

Wednesday in the Word
Digging Deeper
November 10, 2021
Focus

2 Timothy 2:1-4 KJVS

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. [2] And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. [3] Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. [4] No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

We will concentrate today on verses 3 and 4. First, some Greek. To 'endure hardness' is captured in one Greek word, kakopatheō; to undergo hardship: - be afflicted endure afflictions (hardness) suffer trouble. Soldiers of Jesus (us) are told and expected to undergo hardship. How? Why? Because, as we saw last week in our study in First John, we are at war. With the spirit of antichrist, soon with Antichrist, himself for some, and with the unsaved world. It may not seem reasonable to consider being at war with the unsaved but they belong to Satan. 2 Corinthians 4:4, John 8:44. They don't know this so they sometimes are unintentional combatants of the cross. They may have already rejected Christ either willfully or in lifestyle choices, but some are destined for salvation and that's where we come in. John 6:44, 1 Thessalonians 5:9, Romans 8:29. God will lead people directly into our path so our sharing the gospel will soon result in their conversion from the unwitting control of evil to the wonderful leading of the Lord. The peace and satisfaction of seeing people trust their eternity to Jesus is unparalleled. Some who reject are polite enough about it but many become quite angry at your suggestion that they allow Jesus Christ to assume the throne of their lives. Christians are increasingly under the pressure of persecution resulting in hardship for those of us bold enough to stand for Christ. Joshua 1:9. Hardship shows up as well in many other ways. Some hardship hits all humanity but many of life's troubles are decidedly spiritual in nature. James 1:2-4 Because we are sensitive to the needs and concerns of others we open ourselves to problems that many would choose to ignore. Philippians 2:4, Galatians 6:2,9-10. Love can indeed hurt. We also know that the illnesses and tribulations that attack us are due to the fallen state of creation. Some of us suffer physical, emotional or psychological brutality and carry on the suffering of Christ. Philippians 1:29, 3:10, 1 Peter 5:10. We are soldiers for the Lord and we must undergo hardship for Him. We must recognize when trials and testing are due to His integrity in our lives and His Hand in our circumstances. We suffer FOR Him. Not needlessly or unknown by the Savior but because of Him and we must endure this to glorify Him. 2 Timothy 3:12, 1 Peter 4:12-13. As we honor those who've given their lives for our nation we likewise honor those who are martyred for Christ and we are inspired to be living sacrifices for God's Will. Romans 12:1-2.

We are told next that as we are led into battle against evil we need to remain focused on the task at hand and not be 'entangled with the affairs of this life'. 'Entangleth' is interpreted; *emplekō*; to entwine that is (figuratively) be involved with: - entangle (in self with). Continuing with the Greek expression we are warned not to be 'entwined or entangled with the transactions of our present existence'. It seems life in general demands so much of our time, effort and devotion that the weightier issue of God's work and will are marginalized by comparison. God isn't telling us to stop living life. He is telling us that life is temporal, momentary, even shallow when considered alongside His concerns. 2 Peter 3:11, 2 Corinthians 4:17-18. How much of life will soon pass and be forgotten? How much else will be carried into eternity? Admit it. We get off target, out of focus. We put so much effort and stress into so many things that truly matter very little or are very self gratifying. God is urging us to realize His role as Lord and King. Matthew 6:33. He knows what is best and most important for us and we must look to Him, our Commander for our marching orders and willingly submit to His Authority. Looking to and trusting God in all situations will result in our best life and bring the most joy and fulfillment. Proverbs 3:5-6. God has chosen us in Jesus Christ to serve and worship Him. Our best intention ought to be to please Him. Our best life is found in doing His will. Psalm 16:11.