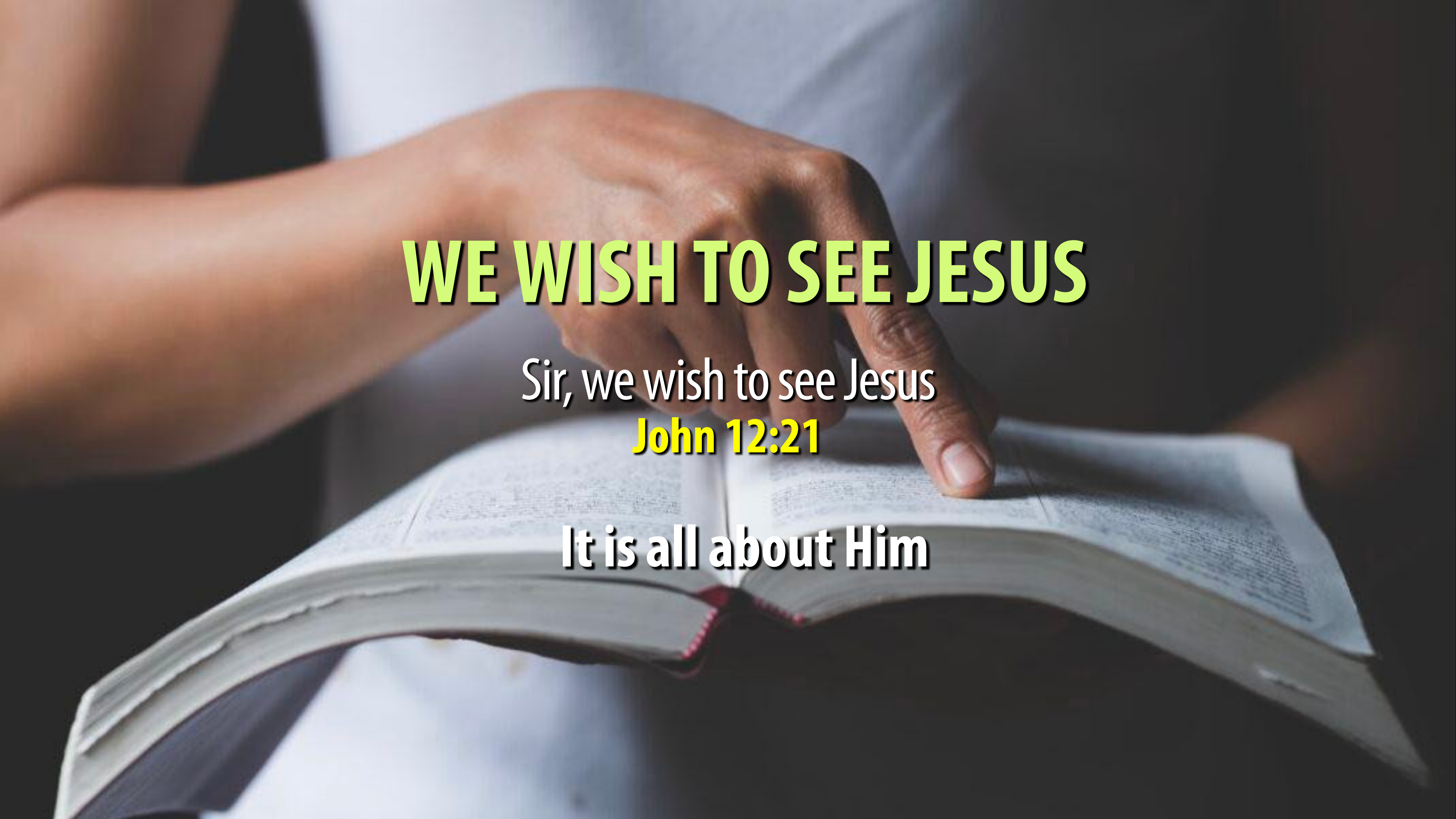


A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, black, leather-bound Bible. The person is wearing a military-style camouflage uniform. The Bible is open, and the words "New Testament" are visible on the inside of the front cover. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the camouflage uniform and a brown leather boot.

