

The Farmer's Diligence, part 2

2 Timothy 2:3-7

³ Suffer hardship with *me*, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted *him*. ⁵ And if someone likewise competes as an athlete, he is not crowned *as victor* unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops. ⁷ Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

There are 4 distinct phases of diligence as it forms in our characters: Hesitant, Heroic, Helpful, and Hard-working.

If we can find ourselves in the continuum, then we can make progress toward the character of Christ in this area.

Hesitant: I know there is work must be done-- I even know what it is—but fear is holding me back.

Colossians 4:17

¹⁷ Tell Archippus, "See to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, so that you may fulfill it."

Proverbs 24:10

¹⁰ *If* you show yourself lacking courage on the day of distress, Your strength is meager.

Christ has done a work in you, but you are not as strong as you thought.

Fear has revealed a weakness in your faith and left you unable to act- and God wants you to see it!

Philemon 2b

...to Archippus our fellow soldier...

Archippus heard the word, faced his fears, and launched out into diligent service.

Heroic: Out of a desire to be better than I am, I take on more responsibility than I can reasonably carry for any length of time. I burn out quickly and I quit.

"The sense of sacrifice appeals readily to a young Christian. Humanly speaking, the one thing that attracts to Jesus Christ is our sense of the heroic, and the scrutiny of Our Lord's words suddenly brings this tide of enthusiasm to the test."

- Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

Luke 9:57-61

⁵⁷ As they were going on the road, someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You go." ⁵⁸ And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the sky *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." ⁵⁹ And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father." ⁶⁰ But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God."

The "Heroic" child of God has sincere zeal, but lacks a complete knowledge of him/herself. Jesus dissuades them!

The Heroic can also manifest as a "Savior" complex when we lose sight of the fact that we are only one part of the Body. 2 Bible studies, 3 people they are discipling, the oil change light is on in their car, and they have 9 rescue cats.

The Heroic will fill your life with activity, but it is not full maturity; it indicates a zeal whose knowledge is incomplete.

Helpful: I have been humbled by my heroic failures and am learning to serve in simplicity. I am growing in maturity and co. But my zeal has been tempered by discouragement.

Acts 12:25

²⁵ And Barnabas and Saul returned when they had fulfilled their mission to Jerusalem, taking along with *them* John, who was also called Mark.

Acts 13:13

¹³ Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

Acts 15:37-38

³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. ³⁸ But Paul was of the opinion that they should not take along with them this man who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

2 Timothy 4:11

¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Take along Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

Hard-working: I have grown into maturity with humility; I have ceased to trust myself, and all my hard work is done in the strength of Christ Jesus, whom I know!

Philippians 4:13

¹³ I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.