

The Pastoral Epistles

II Timothy 2:1-7 “²You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ²and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. ³Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.”

Verse 1 opens the passage with a command from Paul to “be strengthened....” This is a passive verb, which means that Timothy wasn’t to do anything, but allow something to be done to, or with him. It is also an imperative verb, which means that God expected Timothy to obey by allowing His grace to give Timothy strength. How does God’s grace give strength?

As Paul continues the thought, he has a second imperative for Timothy, “entrust to faithful men.” The content that Timothy was to entrust was Paul’s teaching. Why would Paul want his teaching propagated? And, these faithful men were to continue teaching the same doctrine, why?

The next verse contains another imperative, “Share in suffering.” To participate in the general hardships of ministry, one has to be active in the ministry. Paul is encouraging Timothy to *stay in the* _____.

Three illustrations are used to communicate the point: 1) good soldiers are committed to their duty, and don’t get distracted with “civilian pursuits.” What are some examples of those *civilian pursuits* for God’s people?

2) In a similar vein, an athlete doesn’t win at his sport unless he competes committed to it. They train in accordance with their game. Their diet is important. They make sure they know the rules. And they exert to the maximum in order to win. How does the Christian life parallel this concept?

3) Paul concludes this idea by presenting the farmer, who gets to enjoy the best and first of his harvest. His reward in eating well is based on the fact that he is “hard-working.” The farmer of that time, didn’t have sprays, GMOs, machinery, nor mass marketing. He had to work hard if he was going to enjoy a good crop. How does this relate to the Christian life?

In closing, Paul hits Timothy with one more imperative, “Think over what I say.” Timothy needed to meditate on these principles so he could increase his understanding.