New Testament

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

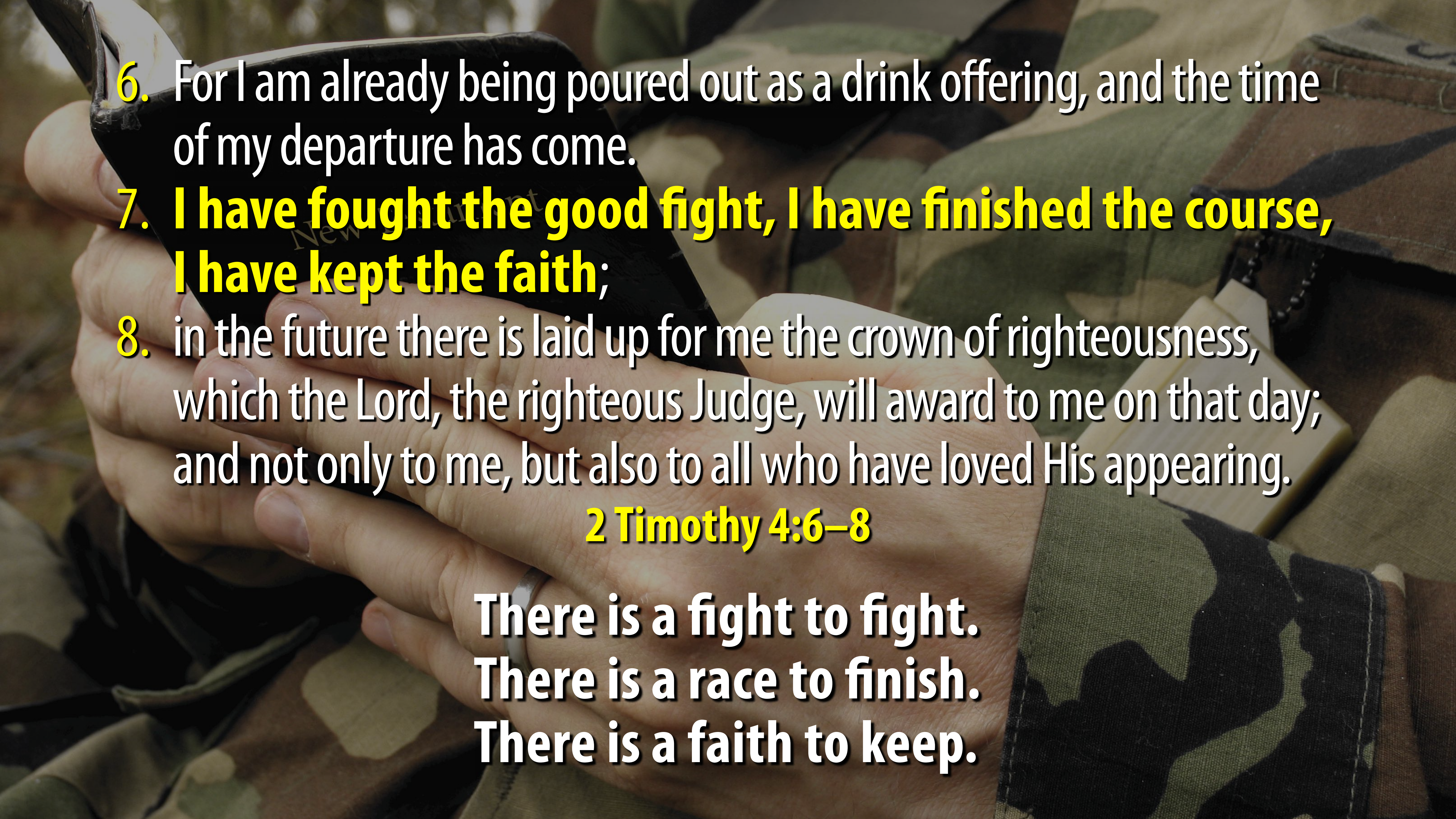
- ▶ **RUNNING THE RACE**
- ▶ **KEEPING THE FAITH**
- ▶ **FINISHING WELL**

A close-up photograph of a person's hand pointing their index finger at an open book. The book is open to a page with text, and the hand is positioned over the right page. The background is dark and out of focus.

