

SUFFERING HARDSHIP

2 Timothy 2:3-13

4/9/17

Jesus Christ came to willingly suffer pain and death so that you and I might be saved from the eternal consequences of our sin.

When we accept Him as our Lord and Savior the Bible tells us that we are declared to be complete in Christ (Col. 2:10).

Redeemed

Justified

Forgiven all of our trespass

Reconciled to God

No longer any condemnation

Born Again

Adopted as God's children

Delivered from the Powers of Darkness

Access to God in prayer

Objects of His Intercession

Heavenly Citizens

Partakers of His Inheritance

Become a part of His Bride, the church

Sealed with the Spirit

Indwelt by the Spirit

He suffered and died to do all of this for us.

Our passage this morning calls upon us to be willing to voluntarily sacrifice and suffer for Him.

Read 2 Timothy 1:8-14; 2:1-7

1. Suffer hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2:3-4

a. Like a good soldier, don't get entangled in the affairs of everyday life.

A good soldier voluntarily gives up the ordinary pleasures and activities of civilian life.

Likewise we as Christians are called to willingly and voluntarily set aside the normal activities of everyday life in order to tell others about Christ.

We are not to let other things take priority in our lives.

Hobbies, television, the internet, kids' activities, even work

We are called to simplify our lives and put first things first.

b. Like a good soldier, seek to please the one who enlisted you.

Our ultimate goal in life should be to please our Savior who enlisted us.

Overseas missionaries willingly give up the comforts, security, and financial benefits of living in the United States.

They do this in order to pass on the treasure to those living in other countries.

At one time **C. T. Studd** was a world famous cricket player. However as a student at Cambridge University he heard D. L. Moody preach and his life was never the same again. He dedicated his life and wealth to Christ. He spent hours trying to convert his teammates. He later gave up cricket to become a missionary to China. While there he received an inheritance of what today would be well over \$1 million. Within 24 hours he gave it all away to various ministries. Years later he and his wife were forced to return to England for health reasons. But he felt God calling him to Africa. He was told that if he went he would not live for long. His only answer was that he had been looking for a chance to die for Jesus. C. T. Studd continued to minister in Africa until our Savior took him home.

He was a good soldier of Christ.

He was unwilling to be entangled in the everyday affairs of life.

- Missionaries aren't the only ones called to voluntarily sacrifice. All of us are.
 - ◆ For many years we had a couple in our church who simplified their lives and voluntarily sacrificed for other.
 - ◇ Though both worked, yet they chose to live in a small house and drive older cars.
 - ◇ They were known for their hospitality.
 - ◇ They gave up many of this life's conveniences so that they could financially support missionaries.
 - ◇ They did this so that they could generously support missionaries all over the world.

Like good soldiers, we too should have a single-minded commitment to please the one who enlisted us.

2. Suffer hardship like a good athlete. 2:5

a. Like a good athlete, compete according to the rules.

Good athletes work hard in order to receive a prize.

But to receive the prize they must compete according to the rules.

In recent years a number of well-known athletes have been suspended from competition and had their awards taken away because they have used performance enhancing drugs.

They weren't competing according to the rules.

As Christians, we must live by God's rules if we want to win a heavenly reward.

1 Corinthians 9:25-27 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷ but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

b. Like a good athlete, we must sacrifice now to win a future prize.

Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

We, like athletes, should strive to win the prize.

But we must remember to compete according to God's rules.

3. Suffer hardship like a good farmer. 2:6-7

a. Like a good farmer, work hard.

In those days many worked as tenant farmers (share croppers) who work hard for someone else in order to receive a percentage of the crops.

A good farmer works hard to receive his share of the crops.

◆ It takes a lot of hard work to get a good crop.

◇ Plowing, planting, watering, fertilizing, weeding, and harvesting in the hot sun

It takes hours of toil and hard work before they saw the fruit of their labor.

◆ The same is true for the Christian.

◇ The fruit we are looking for is seen in the lives of our disciples

◇ Ultimately we receive the fruit of heavenly rewards.

b. Like a good farmer, we can expect to receive our share of the crops.

All of us should look forward to hearing God say,

Matthew 25:21 ". . . 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Luke 19:17 . . . 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.'

v. 7 Consider- Prayerfully reflect on, think about what this means and God will give you understanding of how it applies to your life.

4. Remember the example of Jesus. 2:8

Dead- sacrifice and suffering

Risen- deity, victory, power, glory

Descendant of David

Jesus is the promised Messiah, through the line of David

1 Peter 2:21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps

5. Remember the example of Paul. 2:9-10

a. He suffered hardship for the gospel. v. 9

He suffered great hardship So that others might receive the treasure of God's Word.

2 Corinthians 11:23-29

He was imprisoned as a criminal and martyred for his faith.

BUT the word of God was not imprisoned

Though the ages many have tried to eradicate Christianity.

There were more than 700,000 Christians in China before the Communist conquest of the 1940s. During the Cultural Revolution at least 30 million people were killed, including most of the Christians. This did not stop the Word of God. Today there are somewhere between 100-200 million Christians in China.

Isaiah 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it.

b. He endured all things for the sake of the chosen. v. 10

- Paul knew that God is drawing people to Himself.

Titus 1:1 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God . .

Acts 13:48 . . . as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

- Paul also knew we are responsible to pass on the message.

Romans 10:14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

6. Remember this trustworthy statement. 2:11-13

a. If we died with Him, we will also live with Him. v. 11

- All who come to Christ are seen by God to have died with Him. (Positionally)

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

- All those who physically die as Christians will ultimately live with Christ

b. If we endure, we will also reign with Him. v. 12a

- Not all will reign with Christ to the same extent.

Cf Luke 19:15-27

c. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. v. 12b

- This is not referring to some temporary denial of Christ in a moment of fear.

♦ Peter and the disciples denied Jesus in a moment of weakness but Jesus sought them out.

- This is referring to a person who refuses to receive Christ as His Lord and Savior.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

- If we deny Him, He will deny us.

d. If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. v. 13

- Even though we may fail Him, He will not deny us.

1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

John 6:37-40

Though guarding the treasure brings hardship, it also brings great reward.