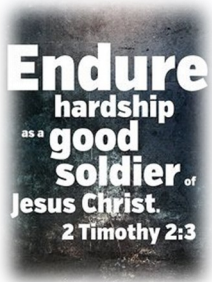


# Making Disciples Aflame for Christ

OCTOBER 2021

*Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 2:3)*

## SUFFER HARDSHIP...AS A GOOD SOLDIER...



**CHRISTIANS SUFFER HARDSHIP.** Jesus told us that in this world we will have tribulation [trials, distresses, pressures, frustrations] (John 16:33). As believers, we not only have the distresses that come from living in a sin-filled world, but the Apostle Paul also tells us that those who have been granted faith in Christ will also suffer for Christ (Philippians 1:29). Paul clearly tells us in 2 Timothy 3:12 that indeed, **ALL who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus WILL BE persecuted.**



LightHouse of Hope  
Ministries

Ray & Tressa Shaw  
Gwen Comman  
P.O. Box 4213  
Clarksburg, WV 26302  
(304) 629-9471 or (304) 669-1787

## SO, CHRISTIANS DO SUFFER HARDSHIP IN THIS LIFE:

- We can suffer intimidation, harassment, and even death because we are identified with Christ as His faithful witnesses and obedient followers – especially all the more as we live godly lives in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- We can suffer as the Holy Spirit conforms us to Christlikeness. The Spirit reveals our love of self and our self-centered, self-exalting way of life; and as He works to expel this old “self-life”, He replaces it with a Christ-loving, Christ-centered, Christ-exalting way of life. The purging can be painful. The results are beautiful.
- We can suffer when our good Father needs to correct us in order to strengthen our faith, train us in obedience, and set our feet on straight paths of righteousness. Sometimes we can find ourselves going the wrong way (even in our practice of faith), and our Father needs to turn us around.
- We can suffer the consequences of our own foolish, prideful choices along this path of life.
- We can suffer simply because we live in a world affected by the fall of Adam wherein all people are suffering under the tyranny of sin. This includes all being exposed to sickness, loss of life, hate, injustice, greed, and more...
- As Christians, we can also suffer for the benefit of others. Our Father of mercies is the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our afflictions so that we will be able to comfort those who are in every affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God (2 Corinthians 1:2-7).

**We all know these various kinds of sufferings.**

**THE QUESTION IS: HOW DO WE HANDLE THEM AS GOOD SOLDIERS?**



**THE CHRISTIAN IS IN A CONTINUAL BATTLE!** First and foremost is the battle to stand firm in our faith in Christ, which is far more precious than gold (1 Peter 1:6-7). Sometimes in the Refiner’s furnace of affliction, it is difficult to endure the fire as God purges and purifies, but we can trust that He is bringing about greater perseverance, proven godly character, and greater hope (James 1:2-4, Romans 5:3-4).

We Christians also battle against the schemes of the devil and his world forces of darkness and the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:11-12).

We also have the battle within wherein our own flesh wants to exalt “self” and wage war against the indwelling Holy Spirit that labors to exalt Christ and manifest His holy and pure life in and through us. These two are in constant opposition to one another (Galatians 6:17).



And, of course, we cannot forget that we are in a continual battle for the minds, hearts and souls of people around us that are captivated and imprisoned by their ideologies, theories, philosophies and religions that keep them blind to the true knowledge of God and their need to be reconciled to Him through Jesus Christ.

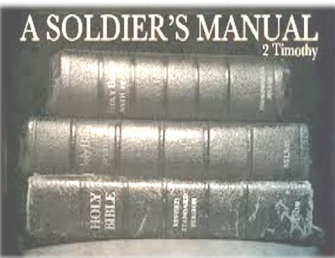
**The Christian life is not a playground. It's a battleground!**



SO, HOW CAN WE BE GOOD SOLDIERS FOR CHRIST?

A GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST:

- **SEEKS FIRST AND FOREMOST TO PLEASE JESUS CHRIST** (2 Timothy 2:4)! He willingly lays aside his rights to his own life and now has a personal and internal commitment to Christ’s call of duty on his life. He desires to be faithful to his Commander in Chief and to be completely obedient to His Word without hesitation.
- **WANTS TO BE ALERT.** He knows he is in active service on the front lines of battle, so he doesn’t allow himself to get distracted in the “stuff” of worldly life that will weaken him (2 Timothy 2:4). He also doesn’t allow himself to fall asleep. He’s not passive or lazy. Even in times of refreshing and quiet, he knows the enemy is on the prowl (1 Peter 5:8).
- **LONGS TO BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS** so he continually seeks Christ’s counsel and His commands through His Word and prayer. He listens and obeys in faith without doubting (Joshua 1:7-9; James 1:6).
- **HE IS ALWAYS CLOTHED AND READIED FOR BATTLE.** His strength and weaponry are not of flesh, but come from the Triune God and His omnipotent might (Ephesians 6:10). God’s soldier is fully clothed in Christ’s spiritual armor, but he knows that he has to sink into that full armor and in obedience to Christ take it up by faith in the battle. God has also graciously given His soldier the indwelling Holy Spirit Who is always present with him night and day.



**THE GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST IS TRAINED BY THE EXAMPLE OF THE GOOD SOLDIER THAT WENT BEFORE HIM.** Jesus Christ the Son of God willingly lay aside His divine rights as the Son of God to do the Father’s call of duty for His life in order to redeem the lost souls of men. Christ sought His Father’s counsel early and often in prayer, and He fully obeyed His Father even to the point of death on the cross. **All thought of saving Himself was lost in the desire to do the will of His Father and to save the life of others.**

**The Apostle Paul knew what it was to be a good soldier of Christ.** He lived and he died for Christ and for his fellow brotherhood. He gave more than he thought he could give. “Christ, who is our life...Christ is all...” (Colossians 3:4, 11); “For to me, to live is Christ...” (Philippians 1:21); “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” (Galatians 2:20). **Paul lived to please Jesus, to glorify His Name, and to lead people to God through Him.**

As Paul’s life on this earth was coming to a close he said, **“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;** in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

WELL DONE, CHRIST’S GOOD AND FAITHFUL SOLDIER.

**Dear ones, in these days when our faith is continually challenged, when we’re suffering hardship, when the battle of faith is raging all around us and even within our own flesh – be a good soldier of Jesus Christ.** Uphold His honor. Live in Him and for Him and for others. Trust His wisdom and His supernatural armor that enables us to be His blessing to the world. **By God’s grace, endure all things and press on for the sake of those in need of eternal Life and Hope in Christ** (2 Timothy 2:10, Philippians 2:12-14).

BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT – SET ABLAZE WITH THE GLORY OF CHRIST – IN ORDER TO LEAD PEOPLE TO GOD.

**We three continue to endure and press on in the teaching and counsel of the Word of God for the sake of those God has yet to save and for those He has already saved.** We are so thankful for your love, prayers and support as we continue to fight the good fight of faith.

To Him Who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion,

*Ray, Tressa & Gwen*  
Fellow Soldiers in Christ



Visit us at: [www.TheLighthouseofHope.net](http://www.TheLighthouseofHope.net) Or E-mail us at: [TShaw@thelighthouseofhope.net](mailto:TShaw@thelighthouseofhope.net) or [GCornman@thelighthouseofhope.net](mailto:GCornman@thelighthouseofhope.net)