WE WISH TO SEE JESUS

Sir, we wish to see Jesus
John 12:21

It is all about Him

- 
- A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a black Bible. The person is wearing a camouflage military uniform. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the uniform and a brown bag.
6. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.
7. **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;**
8. in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

2 Timothy 4:6–8

**There is a fight to fight.
There is a race to finish.
There is a faith to keep.**

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a black Bible. The person is wearing a camouflage military uniform. The Bible is open, and the words "New Testament" are visible on the left page. The background is a blurred camouflage pattern.

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

- ▶ What is the cost of fighting poorly?
- ▶ Who do we fight against?
- ▶ For whom do we fight?
- ▶ How do we fight?

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, black, leather-bound Bible. The person is wearing a military-style camouflage uniform. The Bible is open, and the words "New Testament" are visible on the inside of the front cover. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the camouflage uniform and a small, light-colored object, possibly a tag or a piece of paper, tucked into a pocket.

"WHAT A WAY TO GO"

- ▶ **Courage?**
- ▶ **Sacrifice?**
- ▶ **Bravado?**
- ▶ **Something deeper?**

Who was receiving the glory?

His Glory, Not Ours

Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

2 Corinthians 8:9

The way of Christ is not:

- ▶ Self-preservation.
- ▶ Self-promotion.
- ▶ Self-glorification.

It is His glorification

The Cost of Fighting Poorly

1. WHAT IS THE COST OF FIGHTING POORLY?

- ▶ Passivity
- ▶ Compromise
- ▶ Pride

How we fight today helps shape
what follows tomorrow



Leadership Abandoned: The Costa Concordia

- ▶ The captain caused the disaster.
- ▶ Then he abandoned the people entrusted to him.
- ▶ Men pushed women and children aside to save themselves.

**Position does not make someone a leader.
Leadership is revealed when sacrifice is required.**

Adam's Silence

She also gave to her husband **with her**, and he ate.

Genesis 3:6

- ▶ Adam was present.
- ▶ He knew God's command.
- ▶ He heard the deception.

... yet he remained silent

Passivity Has Consequences

God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 1:28

God had called humanity to **be fruitful, to multiply, to fill the earth, to subdue it and to exercise dominion.**

Yet when the serpent came, Adam did not take the fight to the enemy. **He passively allowed the enemy to come to him.**

Solomon's Compromise

For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.

1 Kings 11:4

Solomon possessed extraordinary wisdom but he repeatedly disregarded God's boundaries. Compromise redirected his heart.

What we tolerate can become part of our legacy.

Uzziah's Pride

But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.

2 Chronicles 26:16

Uzziah was strengthened by God but then he began to treat God's blessing as though it belonged to him.

- ▶ Strength without humility becomes dangerous.
- ▶ Never confuse God's blessing with permission to disregard His boundaries.

Three Ways to Lose the Fight

- ▶ **ADAM - PASSIVITY:** silent when he should have acted.
- ▶ **SOLOMON - COMPROMISE:** his heart was gradually turned away.
- ▶ **UZZIAH - PRIDE:** his strength lifted up his heart.

**The battle can be lost long before
we realise we are losing it.**

Fight Passivity at Home

Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.

1 Corinthians 16:13

A man may provide financially yet remain absent emotionally and spiritually.

- ▶ Ask
- ▶ Listen
- ▶ Encourage
- ▶ Correct
- ▶ Pray
- ▶ Lead

When you are required to lead—lead!

Knowing the Enemy

2. WHO DO WE FIGHT AGAINST?

The enemy behind the battle is not always the person standing before us.

