

The Most Excellent Way

Discipleship/Leadership Bible Study Homework

“Commitment”

HEART ATTITUDE: Eternal Hope

Good soldiers are not afraid to suffer. God is faithful to His children. Although we may suffer great hardships on earth, He promises that someday we will live eternally with Him. Paul was comforted by this eternal hope as he went through suffering and death, and it can be ours also.

The Holy Spirit helps us to be wise and strong. God honors our confident testimony even when we suffer. We must be committed to boldly utilize the gifts the Holy Spirit has given us. In the face of opposition and persecution, we must keep our eyes on God.

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-13 (NIV)

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (1)

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. (2)

Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. (3)

No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer. (4)

Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules. (5)

The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. (6)

Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this. (7)

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, (8)

For which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal.

But God’s word is not chained. (9)

Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. (10)

Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; (11)

If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; (12)

If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself. (13)

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• **FOCUSING**

1. Have you ever thought of yourself as a soldier, an athlete, a farmer?

2. Do you enjoy hard work? Why or why not?

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- **STUDYING GOD’S WORD**

3. What did Paul encourage Timothy to do with what he had been taught? (2:2)

How can we be “strong” in grace? Grace means “undeserved favor.” Just as we are saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8-9), we should live by grace (Colossians 2:6). This means trusting completely in Jesus and HIS power, not trying to live the Christian life in our own strength. Depending ON grace and living IN grace contrast to the world’s values, and in contrast to those like Phygellus and Hermogenes who deserted Paul and the faith.

4. How was Timothy to endure hardship? (2:3)

If the Church consistently followed this advice, it would expand geometrically as well-taught believers would teach others and commission them, in turn, to teach still others. Disciples need to be equipped to pass their faith on; our work is not done until new believers are telling others the Good News they have learned (see Ephesians 4:12-13).

5. How does a soldier limit himself? Why? (2:4)

6. What must an athlete do in order to win? (2:5)

7. What should a hardworking farmer receive? Why? (2:6)

Paul used a comparison with soldiers, athletes and farmers who must discipline themselves and be willing to sacrifice to achieve the results they want. Like soldiers, we have to give worldly security and endure rigorous discipline. Like athletes, we must train hard and follow the rules. Like farmers, we must work hard to enjoy the fruit of our labor. But we keep going despite suffering because of the thought of victory, the vision of winning, and the hope of harvest. All our suffering is made worthwhile by our goals of glorifying God, winning people to Christ, and one day living eternally with Him.

8. What was Paul’s gospel? (2:8)

At the heart of false teaching is an incorrect view of Christ. In Timothy’s day it was popular to assert that Jesus is divine but not human — God but not man. These days we too often hear that He is human but not divine— man but not God. Either view destroys the Good News that Jesus Christ has taken our sins on Himself and has reconciled God and man. Jesus is fully man and fully God. This is the ONLY Biblical view. (See Philippians 3:9-16.)

9. Why was Paul willing to endure anything? (2:10)

We are free to choose between life and death, and yet God has chosen us. This is a mystery our finite minds cannot easily grasp. But even if we do not completely understand it, we can choose Jesus and be grateful that He has chosen us.

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10. How did Paul encourage Timothy? (2:11-13)

11. What *trustworthy saying* did Paul leave with Timothy to encourage him? (2:11-13)

Jesus will stay by our side even when we have endured so much that we seem to have no faith left. We may be faithless at times, but Jesus remains faithful to His promise to be with us always, “even unto the end of the world” (see Matthew 28:20 and Romans 8:38-39). Only one thing can break our communication with God — if we turn against Him and refuse His help. Are you facing hardship? Don't turn from God — He promises you a wonderful future with Him.

• **UNDERSTANDING**

12. What is the most important commitment another has made on your behalf?

13. What example do the soldier, the athlete, and the farmers set for you?

• **DOING THE WORD**

14. How will you reinforce your commitment to be a good soldier for the Lord?

15. How will your eternal hope impact your service in The Most Excellent Way?

May God richly bless you as you study His Word!