

II Timothy – A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ II Tim. 2:1-6

Thesis: To help us better understand our duty as a Christian.

Introduction:

- A. Paul wanted Timothy to teach the things that he had learned to others who could teach as well.
 - 1. Paul knew that Timothy was going to be facing some difficult times.
 - 2. He wanted to encourage him to be faithful in the times of persecution.

- B. Note: This sermon is adapted from Tom Holland's "Courageous Christians (Sermon Outlines from II Timothy)."

I. Christians are portrayed as soldiers (2:3-4).

A. A good soldier must endure hardships (2:3).

- 1. The Christian life demands a sacrifice on our part.
 - a. **Rom. 12:1** - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.
 - b. God expects us to make a sacrifice.
- 2. If we are going to be "a good soldier of Jesus Christ," we must be willing to suffer hardships.
 - a. We are all going to suffer persecutions.
 - 1) Timothy needed to know this if he was going to remain faithful to God.
 - 2) **II Tim. 3:12** - Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.
 - b. In the New Testament, there is perhaps no better example of suffering than Paul.
 - 1) Paul suffered greatly for the sake of Christ.
 - 2) **II Cor. 11:22-28** - Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. {23} Are they ministers of Christ? -- I speak as a fool-- I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. {24} From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. {25} Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; {26} in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; {27} in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness

often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—{28} besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

- c. Paul, in word and example, is telling Timothy that he is going to have to endure hardships “as good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

B. A good soldier does not entangle “himself with the affairs of this life” (2:4).

- 1. Jesus warned of those who would be entangled “with the affairs of this life.”
 - a. **Mt. 13:22** - Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.
 - b. **Lk. 14:26** (Jesus says we must love Him more than anything in this life) - If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.
- 2. We cannot allow anything to come between us and God.

C. The idea of the Christian as a soldier is one of the most popular analogies in the New Testament.

- 1. Paul used it several times with Timothy.
 - a. **I Tim. 1:18-19** - This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, {19} having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,
 - b. **I Tim. 6:12** - Fight the good fight of faith,
 - c. **II Tim. 4:7** - I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
- 2. **Eph. 6:10-13** - Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. {11} 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. {13} Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- 3. **II Cor. 10:4-6** - For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God.

“As a good soldier of Jesus Christ,” we “must endure hardship” and we cannot allow ourselves to be entangled “with the affairs of this life.”

II. Christians are portrayed as athletes (2:5).

A. The analogy of athletics is another favorite analogy throughout the Bible.

1. Paul often used it in his epistles.
 - a. **II Tim. 4:7-8** - 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.
 - b. **II Cor. 9:24-27** - Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. {25} And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. {26} Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. {27} But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.
2. **Heb. 12:1-2** (The writer of Hebrews also used this analogy) - Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, {2} looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

B. In athletics, the winner must compete according to the rules.

1. We cannot arbitrarily decide what we want to do in religion.
2. If we are going to be “crowned,” we must compete according to the rules of God.

Just like athletes, we must compete “according to the rules” that God has given us if we want to be crowned with victory.

III. Christians are portrayed as farmers (2:6).

- A. Of the three analogies, this is perhaps the least used in the Bible to describe our life as a Christian.
- B. A farmer must be patient in order to receive his harvest.
 1. A farmer will plant his crop, and then wait for months to enjoy the harvest.
 2. **Js. 5:7-8** - Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. {8} You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

Just like a farmer, we must be patient if we are going to reap the harvest.

Conclusion: