Dear Open Door Family,

There is only one thing worse than having to mow the lawn. That is when you know you have to mow the lawn but cannot because your lawn mower breaks down. So now not only do you have to mow the lawn, you have to fix the lawnmower. For some guys that is an easy matter. For me, well, that is another story. I can use the tools and replace parts but I never know what is actually wrong or even how to figure out what is wrong. Oh well, that is all part of life. Being a Christian is compared to being a soldier, an athlete, or a farmer in these verses. Let's look at them together.

2 Timothy 2:3-6 *(NIV) Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. [4] No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs-he wants to please his commanding officer. [5] Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. [6] The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops.*

Have you ever wondered what a soldier, an athlete and a farmer have in common? Here are some of thoughts on that. A **Soldier** cannot become entangled in civilian life and loose his FOCUS; he must follow his commander. The **Athlete** must compete in the RIGHT WAY in order to win the race. The **Farmer** must WORK HARD to be able to reap the harvest. The danger if they make a mistake is staggering. The Soldier who looses his FOCUS and disobeys his commander could die or cause others to die. The Athlete who does not Compete by the Rules looses the race and maybe even his reputation. The Farmer who does not WORK HARD can loose his lively hood. *"Like soldiers, we have to give up worldly security and endure rigorous discipline. Like athletes, we must train hard and follow the rules. Like farmers, we must work extremely hard and be patient. But we keep going despite suffering because of the thought of victory, the vision of winning, and the hope of harvest."* Life App. Bible Notes

PRAYER: Lord, help me to be willing to Follow and Obey only You, to live out Your Word each day in my life to be Diligently and Disciplined as I serve You. Lord, may I be willing to Patiently wait for Your timing in all things.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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