

Mentoring Hearts, Changing Lives

—AN ATHLETE STUDY OF 2ND TIMOTHY

SELL IT ALL

"When it comes to choosing between storing a championship ring or trophy in a room, or providing kids with an opportunity to change their lives, the choice is pretty simple: Sell it all." Kareem Abdul-Jabbar sold 4 championship rings, 3 MVP Trophies and other memorabilia for 2.8 million dollars for a youth education program.

Whereas many men would climb over their own grandma to get a championship ring or MVP trophy, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar decided dusty jewelry mattered little when compared to investing in the next generation. It's not that those mementos *didn't matter* it's that something *mattered more*.

For what would you "sell it all?" In Matthew 13:45, Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to a treasure hidden in a field. A man found the treasure, covered it, sold all he had and bought the field. Was he stupid to sell it all? No way! By selling it all, he got much more in return.

If you've been coming to this study to see if this Jesus "thing" is all "worth it," rest assured, it is of greater value than anything you can give up. But catch this, the person that invited you cared for you enough to risk an unknown reaction, ridicule, a lost friend, etc. They "bet the farm" so you might find the treasure in the field.

"The main thing is to keep the main thing, the main thing."

—Lee Iacocca

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-7

¹You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ²and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

³Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

⁴No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

"If you're lost and wandering, come stumbling in like a prodigal child...Whatever you've done can't overcome the power of the blood."

I think we can all have more of two things: first, more banjo in worship. Second, and more importantly, reminders of the hope and encouragement found in the Gospel. Scan the QR code for just that. If you've surrendered you life to Christ, celebrate. If not, *let the gates of glory open wide*.



DISCUSSION

What is something you'd never sale for any price?

1. What did Timothy receive from Paul and what was he supposed to do about it? (2)

2. What 3 illustrations does Paul present of Christian endurance and what is the requirement for each? (4-6)

Illustration

Requirement

3. ID the similarities between this role and the work of mentoring and/or discipling.

Soldier-

Athlete-

Farmer-

4. In what ways are you investing in...

...your life right now?

...your life in the future?

...eternity?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you that you will spend eternity with Jesus? If you're anything less than 10, don't wait. Talk to your Coach today!

ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION



Mentoring Hearts, Changing Lives

WEEK 5

—AN ATHLETE STUDY OF 2ND TIMOTHY



STUDY NOTES THE GREAT COMMISSION

In some of his final words on Earth, Jesus said to his disciples, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age*” (Matthew 28:18-20, key words underlined).

Notice that Jesus didn’t offer a “Great Suggestion.” He declared the “Great Commission,” that we evangelize the lost, enlist them into a local church body through baptism, and educate them to become more like Jesus. Timothy experienced this. He saw and heard Paul do this. He’s done this himself. However, in a moment of discouragement, Paul needed to give him a mission critical reminder.

Paul said, “**be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**” Literally, it means “keep on being strengthened.” These words challenge every believer’s natural tendency to do God’s work in their own strength.

Paul went on, “**What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses...**” What do you think Timothy heard? He probably heard a lot about the *grace that is in Christ Jesus*. Paul again wanted to remind Timothy of his defensive capabilities—primarily to “remember.” Offensively, however, Timothy was to **entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also**. Paul urged Timothy that men ought not be judged as the world does—popularity, wealth, talent—but by something much more important, faithfulness.

MENTORING HEARTS REQUIRES POINTING TO HEAVENLY REWARDS

The illustrations in the next few verses involve a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer. Each illustration highlights four things: 1) the role, 2) a form of hardship endured in that role, 3) the personal reward received for enduring that hardship. 4) the reason that hardship may arise for one engaged in this task as it relates to discipleship.

For example, **the soldier**. A Roman soldier was expected to keep only one thing in his sights: the service of his commander. He was not allowed to marry, nor engage in agriculture, trade, or manufacturing. These things are not sinful, but they pose a threat to the soldier since involvement in them would interfere with his primary military responsibilities.

Each soldier had been trained to measure the entire worth of his entire soldierly existence based on the degree to which his faithfulness

would **please** his immediate superior that **enlisted him** and, ultimately, the empire. This faithful service, and the **suffering** it required, defined his life.

Likewise, **an athlete** could only experience victory if he **competes according to the rules** as set by the authorities over those games. But what did this have to do with Timothy or biblical discipleship?

Some basic rules set by Olympic authorities over those games included: 1) Birth: The ancient Olympics required Greek-born competitors. 2) Training: The ancient Olympics required a 10-month training period and an oath before Zeus from each athlete that he had completed it. 3) The event: Each athlete had to conform to the rules for the event or be disqualified.

Similarly, the “rules” for Christians are 1) Rebirth: Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3, “*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*” 2) Training: 1 Peter 3:15 says, “*But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.*” Preparation requires Christ-honoring training. 3) The event: Hebrews 12:1 says, “*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.*”

Finally, the faithful **farmer** would have **the first share of his crops**. His diligence enabled him to enjoy the fruit of his labor...literally. To remain motivated on a daily basis, during the long months in between harvests, the farmer and his family could reflect on and appreciate the future rewards of such faithfulness.

Farming crops offers no shortcuts. A farmer can do nothing to make crops grow. He can plant, water, feed, and pull weeds—in other words, he can tend the soil—but God must bring the growth. When disciple someone, you can’t make them grow. All you can do is prep the soil, feed and water their spiritual appetite, and send them back out into the world. Just like a coach can’t run on the field and take a player’s spot, a mentor can’t play the game for a disciple.

HEAVENLY REWARDS COMPLETE EARTHLY MISSIONS

Paul told Timothy, “**Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.**” Each role faces adversity both internally and externally. Each one experiences delayed gratification after significant investment. These lessons apply not only in our own investment as disciples of Christ, but as we seek to disciple others.