Our Real Enemy

- 10. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.
- 11. Put on the full armour of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.
- 12. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:10-16

This is a spiritual battle

The Thread of Deception

What Connects These Failures?

- ▶ Aaron's false glory.
- ▶ Adam's passivity.
- ▶ Solomon's compromise.
- ▶ Uzziah's pride.

DECEPTION

Each person believed something that was not true.

The Ancient Lie

God is withholding something good from you!

The lie of Genesis 3 continues:

- ▶ You need more.
- ▶ God is holding you back.
- ▶ His boundaries are against you.
- ▶ You would be happier outside His will.

Know Your Enemy

Put on the full armour of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Ephesians 6:11

- ▶ ACCUSER
- ▶ TEMPTER
- ▶ DECEIVER
- ▶ ADVERSARY

Pride Corrupts the Gift

Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendour.

Ezekiel 28:17

Pride redirects attention:

- ▶ From the Giver to the gift.
- ▶ From His glory to my glory.
- ▶ From gratitude to entitlement.

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Know Your Weaknesses

Where am I vulnerable?

- ▶ Where is my weak spot?
- ▶ Where is my blind spot?
- ▶ Where am I easily deceived?
- ▶ Where does Christ need to sanctify me?
- ▶ Where do I need accountability?

Be watchful.

Call Each Other Up

We need one another:

Not merely to say: “You’re doing great”
but sometimes to say: “brother, I can
see something dangerous.”

Accountability is not interference.
It is one way we help each other fight well.

The Gradual Road

The enemy is often covert

Not every fall begins with obvious rebellion.

Often it is:

- ▶ A small compromise.
- ▶ Then another.
- ▶ A little further from the light.
- ▶ Then further again.

Be alert to the gentle slope.

Jesus Answered With the Word

Matthew 4:1–11

Satan distorted the Word of God.
Jesus answered: “it is written.”

- ▶ Know the Word.
- ▶ Believe the Word.
- ▶ Stand upon the Word.

The King We Serve

3. FOR WHOM DO WE FIGHT?

- ▶ Not because God is weak.
- ▶ Not because God needs rescuing.
- ▶ We have been given the honour of serving our King.

A Leader Worth Following

“I fight for you.”

In the military, some leaders inspire loyalty because they:

- ▶ Lead from the front.
- ▶ Share the burden.
- ▶ Accept responsibility.
- ▶ Care for those under them.

How much more is Jesus worthy of our allegiance?

Whose Side Are You On?

Joshua 5:13–15

Joshua asked: “Are You for us or for our adversaries?”
The Commander of the LORD’s army answered: “**NO.**”

The question is not: “Is God on my side?”
The question is: “**Am I surrendered to Him?**”

Holy Ground

The captain of the LORD'S host said to Joshua,
"Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place
where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

Joshua 5:15

Joshua

- ▶ fell on his face
- ▶ worshipped
- ▶ listened
- ▶ obeyed

The right response to the King is surrender.

Undone Before His Glory

Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

Isaiah 6:5

**The closer Isaiah came to God's holiness,
the more clearly he saw himself.**

Fear God, Yet Do Not Be Afraid

Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul;
but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of
power and of love and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:7

**Reverence without cowering.
Confidence without careless familiarity.**

The Manawatū River

Wide, deep, fast-flowing.
Powerful enough to take a life.
Yet, when understood and respected:
refreshing, enjoyable, beautiful.

Its power was both fearsome and good.

Reverence Opens Into Joy

WE RESPECTED THE RIVER.
We understood its power.
We knew where to go.
We knew where not to go.
We entered it properly equipped.
And because of that: we could revel in its glory.

**Through Christ we are invited into
the magnificent presence of God.**

Strength at the Cross

But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.

Luke 23:34

• **Whipped** • **Mocked** • **Crucified**

Yet Jesus prayed for His enemies.

This is not weakness.

