

Grace for the Fight

Speaker: Elder Chris

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You then, my child, **be strengthened by the grace** that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. **Share in suffering** as a **good soldier** of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in **civilian pursuits**, since **his aim** is to please the one who enlisted him. An **athlete** is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hard-working **farmer** who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. - 2nd Timothy 2: 1- 7

- **Be strengthened by the Grace...**
 - o Strengthened – to build up, to make stronger (I would add to “empower”)
 - o God’s grace gives us the option to be stronger, but this strength only takes place when grace is embraced.
 - When grace is not embraced it’s not that we remain stagnant, we actually move in reverse, for like natural strength, unless muscles continue to be torn in a consistent manner, the muscles strength transforms into excess fat
 - We must Keep going, Keep pushing, Keep building
- **Share in the suffering as a Good Soldier**
 - o What does that suffering look like?
 - Internal
 - Fear (fear of death, loss, pain)
 - Insecurity (training, team, purpose, importance)
 - Past pain (death of another soldiers faith, unwanted injuries)
 - External
 - Current attacks and cross fire (unruly children, financial lost)
 - Playing field (unfamiliar ground, crossed boundaries) (like walking life with each other in a vulnerable/intimate way)
 - Unit (Team) Communication
 - o While you’re fighting this battle, other battles are taking place simultaneously
- **But a Good Solider**
 - o Has prepared their mind for painful discipline and preparation
 - o Has prepared their spirit for patience and long-suffering
 - o Has prepared their hearts for the life of sacrifice
- **No Soldier gets entangled in Civilian Pursuits**
 - o How I look (gunk on their face, dirty in clothes, musk on their body)
 - o What people think (so boring, disciplined, uptight, no fun, so hard)
 - o Provision for next week (if the lights are going to be on)
- **His aim** is to please the one who enlisted him
 - o I wondered why the one who enlisted him mattered so much
 - Why not please His country?
 - Why not please His family?
 - Why not please himself?
 - o Because the one who enlisted Him
 - Saw what the solider possessed
 - Saw the solider beyond his flaws
 - Saw who he would become
 - Saw what he had that would better his unit

- He Saw the best in us and gave grace for the worst
 - The Military is willing to accept pretty much anyone who is willing to submit to their mission. They will train you on all the other stuff
 - Likewise, God looks past who we were and sees who will become under His Lordship. He will train us through His Word and His Spirit in a way that WILL/MUST bring forth success
- The Text continues by moving to the athlete
 - I love this one for it speaks of not skill, not talents, but of obedience.
 - Story of My Brother Carlos
 - Carlos ran 4 x 400 meter race last year. He was the 3rd leg.
 - 3rd leg is in my opinion the most important runner on the field
 - He is the one who is to ensure the 4th and last runner a smooth victory
 - Carlos would typically run his 100 meters in 51 secs.
 - This race was vital to the team because it determine if they won Lower State and although Carlos was a junior the 3 other runners were all seniors.
 - This race mattered
 - Carlos had practiced, was disciplined, prepared, and adequately qualified for this race
 - He ran hard, and the Victory was found as the 4th place runner easily ran through the finish line
 - UNTIL
 - The official called Carlos on a line foul disqualifying the team from the race.
 - You see, Carlos didn't switch lanes, but for simply one step He lost focus of the rules and took only one step into a lane that was not his
 - He was devastated
 - His skill didn't bring Him victory, but his lack of cautiousness to the rules caused him and the team a loss.
 - I believe this is what the scripture is speaking of
 - We must know the word(training), and obey the word (submit)
- Lastly, the text speaks on the farmer
 - I believe this is the one that is the hardest for us to practice, and its summed up in two words
 - Confident Patience
 - Patience in the process
 - Confident in the resulting product
 - Grace Place
 - He has given us [Grace Place] the tools
 - He has given us the Resources
 - He has commanded us to "USE OUR STAFF" (Exodus) to part the waters, send the plague, and heal the people
 - We have the Fertile Grow – Provision
 - We have the Seed – Word of God
 - We have the Fertilizer – Test and Trials
 - We have the farmer/workers - Us
 - We have the Rain – Holy Spirit
 - We have the Sun – God Himself
 - And by God's grace we have the patience to wait confidently for the harvest in its due season

- So what do these all (Soldier/Athlete/Farmer) have in common for they seem vastly different
 - o Patience
 - o Discipline
 - o Expectation/Goal
 - o Process
 - o THE BIGGEST COMMONALITY IS
 - THEY ALL HAVE AN ENEMY AND THEY ALL HAVE A GOAL
 - The enemy wants to
 - The soldier's life → physically (sickness [cancer], accidents[car crash])
 - o Obvious Hit – we must watch our steps
 - The athletes faith → internally (bills, tension, disunity, failures, your children)
 - o Spiritual Hit – we must prepare our minds
 - The farmers Blessing → the harvest (your blessings, your future)
 - o Secret Hit
 - (canker worms, rabbits) come in your absence where we must watch and protect our blessing
 - o But only by God's Grace can we find strength to win the battle
 - o Only by his grace can we as His soldiers be shield by the grenades thrown our way...for He will throw Himself on it...sacrificing His life to save ours
 - o Only by God's grace can we as his athletes get back up after falling to finish the race that he's set before us for HIS name sake
 - o Only by God's grace can we as His farmers reap a fruitful harvest
 - o It is only by His grace that we can face the enemy and walk in confidence that the victory or death, hell, and the grace has been won.