with patience to keep on keeping on - finish the course!**

3. **From these passages, there are four things that we should keep in mind:**
  - A. **Each of us must exercise self-control.**
  - B. **Each of us must contend according to the rules – the law of Christ, the New Testament.**
  - C. **Each of us must lay aside anything that would hinder our running – living the Christian life.**
  - D. **Each of us must finish the course – run it with patience.**

### **Kept the Faith**

1. **Words sometime have many meanings. For example the word “bank.”**
  - A. **It may mean a place where money is kept.**
  - B. **It may refer to a place at the edge of a body of water.**
  - C. **It may refer to a “bank of clouds,” etc.**
2. **The word “faith” is like this.**
  - A. **It may refer to the mental art of believing a fact based on testimony; such as, believing Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, based on the testimony of the apostles.**
  - B. **It may refer to the fidelity of one to Jesus – that is, his faithfulness.**
  - C. **It sometimes refers to the things believed or the gospel in this case. Jude said:**

Jude 1:3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly **for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**

- 3. This passage of scripture reveals three important facts to us:**
- A. That here is an organized body of truth called the faith. It is this body of truth that Paul kept himself faithful to.**
  - B. It also reveals that the faith is complete. It was “once delivered” – not twice or three times.**
    - 1) We do not have to look for another or later day revelation from God.**
    - 2) The faith Paul kept is the complete revelation of God’s will to man. Paul said:  
**Galatians 1:7-9****
  - C. It informs us that the faith is the authority of God to men. It was delivered. Men did not decide upon it; heaven decreed it. No wonder Paul kept it! He said:**

1 Corinthians 1:21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached **to save those who believe.**

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for **it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes**, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

## **Gained the Crown of Righteousness**

- 1. In Revelation 2:10, the Lord promises to the faithful the crown of life.**

1 John 2:25 And this is the promise that He has promised us-**eternal life**.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, **lay hold on eternal life**, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

- A. Because Paul had fought the good fight, finished the course, and kept the faith, he had the assurance of a crown, not of olive leaves, but of righteousness!**
- 2. Remember, that this crown was not promised to Paul only, but **"also to all who have loved His appearing."****
    - A. That means that everyone of us may receive the crown if, like Paul, we fight, finish, and keep the faith all of our days that we serve our almighty God as a Christian!**

## **Conclusion**

- 1. I want to encourage all of us to learn this valuable lesson from the great apostle Paul.**
- 2. These four accomplishments that was realized by this beloved apostle should serve as an inspiration for each one of us.**
- 3. These four things will be the greatest things that any Christian can accomplish in this life to ensure an eternal home with our beloved Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!**
  - A. Fight the good fight.**
  - B. Finish the race.**
  - C. Keep the faith**
  - D. Look forward to receiving the crown of righteousness which is promised to all who have "loved His appearing!"**