This is extraordinary strength.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, dark-colored Bible. The person is wearing a camouflage military uniform. The Bible is open, and the words "New Testament" are visible on the left page. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the camouflage uniform and a small, light-colored object, possibly a notepad or a piece of paper, tucked into a pocket.

The Returning King

"Behold, a white horse."

"Faithful and True..."

"In righteousness He judges and makes war."

"KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

Revelation 19:11-16

This is our King!

4. HOW DO WE FIGHT?

- ▶ Not through uncontrolled force.
- ▶ Not through passivity.
- ▶ Not through human confidence.

We fight with strength surrendered to Christ.

BIBLICAL MEEKNESS

Meekness Is Strength Under Control.

Meekness is not the absence of strength, it is strength:

- ▶ Yielded to God.
- ▶ Brought under control.
- ▶ Responsive to His direction.
- ▶ Used for His purposes..

The wild horse comes beneath the reins.

Put On the Whole Armour

New Testament

Ephesians 6:13–18

- ▶ The belt of truth
- ▶ The gospel of peace
- ▶ The helmet of salvation
- ▶ Prayer and perseverance
- ▶ The breastplate of righteousness
- ▶ The shield of faith
- ▶ The sword of the Spirit

“That you may be able to withstand in the evil day...”

The Sword of the Spirit

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Ephesians 6:17

God's truth is not merely to be possessed. It must be:

- ▶ Known.
- ▶ Believed.
- ▶ Spoken faithfully.
- ▶ Brought to bear in the battle.

"It is written." Our confidence is in Christ and the truth of His Word.

The Church Is Not Called to Passivity

I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 16:18

Gates do not advance.

Gates attempt to resist an advancing force.

- ▶ Stand against deception.
- ▶ Take the gospel into darkness.
- ▶ Serve those who need freedom.

Actively pursue the kingdom of God.

The Physical Fight

I discipline my body and bring it into subjection...

1 Corinthians 9:27

Your body is not an object of worship.
Neither is it something to neglect.
It is something entrusted to you.

- ▶ Care for it.
- ▶ Discipline it.
- ▶ Strengthen it as God enables you.
- ▶ Be ready to serve.

