

DARING FAITH

THE KEY TO MIRACLES

DARING TO GIVE GOD MY BEST

Parts 1-2

“DO YOUR BEST to improve your faith. You can do this by adding goodness, understanding, self-control, patience, devotion to God, concern for others, and love. If you keep growing in this way, it will show that . . . Christ has made your lives useful and meaningful.” **2 Peter 1:5-8 (CEV)**

“Honor God with everything you own; give him the first and the BEST part of everything. If you do this, your barns will fill with grain and your barrels will overflow with wine.” **Proverbs 3:9-10**

HOW DO I GIVE MY BEST TO GOD?

2 Timothy 2:3-7 – A Soldier, An Athlete, A Farmer

“Endure hardship with us like a GOOD SOLDIER of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets tied up in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer. Similarly, if anyone competes as AN ATHLETE, he does not receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules. And the HARDWORKING FARMER should be the first to receive a share of the crops. Think about these three illustrations, and the Lord will help you to understand how they apply to you.” **2 Timothy 2:3-7 (NIV/LB)**

LESSONS FROM THE MILITARY LIKE AN EFFECTIVE SOLDIER, I MUST . . .

1. _____

“The greatest love is shown when a person lays down his life for his friends.” **John 15:13 (LB)**

2.

“Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” **2 Timothy 2:3**

“Live a life of sacrificial love just like Christ loved us and gave himself as an offering and sacrifice for us.” **Ephesians 5:2**

3.

“As Christ’s soldier, do not let yourself become entangled in the affairs of this life, wasting time, for then you can’t please your commanding officer who enlisted you in his army.” **2 Timothy 2:4 (NIV/NLT)**

LESSONS FROM SPORTS

“In a race everyone runs, but only one person wins the prize. So run your race to win. TO WIN the contest YOU MUST DENY YOURSELVES many things that would keep you from DOING YOUR BEST. An athlete goes to all this trouble just to win a ribbon or medal that won’t last, but we do it for an eternal reward that will last forever! So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I fight to win. I’m not just shadow-boxing or playing around. Like an athlete I discipline myself, making sacrifices and training my body to do what it should, not what it wants to do. Otherwise I fear I might be disqualified from the race.” **1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (LB/NCV)**

TO WIN THE PRIZE, I MUST . . .

1.

“In a race everyone runs, but only one person wins the prize. So run your race to win!” **1 Corinthians 9:24 (LB)**

“Run YOUR BEST in the RACE OF FAITH, and win eternal life for yourself; for this is the life that God called you to when you professed your faith before many witnesses.” **1 Timothy 6:12 (TEV)**

2. _____

“Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we’re in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that joyful finish with God in heaven—he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever. And now he’s there, in the place of honor, right alongside God.” **Hebrews 12:2 (Mes)**

“If anyone competes as an athlete, he cannot receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules.” **2 Timothy 2:5 (NAS)**

“To win the contest you must deny yourself many things that would keep you from DOING YOUR BEST. An athlete goes into strict training just to win a ribbon or medal that won’t last, but we do it for an eternal reward that will last forever! . . . So I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should.” **1 Corinthians 9:25, 27 (LB/NLT)**

3. _____

“I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step! I fight to win. I’m not just shadow-boxing or playing around.” **1 Corinthians 9:26 (LB)**

Jesus: “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field.” **Matthew 13:24 (NLT)**

LESSONS FROM FARMING

“Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully. Then God will generously provide all you need, and you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others . . . For God is the one who gives seed to the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will give you many opportunities to do good, and he will produce a great harvest of generosity in you! Yes, you will be enriched SO THAT you can give even more generously! . . . You will be glorifying God through your generous gifts, AND your generosity will prove you are obedient to the Good News of Christ!” **2 Corinthians 9:6-13 (NLT)**

TO REAP A GREAT HARVEST, I MUST . . .

2 PROMISES OF JESUS

“Give, and it will be given back to you. You will be given much. It will be poured into your hands—more than you can hold. You will be given so much that it will spill into your lap. The way you give to others is the way God will give to you.” **Luke 6:38 (ICB)**

Jesus said, “I guarantee you this: Anyone who gives up anything for my sake and the Good News—whether a home or a family member or property—will get MORE THAN THAT BACK, multiplied a HUNDREDFOLD, and in the world to come they will be given life forever!” **Mark 10:29-30**