

A Farmer for Christ Jesus

Introduction and Review

- The past two weeks we addressed many aspect of the Christian life as a soldier & athlete for Christ Jesus from 2 Timothy 2:1-5.
- We learned that two dominate traits of a Christian soldier are: **strength** in ministry and **dedication** to ministry (v. 1, 4).
- We learned that the athlete for Christ is running & training with purpose to receive a crown of righteousness, glory & life.
- We also learned that the athlete for Christ must obey the word & will of God – no shortcuts, cheating or looking the easy way!

I. The Description of A Farmer for Christ

A. Worker

*A farmer by definition must be a worker to survive. Laziness leads to no crops & no survival (Pr. 20:4). Likewise Christian ministry requires the believer to be a **worker** (Mt. 9:37-38; 1Th. 1:3; 1Tim. 5:17). Laziness in ministry leads to no fruit & no survival of the ministry.*

B. Hard worker

*“κοπιᾶω” means to exert oneself physically, mentally or spiritually; strive or struggle. A farmer starts early & works late into the day regardless of the weather. Likewise living for Christ is extremely demanding – physically & spiritually (Rom. 16:6, 12). It involves sacrifice of time, money, comfort, plans, desires & **even needs** (2Co. 11:27).*

II. The Work of A Farmer for Christ

A. Planting and watering (1Co. 3:5-9)

*The farmer must plant the seeds properly in the soil. Then he must water & nurture the seeds & patiently wait for the result. The Christian must also plant & water – living holy, sharing the gospel, helping people physically & spiritually with patience (Mt. 5:16; Jas. 5:7). The Lord has assigned ministry **work** to be done (v. 5d), gives the **growth** (v. 7b) & gives **rewards** (v. 8b). So He deserves the **praise** (v. 9)! The reward is based on the quality of labor, not the quantity of results (Jeremiah, Habakkuk, etc. – 2Co. 2:15-16).*

B. Harvesting

Harvesting is the gathering in of a particular crop – grain, olives, figs, grapes, etc. Spiritual planting & watering means there will be a spiritual reaping & harvesting (Gal. 6:7-9). Harvesting is when Christians go out into the field or world of unbelievers with the gospel to call people to follow Jesus (Mt. 9:37-38).

III. The Reward of A Farmer for Christ

A. The crop

The harvest or crop is the farmer’s reward for all his labor & it keeps him motivated. The harvest was also a sign that God had blessed his labors. Jesus saw the harvest of souls as rewarding & motivational (Mt. 9:36). The Christian is encouraged to be faithful in the work of ministry because of the reward (1Co. 15:58).

B. The first share

The Christian who is faithful in taking the gospel to & making a disciple of an unbeliever receives the joy of his/her labor immediately or “first” (Phil. 4:1). The faithful Christian who works hard in ministry will also have the certainty of receiving a reward when Christ returns (1Co. 3:11-15).

We must seriously think about these truths & trust God to give us understanding (v. 7).

ILL: As a child in AR we occasionally picked cotton. Most were hard workers, filled bags will clean cotton, weighed in heavy & were paid appropriately. WW was lazy, half filled bag with & debris, weighed in light & paid very little. Same with blue berries in MI.

APPL: The same is true with us spiritually. The Christian who is not diligent, not faithful & not wholehearted in his/her work should not expect that the Lord will overlook this unacceptable labor. But the Lord expects Christians (bought with the price of Jesus’ blood) to work hard for Jesus all the days of our life & then enter into His glory!

CONCLUSION

So then my beloved brother or sister if you are a Christian, you are also a farmer for Jesus. And since you are a farmer, you should want to work hard for Jesus, patiently waiting for the Lord to bring forth the results of your labor. Jesus has set you free my brother & sister from working in Satan's graveyard. He set you free to work in His vineyard; taking the gospel to those who are lost, answering questions of life & death, following up with people; sacrificing your time, money, talents, skills and patiently waiting for God to reveal the fruit of your labor. Will you recommit yourself to this hard work today? Will you recommit yourself to this labor of love until you die?

If you are not a Christian, all of your labor is in vain. Only things done for Christ & in Christ will last eternally. You must come to Jesus in your heart & believe that He can save you from your sin. You must place your trust in Him. Depend upon Jesus alone to save you; not church attendance, Sunday School, bible study, baptism, Lord's Supper, etc. Jesus alone will save you. Trust Him today!

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