



# Second Timothy

Paul's Last Words

# Faithfulness Has Its Reward

Soldiers, Athletes, Farmers

II Timothy 2:1-7

Lesson Four

*Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum*

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## Paul's Last Words

### Faithfulness Has Its Reward—II Timothy 2:1-7

Today's lesson has some very interesting pictures. Paul was a master teacher and knew that if he could draw a picture for his students, they would see the lesson much more clearly. Read II Timothy 2:1-7.

The first thing we see is that Paul is telling Timothy that he should not be the end of the line. What Timothy had learned needed to be passed on. The Christian is not a dam to hold back the water. The Christian is a channel through which the message of Christ flows to others.\*

Timothy had heard about and had experienced the grace of God through Jesus. He had accepted God's offer of salvation, which is a free gift (grace) from God. This grace offer was not only for Timothy, but Paul said that many others had heard and experienced the same gift.

Then Paul said, what you have received of God, you must pass on. And, note that Paul told Timothy that he was to give this message to others, that he could trust, to pass it on. So, Timothy was taught by Paul, and Timothy was to teach others. That way, the truth of God would continue to be taught and believed.

It is most important that Christians learn that God wants us all to be carriers of the Good News. Receiving Jesus as Savior is only the beginning. With that comes responsibility to share the Good News with those who have not heard.

Then Paul painted three pictures. He first spoke of soldiers. He said that a good soldier will not get "tangled up" in things that will distract him from his responsibilities. He called this person a "good" soldier. Now there are probably soldiers that get sidetracked when they should be focused. That is a dangerous thing for the soldier, but it is also a very bad thing for the battle. Soldiers don't win battles by wandering off to look at the scenery. They must keep their head down, their weapon ready, their eye on the enemy and look for ways to win the battle.

The mistake of getting sidetracked is a rookie mistake. Paul expected Timothy, and those he trusts with the Gospel, to behave like veterans of training and many battles. Paul challenged Timothy to "endure hardship" like those who are fully committed to the battle, who take their place in the army just as they have been trained and assigned by their commanding officer.

The second picture is of an athlete. One of Paul's favorite ways to illustrate what he was saying was to use stories about athletes. Paul grew up in Tarsus. At that time there was a great stadium

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there. Paul must have seen many athletic events when he was a young boy. He probably became a sports fan, and might have gone to athletic events all his life. Whatever the case, since sports events were very popular in the Roman Empire, this was a good way to help people understand what he was saying.

Paul said that if you want to be a winner, you must compete by the rules. You can't make a touchdown by running passed the sidelines, or running the wrong way. You must do it by the rules. The language Paul used here tells us that he is talking about a professional athlete, not an amateur. This was not someone who played only on weekends or once in a while just for fun. This was a person who was a full time, professional athlete, trained, conditioned and very aware of the rules of the game.

We see here Paul's encouragement for Timothy to give his full time to sharing the Good News. Someone said, "The spare-time Christian is a contradiction in terms." The whole life of a Christian must be dedicated to serving God as He was revealed to us in Jesus. Every moment of our time is His and we should recognize that by giving full effort to serving Him.

We get one more picture, that of a hard-working farmer. The farmer doesn't just drop some seeds in the ground and then sit around until they produce some corn. Growing corn and most other crops is a year-round, full time job. But there is also waiting...patient waiting. Once the seed is sown, the farmer must wait till the corn is fully developed. So the farmer works hard and waits for the reward.

Just as farmers must be up early, never quit until the planting, cultivating and harvesting is done, the Christian must work hard always to please God and to share with others what God has done for him or her and for all of us.

\*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

**Scripture Memory:** "Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

II Timothy 2:3

**Lesson Goal:** To encourage students to be diligent in service to God and to be faithful to tell the Good News, expecting God to bless their efforts.

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### Student Worksheet

#### Faithfulness Has Its Reward—II Timothy 2:1-7

-What does it mean that Timothy should not be the end of the line?

-Receiving Jesus as Savior is only the \_\_\_\_\_. With that comes responsibility to share the \_\_\_\_\_ with those who have not \_\_\_\_\_.

What were the three people who Paul pictured?

-Paul challenged Timothy to “\_\_\_\_\_ hardship” like those who are fully \_\_\_\_\_ to the battle, who take their place in the army just as they have been \_\_\_\_\_ and assigned by their commanding \_\_\_\_\_.

-Like the trained, professional athlete, The whole life of a Christian must be \_\_\_\_\_ to serving God as He was revealed to us in \_\_\_\_\_.

-Just as \_\_\_\_\_ must be up early, never quit until the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ is done, the Christian must work hard always to \_\_\_\_\_ God and to \_\_\_\_\_ with others what God has done for him or her and for \_\_\_\_\_ of us.

**Scripture Memory: “Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”**

II Timothy 2:3

#### **How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:**

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.