



SOLDIERS FOR CHRIST

BIG IDEA: The life of the Christian requires perseverance and a singular focus on the mission.

DATE: Wednesday, November 5 and Sunday, November 9, 2025

SCRIPTURE: 2 Timothy 2:1-7; 20-26

OPENING QUESTION

Have you ever joined a team, enrolled in a class, or started a new job and quickly realized, "This isn't for me!" What did you do? Did you stick it out or change your plans?

In today's section of Paul's letter, he is clear in telling Timothy that the life of a Christian minister is not for the faint of heart. He goes on to stress exactly what will be required of those who "enlist" in God's army and choose this path. Paul uses four illustrations to make his point - a teacher, a soldier, an athlete and a farmer.

SETTING THE STAGE

Paul opens this next section of his letter with instructions for Timothy to "endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2:3). Paul approached his ministry in the same way a soldier approached a battlefield. He knew that effective tactics, hard work, and endurance amid struggles were necessary to secure the victory. Spiritually speaking, there were no gains without pains...no crowns without crosses. Persevering through trials leads to success.

STUDY THE BIBLE

2 Timothy 2:1-7; 20-26 (NLT)

Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. ²You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others. ³Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them. ⁵And athletes cannot win the prize unless they follow the rules. ⁶And hardworking farmers should be the first to enjoy the fruit of their labor. ⁷Think about what I am saying. The Lord will help you understand all these things.

²⁰In a wealthy home some utensils are made of gold and silver, and some are made of wood and clay. The expensive utensils are used for special occasions, and the cheap ones are for everyday use. ²¹If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your

life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work. ²²Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.

²³Again I say, don't get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. ²⁴A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people. ²⁵Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people's hearts, and they will learn the truth. ²⁶Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants.

DISCUSSION

TEACH THESE TRUTHS: 2 Timothy 2:1-7

What can a soldier teach us about staying focused on our mission? What about an athlete? A farmer?

What insight did Paul give Timothy that can increase your focus on the mission?

What helps *you* remain focused on Christ's mission, especially during difficult days?

BE VESSELS FOR GOD'S USE: 2 Timothy 2:20-26

Do you have a set of "good dishes" or certain items you only bring out for special occasions? What are they? What makes them special?

Vessels of gold and silver and vessels of wood and clay all have their purposes in the home. However, as Paul notes here, some purposes are more noble than others. Why is it important for believers to be cleansed from dishonorable purposes?

One of the best ways to make ourselves useful to God is to recognize the things that have lasting value in our lives and choose to pursue those things. What does Paul say that we are to flee? What does Paul say we should pursue instead? How do you practically live that out?

Why is it important for a servant of God to possess a gentle spirit, an ability to teach, patience, humility, and a willingness to correct false doctrine? Which of these do you do well? Which are growing areas for you? What would it look like to possess one quality without another? How do they go together?

RESPONSE

As you think about your focus on the mission Jesus has called you to do you need to:

- Be more like a good teacher who is committed to teaching the truth?
- Be more like a focused soldier and put aside distractions so you can focus on the mission?
- Be more like a winning athlete and not disqualify yourself from the mission?
- Be more like a hardworking farmer patiently working and waiting for the success of the mission?