

THE BOOK OF SECOND TIMOTHY

"God's Man"

2 Timothy 2:3-7

Introduction

1. Proper pedagogy in the face of apostasy will provide spiritual leadership (vv. 1, 2). The only safeguard for true doctrine is persistence in the doctrine taught by Paul. It is imperative to transfer the truth alone!

2. To accomplish this goal of proper transmission of the truth, Paul affirms three figures the true servant of God should be. When these are operative, a true work of the Lord will be done. Check out these figures in the text:-

1. SOLDIER vv. 3, 4.

a. Endure.

The Greek verb used here is only found this once in the book. It is a double compound and means to "join rank with those who suffer". It could be rendered, therefore, "take your share of the hardship" in relation to the Gospel. Others had left Paul (1:15), he appeals to Timothy to remain steadfast! This can be done IF Timothy plays the role of a "good soldier". The word "good" means "noble". The soldier is one enlisted, but not for parade, guard duty, or furlough. He is a man galvanized into action. In this spiritual war, there is no demobilization! This concept of the soldier is used elsewhere (Phil. 1:25; Phile. 2). God give us men in the ministry like this today!

b. tangle.

The soldier is one who is in rank with "Jesus Christ". He is unrelated as far as human organizations are concerned; he is heavenly enrolled as a soldier! In view of this, he must not be entangled with the affairs of this life. Incidentally, the word "life" is the course of it and not its mere existence. But the key item here is the verb "entangle". The verb means to "inweave" and is only used here and 2 Peter 2:20. Being present tense, the thought is this: there is no room for linear entanglements when you are on military duty for the Lord.

c. Engage.

The one goal of a true soldier is the good pleasure of the one who enrolled him. So it is stated here. To be of use to the commander is the objective here. Purpose is clearly expressed by the grammar. Note: it is God Who enrolls a believer. It is God Who

is to be pleased! This is the way it was with Enoch (Heb. 11:26).

2. ATHLETE v. 5.

a. Contest.

With the use of a third class condition and the present tense, Paul brings up the matter of general participation in athletic contests. The verb is only found here in the N.T.

b. Crown.

The crown is provided for the winners. The passive voice of the verb shows that the crown is bestowed upon the athletic winner.

c. Conditions.

In general, three obtained in the Greek games: 1) Certificate of Greek birth. 2) Rigorous pre-contest training. 3) Keeping regulations of the games. Meeting these conditions is covered by the word "lawfully". The verb "strive" in this segment of the sentence is in the aorist tense and refers to a specific contest. NOTE: There is great applicability of these items to the believer's role unto the Lord.

3. FARMER v. 6.

a. Labor.

The verb "labor" is the key to the situation. The farmer (lit.: tiller of soil) must labor. Anyone knows a farmer "enjoys" constant toil, early hours, frequent problems, infinite patience, and perpetual sameness--that's labor! Hence, what is being discussed here is someone just as occupied as a soldier or athlete!

b. Liberty.

The laboring farmer, of necessity, takes of the fruit of the ground first! This is his reward. The soldier pleases the one who enrolled him; the athlete gets the crown; the farmer eats the fruit! All the sacrifices are repaid!

Conclusion As a bridge between this section and the one which follows, verse 7 calls upon Timothy to put his mind (so Greek) on what is said. Reason: the Lord will give understanding in all things. Such a promise! Amen!