

A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST

2 Timothy 2:1-13

By the time the Apostle Paul wrote this letter to Timothy in 67 A.D., persecution had broken out against Christians instigated by Nero's lie that Christians had set fire to the city of Rome. Paul, abandoned and lonely, wrote his beloved partner from a Roman dungeon where he awaited what he assumed would be the trial that would lead to his execution.

In 2 Timothy 2:1-13, Paul challenged Timothy to share in suffering as a good soldier of Jesus Christ keeping in mind the reward Jesus will give His faithful servants.

In 2:1-2, Paul directed Timothy to train men to teach God's Word.

The Roman persecution created a shortage of trained Bible teachers. Paul tasked Timothy to train up Bible teachers to fill the vacancies created by those who had abandoned the faith.

The Church's need for well-trained Bible teachers continues. We need to encourage those with the spiritual gift of teaching to pursue training either here under our teaching staff or by attending a Bible college such as Ethnos Bible Institute or by attending a seminary such as Southern California Seminary.

In 2:3-7, Paul challenged Timothy to share in suffering by serving Jesus as a good soldier during the persecution.

Paul identified three characteristics of a good soldier using three metaphors in verses 4-6. The first metaphor of the soldier teaches that a good servant of Jesus is *mission minded*. The second metaphor of the athlete teaches that a good servant of Jesus is *obedient*. The third metaphor of the farmer teaches that a good servant of Jesus *works hard*. All three metaphors also contain the idea of benefit.

If you are serving Jesus, staying focused on His mission, obeying His teachings and working hard at your ministry, you are a good servant of Jesus and can look forward to receiving the good things Jesus has in store for you.

For some of us the doctrine of rewards is a new concept. That is the fault of certain theological filters that failed to recognize this extremely important doctrine. The truth of rewards was very much on Paul's mind as we see in verses 8-13.

In verses 8-13, Paul revealed the good things coming to those who serve well, particularly in times of persecution.

The *elect* are believers who possess justification salvation. *Salvation with eternal glory* refers to receiving glory in the life to come (Romans 8:17).

In verses 11-13, Paul articulated the glory to be received by faithful servants and the loss which will be experienced by faithless servants.

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

Those killed as a result of serving Jesus during the persecution will live with Jesus for eternity.

if we endure, we will also reign with him;

Those who endure suffering during persecution will reign with Jesus in His Messianic Kingdom.

if we deny him, he also will deny us;

Jesus will deny those who deny Him the reward of reigning with Him.

if we are faithless, he remains faithful— for he cannot deny himself.

Jesus is trustworthy whether His servant believes it or not.

Keeping in mind the good things with which Jesus is going to reward you will strengthen you as you serve Him in times of persecution or peace.

We should, as Paul said in verse 2:8, keep these things in mind. Jesus is going to reward our faithful service. Keeping that in mind will strengthen our resolve to be good soldiers, good servants; mission-minded, obedient and hard-working.

GRACE NEWS AND NEEDS

-Women's Ministry "Mom's Panel", June 2nd, 6:00 PM.

Free! Sign up on the patio and bring a salad to share. Childcare provided.

- Baptism Class, Sunday, June 4th, 10:00 AM, Modular.

- Blood Drive, Friday, June 9th, 1:00 - 7:00 PM, Modular.

- Men's Breakfast, Saturday, June 10th, 7:30 AM

\$10, signup on the patio.

- VOM Needs for May: One gallon zip seal plastic bags / Medical tape.

- Financial Update:

Budget Goal to Date: \$291,631.00

Giving received: \$286,183.00

Shortfall: \$5,448.00