The Emotional Fight

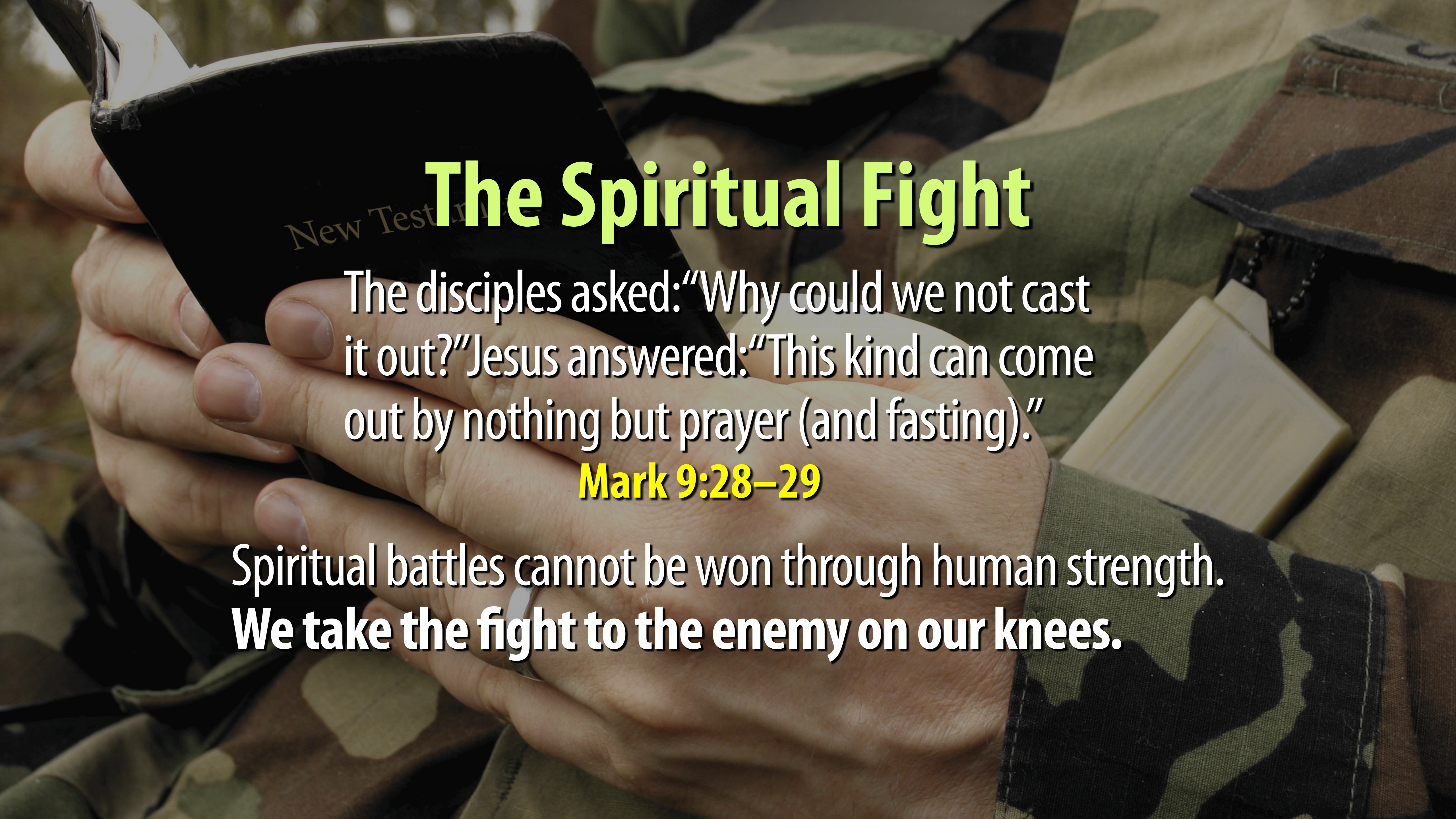
Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.

Proverbs 25:28

Our emotions are real but they are not meant to rule us.

- ▶ Our anger
- ▶ Our reactions
- ▶ Our tongue
- ▶ Our impulses

must come beneath the lordship of Christ.

A person wearing military camouflage clothing is kneeling on the ground. They are holding a black Bible with both hands. The Bible is open, and the words "New Testament" are visible on the left page. The background is a natural, outdoor setting with dry leaves and grass.

The Spiritual Fight

The disciples asked: "Why could we not cast it out?" Jesus answered: "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer (and fasting)."

Mark 9:28–29

Spiritual battles cannot be won through human strength.
We take the fight to the enemy on our knees.

Get Back Up!

For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again...

Proverbs 24:16

Do not make peace with sin.

- ▶ Repent.
- ▶ Bring it into the light.
- ▶ Seek help.
- ▶ Establish boundaries.

Do not believe that a fall must become your final surrender.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, black, leather-bound book. The book is open, and the words "New Testament" are visible on the inside of the front cover. The person is wearing a camouflage-patterned uniform, and a silver ring is visible on their left ring finger. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the camouflage uniform and a small, light-colored object, possibly a tag or a piece of paper, tucked into a pocket.

New Testament

Fallen? Get back up!

- ▶ Return to Christ.
- ▶ Return to His Word.
- ▶ Return to prayer.
- ▶ Return to fellowship.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a black Bible. The person is wearing military-style camouflage clothing. The Bible is open, and the text "New Testament" is visible on the left page. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the camouflage uniform and a small white tag attached to a strap.

Finish Well.

