

## A WORD FOR THE WISE

Scripture used: [2 Timothy 4:7 \(NKJV\)](#)

### OVERVIEW

Today, Graduation Sunday, Pastor Hurmon honored the graduates in our church community by delivering his sermon titled "A Word for the Wise". At the end of his life, Paul wrote in his letter to Timothy that he had ...*fought the good fight, ...finished the race, and ...kept the faith*. Paul, a man of great education, believed these were his three greatest accomplishments, and he wanted to make sure Timothy, the young man he mentored, knew what was important to him. As graduates attend commencement ceremonies and as all of us seek to live purposeful lives, how can we seek to obey God and make wise choices using the same words Paul wrote to Timothy?

### KEY POINTS

- 1. Start with the end in mind.** Another word we use for a graduation ceremony is commencement. One definition of commencement is beginning. To begin, we have to know where we are aiming to end. We need to imagine what the outcome will be of our journey so we walk in the right direction.
- 2. Choose the right fight.** Paul stated in [2 Timothy 4:7](#) that he fought the *good* fight or the right fight. Paul knew the difference because he had at one time fought the wrong fight in his persecution of Christians (see [Galatians 1:13 \(NIV\)](#)). Not every fight is worthy of a fight, so how do we know what is the right fight for us? The best question we can ask ourselves when trying to discern is: *Is it wise?*
  - a. Is it wise in light of my past? (struggles, failures, addictions)** In [Deuteronomy 4:9 \(NLT\)](#), Moses directed the Israelites to not forget their past. He told them to watch themselves and to be careful. In addition, they should teach future generations to do the same. We can put Moses' words into practice in our own lives. How did that work out the last time I did that? Should I be open to a relationship, an activity, or a choice that went wrong in the past? Did I learn something from my past experiences that I can use to inform my current ones?
  - b. Is it wise in light of my current situation?** [Ecclesiastes 3:1 \(NLT\)](#) reminds us that everything has a season. Maybe this is not the correct season for what you are considering. Or perhaps this is the season for short-term pain that will lead to long-term gain. Maybe seeking short-term pleasure right now will lead to long-term misery. We can ask ourselves: how will the decision I make affect my current situation in the short term and in the long term?
  - c. Is it wise in light of my future?** Paul had his end goal in mind. The decisions he made were directed by his hope for his future. As we look towards our future with the end in mind, we can use that to help us to make wise decisions. How do our decisions coordinate with the good/right fight that we are fighting? How can we direct our decisions by the hope we have for our future?
- 3. Keep the faith.** In spite of all the turmoil that Paul encountered on his journeys ([Acts 27:27-28:5](#)), he kept his faith in God. He lived a "with God" life. When we face the hardships of this life, we too can keep our faith. Pastor Hurmon gave us several verses to encourage us in our time of need: [Psalm 124](#), [James 1:17](#), [Romans 8:1](#), [Romans 8:28](#). When like Paul we come to the end of our lives, we can hope to hear the words of Jesus found in [Matthew 25:23](#) knowing we fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith. "*Well done, good and faithful servant.*"

### DISCUSSION

- 1) HEAR** - What were some of the wisest decisions you've ever made? The most unwise? Why?
- 2) UNDERSTAND** - We will encounter many fights - some good/right and some wrong. How do we know what the good/right fight is? Reflect on past fights you have fought. Did you seek short-term pleasure that might have led to long-term misery, or were there times you chose short-term pain and the result was long-term gain? How can you use the wisdom you gained in these past situations now? How can you use them to mentor future generations? Ask God in prayer to reveal to you what wise decisions He is asking you to make in this current season, and how to use your past and future to help inform these decisions. Ask God for wisdom and listen as He provides you guidance in prayer and in His Word.
- 3) DO** - Keeping the faith is always a wise path to take. Even when we struggle in the valleys of life, we can turn to God for encouragement and lasting hope. What is the next step you can take towards making wise decisions? How will you remember to pause and ask yourself the best question: Is it wise? What daily steps will you take to keep your faith? See you next Sunday, June 12, as Pastor Hurmon begins a new series, "Illusions".