

Modeling and Mentoring Faithful Ministers

Characteristics of the Faithful Soldier

2 Timothy 2:1-7

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Text: 2 Timothy 2:1-7

Introduction: In 2 Timothy, Paul admonishes his spiritual son Timothy to be faithful. He uses a number of military allusions when writing to Timothy about ministry: obey orders (1 Timothy 6:13-14); fight the battle (1 Timothy 1:18); stay on duty (1 Timothy 1:3).

Theme: Characteristics of a faithful soldier

While people often make evaluations based on talent, numbers, and external success, God's basis of evaluation is faithfulness.

To be a faithful Christ follower . . .

I. You Will Faithfully Assume Your Duty – vv. 1, 2

A. You are challenged.

1. 1 Timothy 1:18, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy... that thou mightiest wage a good warfare"; i.e. fight a good fight.
2. 2 Timothy 1
 - a. Zeal (v. 6)
 - b. Courage (vv. 7-12)
 - 1) *Suffer with me*—Paul says, for he is not ashamed having confidence that He Who began a good work will continue it until it is complete!
 - 2) If you've trusted in the atoning work of Christ, God is working to make you like Christ and to use you to reach others! *Assume duty faithfully.*
 - 3) Don't be AWOL from service.
 - c. Fidelity (vv. 13-18)
3. Satan's strategy is to separate a man from spiritual disciplines that keep him fit and effective.

B. You are called.

1. A man of God is charged with a duty (2 Timothy 1:3).
2. A man of God is a fighter.
3. A man of God is called to be a soldier of Christ first.

- a. If you are a believer, you are on active duty.
- b. Wear your uniform proudly!

II. You Will Faithfully Accept Difficulty – v. 3

- A. You will participate in suffering.
 - 1. No soldier goes to war from the luxury of a comfortable bedroom.
 - 2. The Christian life is a battlefield, not a playground.
 - a. Paul speaks of dying with Christ (2 Timothy 2:10-11).
 - b. This calling is not trite.
 - c. Those who “live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12).
- B. You will partner in suffering.
 - 1. This is a call to join the leader.
 - 2. This call is an action verb.
 - a. Paul is encouraging Timothy to partake in his own deep experiences of danger and sorrow.
 - b. Paul told Timothy not to be ashamed of the Gospel or of Paul but be a partaker of affliction—join him in the suffering for the Gospel (1 Timothy 1:8).
 - 3. This is a call to step out of the comfort zone.
 - a. Involve those whom we are mentoring.
 - b. They will sometimes fail.
 - c. Don’t expect veteran work out of a novice.
 - 4. This is a call to be partakers of the suffering (2 Corinthians 1:7).

III. You Will Faithfully Avoid Distractions – v. 4a

- A. You will take precautions.
 - 1. A soldier on active duty must not get distracted by civilian affairs.
 - 2. *Entangled* mean intertwined.
 - 3. “Lay aside every weight” (Hebrews 12:1).
 - a. Entertainment: today’s young people are influenced and enamored by the world.
 - b. Prosperity: today’s young people are unwilling to go into ministry because they are pursuing a lifestyle that ministry won’t support.

- c. Parents: today's parents don't want their children to go into ministry because they don't see it as financially successful.
 - 1) It is dangerous to step between your child and God's will! That is NOT a safe place to be.
 - 2) God can and does provide.
 - 3) The best place for you and your family is the center of God's will.

5. Are we willing to deny ourselves to serve Christ?

B. You will serve with concentration.

- 1. "There's a war on!"
- 2. We live in a day when professing Christians don't want to be denied anything; we justify fleshly indulgences in the name of "Christian liberty."

IV. You Will Faithfully Anticipate Decoration – v. 4b

A. You will have a purpose.

- 1. His aim is to please the One who enlisted him.
- 2. He strives to hear "well done" good and faithful servant.

B. You will be persistent.

- 1. He doesn't quit, doesn't compromise.
 - a. He knows that doctrine does not belong to us; it is God's and can't be bent to please the culture.
 - b. He "earnestly [contends] for the faith which was once delivered" (Jude 3).
 - c. He is a man of the Word who sticks to the Word and exalts the Word.
- 2. He lives with eternity's values in view.

C. You will follow a pattern (2 Timothy 2:4-6).

- 1. A soldier with a devoted purpose (v. 4)
- 2. An athlete with a dedicated persistence (v. 5)
- 3. A farmer with a diligent patience (v. 6)

Paul concludes by telling Timothy to reflect on these illustrations and this teaching and to realize that true understanding comes from the Lord.

Our challenge to do the same:

1. Am I a follower of Jesus Christ?
2. Am I being taught?
3. Am I teachable?
4. Where do I need to grow in faithfulness?

Has the Lord called you to serve in an area you are unwilling to serve? To give the Gospel to someone you hesitate to speak to about such a subject? *Assume duty.*

Are you unwilling to do that which is difficult or step out of your comfort zone to serve? *Accept difficulty.*

Are you being distracted by the things of this world—the lust of the flesh, eyes, boastful pride of life? Maybe it isn't sins, but the weights—distractions and cares. *Avoid distractions.*

Have you lost sight of why you are here and whom you are serving? Live with eternity in view that you may please the One who has called you to be a soldier. *Anticipate decoration.*

Paul told Timothy, all who will live godly in Christ Jesus will experience persecution.

Are you willing? Are you ready?