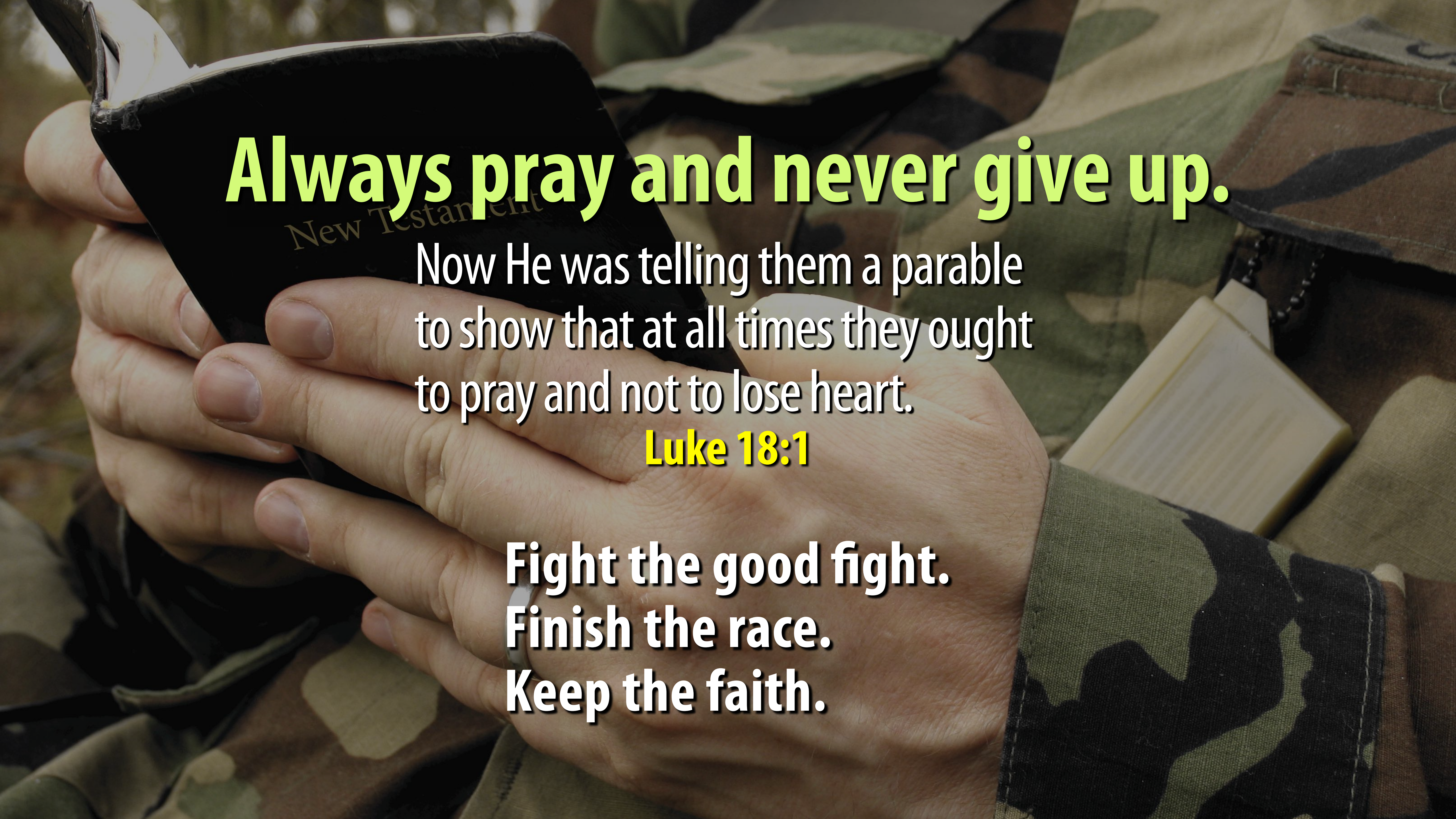
I have fought the good fight, I have
finished the race, I have kept the faith.

2 Timothy 4:7-8

Be strong and courageous.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and
courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for
the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9



Always pray and never give up.

Now He was telling them a parable
to show that at all times they ought
to pray and not to lose heart.

Luke 18:1

**Fight the good fight.
Finish the race.
Keep the faith.**



TAKE A KNEE BEFORE THE KING

