

15. FARMERS, ATHLETES, SOLDIERS SONS LIVING FOR THE LONG RUN

EVERY METAPHOR HAS ITS LIMITATIONS AND EVERY ILLUSTRATION ITS LIMITS, BUT THERE ARE GOOD REASONS PAUL POINTED TO FARMERS, ATHLETES, AND SOLDIERS IN [2 TIMOTHY 2](#). AS A “MILITARY BRAT,” I AM COMFORTABLE WITH THAT TYPE OF LANGUAGE BUT AM IN NO WAY SUGGESTING THAT ANYONE SHOULD FORM A “CHRISTIAN MILITIA.” NEITHER WAS PAUL.

I. INTRO

A. [2 TIMOTHY 1-2](#)

- 1) [1:15](#) sometimes the Lord DOES lead us into adversity, as He did with Paul
- 2) [2:2](#) Paul knew he wasn't going to be around for the 4th generation of believers, and he instructed Timothy to entrust the message to those who would steward it well, just as he himself had done
- 3) [2:3](#) hardships aren't optional
- 4) [2:11-13](#) die, endure, don't deny
- 5) farmers, athletes, and soldiers all have a mentality that is forward-focused; they are diligent **today** for a reward **tomorrow**

II. ATHLETES SOLDIERS FARMERS

A. Farmers

- 1) life & mentality of farmers
 - a) back-breaking, thankless work
 - b) relying on / partnering with seasons outside their control
 - c) their success and livelihood months and years from now is contingent on their diligence today

B. Athletes

- 1) life & mentality of athletes
 - a) there is no room for compromise
 - b) every decision in every moment matters
 - c) their success and livelihood months and years from now is contingent on their diligence today
 - d) 24/7 eat, train, sleep, daily diligence & discipline
- 2) must compete according to the rules
 - a) 2017 third fittest man on earth {won't mention his name} made it to the podium, but he tested positive for two performance-enhancing drugs after the games were complete. He was disqualified, was stripped of his podium ranking, and lost his

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winnings. Pat Vellner, consistent games finisher but never first, was subsequently awarded third place and received the winnings etc., but he missed his podium moment to R.G.'s cheating

- 3) discipline > motivation daily diligence & discipline
 - a) "sometimes you're tired. Sometimes you slept bad. Sometimes you're hurting. There are things that happen in your life and you're not going to be able to be motivated all the time. And I also think - motivation is overrated." Annie Thorisdottir

C. Soldiers

- 1) life & mentality of soldiers
 - a) soldiers do not exist; they have no personal identity
 - b) soldiers go where they are told to go, wear what they are told to wear, obey orders without questioning
 - i. maybe in your divine assignment, you get to choose where you live, maybe you don't
- 2) despite severe limitations, the men in E Company during WWII got the job done because they did not focus on the inconveniences they suffered; they focused on the adversity they were suffering from the Nazi army
- 3) "we have no right to decide where we should be placed, or to have preconceived ideas as to what God is preparing us to do. God engineers everything; and wherever He places us, our one supreme goal should be to pour out our lives in wholehearted devotion to Him in that particular work. 'Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might'..." - Oswald Chambers
- 4) [Matthew 21:28-31](#)

III. BONDSERVANTS AND SONS

A. [Galatians 1:8-16](#)

- 1) the exaltation of Jesus and transformation of blood-bought disciples is the Father's and the family business ([Matthew 28:19-20](#))
- 2) my responsibility is not whether or not someone wants to obey Jesus. My responsibility is to proclaim the name of Jesus and live in such a way that shows fidelity to His message at any cost and invite people into this story
 - a) [Matthew 22:9](#) you and I are not responsible for whether or not they actually come, but we are responsible for delivering the message
 - b) the message is more important than the messenger; the mission is more important than my ego
- 3) we each have to ask the Lord what His story is for our life and submit to it when He illuminates for us
 - a) even if it feels like it's counterproductive or goes in a different direction than whatever dreams He's put in your heart, you go where He leads you and you let Him forge and fortify obedience in you at any cost
 - b) [Romans 8:14-25](#)

- B. We were bought with a price; we are not our own ([1 Corinthians 6:20](#)). There is no one better to belong to than Jesus. He is a trustworthy Master. It is because we are sons that we willingly become bondservants of Jesus Christ.



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- C. The following passages outline Paul's theology on adoption and sonship.
- 1) [Galatians 4:1-7](#)
 - a) the heir, as long as he was a child and had not yet grown up, did not differ from a slave and needed the protection of the law
 - 2) [Romans 8:14-25](#)
 - a) before, you were a child of wrath; but when you were adopted, you received a new family name
 - b) because you are a son, you have the kind of confidence before God that the child of a king has in approaching his father at 2:30 AM for a glass of water
 - c) because you are a son, you CAN endure hardship as a good soldier, to please the one who enlisted you
 - 3) [Ephesians 1:5-12](#)
 - 4) [Ephesians 2: 1-10](#)
- D. It is good and right and appropriate to rest in all these beautiful promises and provisions in adoption and sonship, but rest is not an excuse to abdicate the responsibility to serve in the family business ([2 Timothy 2:2](#))
- 1) [Luke 2:49](#)
 - 2) [Philippians 2:5-11](#)
 - a) entitlement is an immaturity that hinders you from growing up and bearing enduring fruit or fighting the good fight ([1 Timothy 6:12](#), [2 Timothy 4:7-8](#))
- E. Life is hard, but it is SO worth it. Let the "Abba, Father" erupt within your heart. Allow Him to minister to you as His child. *And* soldier up. Do not get involved with civilian affairs. You are not a civilian. Soldier Up.