



FRANKLIN ROAD

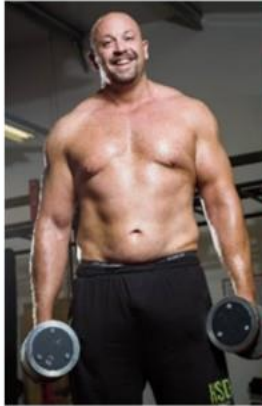
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NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 18, 2019

BE STRONG



IN THE OPENING VERSES OF II TIMOTHY 2 PAUL IS GIVING HIS ASSOCIATE TIMOTHY A PEP TALK. HIS INSPIRING WORDS ARE “BE STRONG!” HE THEN PROCEEDS TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTIVE ILLUSTRATIONS OF HOW TO DO SO. WE WOULD DO WELL TO CONSIDER THESE SUGGESTIONS.

THE FIRST THING PAUL PROPOSES IS TO FOCUS AS A SOLDIER (V. 4). “NO SOLDIER GETS ENTANGLED IN CIVILIAN PURSUITS, SINCE HIS AIM IS TO PLEASE THE ONE WHO ENLISTED HIM.” (ESV) WE MUST RESIST GETTING CAUGHT UP IN THE COSMOS AROUND US. WE CAN’T AVOID IT AND MUST MINISTER WITHIN THIS WORLD BUT AT THE SAME TIME BE CAREFUL LEST WE BECOME DISTRACTED BY THE WORLD’S PLEASURES, POLITICS AND PURSUITS. I THESSALONIANS 2:4 INDICATES THAT WE HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH THE GOSPEL AND OUR MISSION IS TO SPEAK, NOT AS PLEASING MAN, BUT GOD.

IN THE NEXT VERSE TIMOTHY IS REMINDED TO BE DISCIPLINED LIKE AN ATHLETE. NO COMPETITOR WINS WITHOUT FOLLOWING THE RULES. NEW NFL RULES WITH REGARD TO TACKLING HAVE MADE IT HARD FOR PLAYERS TO ADJUST. THEY’VE BEEN FORCED TO LEARN NEW TECHNIQUES IN ORDER TO AVOID PENALTIES. CHRISTIANS TOO MUST BE CONSISTENTLY COMMITTED TO SELF-CONTROL. IN I CORINTHIANS 9:25-27 PAUL REMINDS US THAT EVERYONE WHO COMPETES IN THE GAMES MUST EXERCISE SELF-CONTROL IN ALL THINGS. HE INDICATES THAT HE WORKED HARD TO DISCIPLINE HIS BODY AND MAKE IT HIS SLAVE. SO MUST WE.

HOPE LIKE A FARMER IS THE FINAL ILLUSTRATION IN PAUL’S STRENGTH INSTRUCTIONS FOR TIMOTHY. (SEE VERSE 6) THE FARMER WORKS HARD TO PLANT HIS CROPS BUT THEN MUST WAIT BEFORE REAPING THE RESULTS. JAMES 5:7 STATES THAT “. . . THE FARMER WAITS FOR THE PRECIOUS PRODUCE OF THE SOIL, BEING PATIENT ABOUT IT . . .”. IT’S EASY TO BE IMPATIENT. WE BEGIN TO FEEL LIKE WHATEVER EFFORTS WE’RE PUTTING INTO OUR WALK WITH GOD OR OUR WORK FOR HIM WILL NEVER BE REWARDED AND THE HARVEST WILL NEVER COME. WE NEED STRENGTH TO KEEP GOING UNTIL AT LAST WE JOYFULLY REAP.

GO BACK NOW TO THE OPENING PHRASE OF PAUL’S INSTRUCTIONS. IN II TIMOTHY 2:1 HE WRITES, “YOU THEREFORE, MY SON, BE STRONG IN THE GRACE THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.” THE GRACE GIVEN BY CHRIST IS THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT FOR OUR CHRISTIAN STRENGTH TRAINING. NO ONE CAN BE FOCUSED, DISCIPLINED OR HOPEFUL WITHOUT CHRIST’S EMPOWERING GRACE.

LOOKING UP!

PASTOR CHUCK CIRCLE