

Fighting The Good Fight: Not Fighting Against It

In 1904, William W. Borden, a member of the Borden dairy family, finished high school in Chicago and was given a world cruise as a graduation present. Particularly while traveling through the Near East, he became heavily burdened for the lost. After returning home, he spent seven years at Princeton University, the first four in undergraduate work and the last three at Yale seminary. William started a bible study and prayer group in his first year at Yale, which by his senior year had grown to 1,300 students. While in school, he penned these words in the back of his Bible, "No Reserves." Although his family pleaded with him to take control of the business, which was foundering, and combined with the advisement of friends that he was "throwing his life away", he insisted that God's call to the mission field had priority. After disposing of his wealth, he added "No Retreat" after "No Reserves." On his way to China to witness to the Muslim Kansu people, at age 25, he contracted cerebral meningitis in Egypt and died within a month. After his death, someone looking through his Bible discovered these final words, "No Regrets." Mrs. Howard Taylor, wife of that great missionary to China, Hudson Taylor, wrote in William Borden's biography, "A wave of sorrow went around the world. Borden not only gave away his wealth, but himself, in a way so joyous and natural that it seemed a privilege rather than a sacrifice."

William Borden accomplished virtually none of the ministry he had envisioned, having been cut off by death even before he reached his field of service. But his final declaration of "No Regrets" was well founded in the assurance that he had genuinely sought and faithfully obeyed the Lord's will. He knew that the Lord does not require success, only faithfulness.

We should be constantly aware that our lives are a spiritual struggle, because that is what God's Word repeatedly teaches. We know we are engaged in the most noble of causes, because that is how the Word defines it. We are to labor with self-discipline, because that is what the Word requires. We know our time is precious and limited and we know our calling is a sacred trust, because that is what the Word declares to be true.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."
[2 Timothy 4:7]

"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."
[1 Timothy 6:12]

– Article submitted by Chuck Wetzel
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