

GREETINGS FROM GREENVINE



You all have heard all the little quips about acknowledging pain in our lives. Like....”No pain; no gain.” “Sweat is pain leaving the body.” Seems like while I was in the Army, especially in Basic Combat Training the Drill Sergeants were very fierce on inflicting pain upon us in order for us to become physically fit; emotionally stable and psychologically trained.

They continued to intentionally inflict pain a number of different ways in order to reach the outcome that they wanted to make us fit for duty in the military. It became a goal of the men with me in the training to completely conform to the desired outcome. It seemed like our goal was to be well-pleasing to the ones who were in charge of our training. We almost became human robots carrying out the orders of the ones who were in charge. There was, of course, consequences for not obeying, as well as consequences for obeying and performing. We were not allowed any outside interaction with anyone or anything for the first 4 weeks of training. No mail from outside. No visits from family or friends. We could only talk to or mingle with those who were in our group of men in the training. We weren’t even allowed to visit with the group that was in the next area, which was adjacent to our company area. All structure and training was focused on the task of conforming us to what the United States Army wanted us to become.

The result was that I was in the best physical shape that I have ever been in my entire life. I could muscle through tasks that I had never even tried prior to entering the military. We had to run multiple miles per day, carrying packs and rifles. When we arrived at our destination we had to perform certain exercises that worked all the muscles in our bodies. At the end of the day, it was very easy to fall into our bunks and sleep. However, we were sleep deprived. Going to bed late and getting up early was a way to condition our minds for the hardships of combat. Pain was a way of life. Sore muscles. Aching feet. Cramps. Spasms. Open sores. Humility. All those things that they thought would make us into “all that we could be.”

At meal time we had to run from the barracks to the Mess Hall and perform physical fetes of exercise in order to eat. While eating, there was absolutely no talking. Single servings of food. Upon leaving, we once again had to perform physical exercise in order to leave and go back to our barracks,

only to learn that we had to get into formation outside and once again endure the pain and hardship of training.

Many of the men in my company were transferred immediately to an Advanced Infantry Training on the other side of the base, where they were trained even harder and worked longer to get ready for the difficulties that they would face in warfare. The training facility was called “Tiger Land.” An introduction to the throws of battle in Southeast Asia. I don’t know how much weight I lost, nor how much muscle I gained. I just know that I was completely exhausted, but feeling more fit than I had ever even imagined.

I was thinking through the passage in 1 and 2 Timothy where Paul uses military wording and phrases to describe our lives as followers of Jesus Christ.

In 1 Timothy 1: 18, Paul writes, “Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well.”

Fighting the battle is what we are involved with as Christ followers. However, Paul reminds the believers in Ephesus that, “Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.” Then follows that with “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the forces of evil in the heavenly realm.”

In Chapter 4 Paul writes, “Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things.” Then in Chapter 6, “Fight the good fight of faith.”

In 2 Timothy 2, Paul uses again soldier language: “Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer.”

These verses take those military thoughts and makes them spiritual exercises and illustrates to us how we should live our lives.

I have several thoughts here to tie it all together.

Soldiers have to be trained. The idea of discipline, learning how to act and react to life’s circumstances is a must. It takes time and repetition of the training. That is why it is so important to read the Word daily and pray without ceasing. In 2 Timothy 2: 15, Paul writes, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

A good soldier learns by his training and betters his talents that are to be used in the battles that he will be facing.

These Scriptures also indicate that the spiritual battles are going on constantly, so we have to rely on our training in order to accomplish the task at hand. There is also the promise of suffering as a soldier. Sometimes that is a physical suffering, sometimes it is mental, but it is always a spiritual exercise that we can get through only with the help of the Holy Spirit of God.

Back to the Ephesians passage, we are to “be alert and always keep on praying for the Lord’s people.” This gives me the thought that we are not alone in this battle. We have comrades in arms, so to speak. We have one another to rely upon during our lives here on earth. You are not alone. Other followers of Christ are here to not only hold you accountable, but also to bolster you along the way and to encourage you in your particular battles.

What a great promise that we can help one another and encourage each other as we walk this path of following Christ.

A disciplined life in Christ includes reading the Word on a regular basis, praying all the time about everything, and encouraging each other in our walk following Jesus.

In Acts 2: 42, we are reminded of the 4 truths that were characteristic of the early church that we need for today as well. The passage tells us that the early church were “steadfastly devoted to...”

1. The apostles doctrine. That would be the Bible for us today. The teachings that have been “Spirit breathed” and kept for us to follow. All of the Bible.

2. Breaking of bread. Communion. The Lord’s Supper. Remembering the Savior the way He asked us to. Continually taking our thoughts to what Christ accomplished on the cross for us.

3. Fellowship is our getting together. We gather for many reasons, but one important in particular is visiting and bringing each other up to speed in what is happening in our lives. Encouraging, uplifting conversation is what we have here. Getting together for fun or food or learning or whatever, just to be together on a regular basis.

4. Prayer. Not only are we instructed to individually pray all the time, but we are told to pray together and agree with the Lord as to what He wants for us as a local group of believers.

Fight the good fight. Get the training you need for battle. We are an active force against evil in this world. Blessings as you train and fight. Jack & Karen

Announcements

- Wednesday Night Bible Study -Wednesday nights @ 6pm
- Adult and Teen Challenge will be here Sunday September 12 - We will having a pot luck lunch
- Greenvine's Girls of Grace - Tuesday September 14, 2021@ 6pm
- Going Beyond Simulcast with Priscilla Shirer @ champions Fellowship - Saturday September 25. 2021
- Men's Prayer Breakfast - Wednesday September 29, @ 7am
- Greater Things Gala - Friday October 22, 2021 benefiting Adult and Teen Challenge

Prayer Requests

Byron Rutland - Still recovering, but doing much better

Carol Witte - Praises that she was able to be in church on Sunday

Debbie Reed - Recovery on her wrist

Cliff reed - Treatment for pain in neck and back

Gerri Smart's daughter Terri is beginning to feel better. She received news that her tumor is shrinking

Denny's Sister is in need of a Kidney Transplant

Becky's granddaughter Taylor who has Cystic Fibrosis and is having health issues

David Becker - Will be having hernia surgery (not scheduled yet)

Bobbie's son in law, Michael and his mom and dad all have covid (dad is in the hospital).

Kathy Bates daughter and son in law, their children and her sister all have covid

Oran Lambright, Jack and Karen's friend is in ICU with covid

Jacob Hannon, Jack and Karen's nephew. In hospital

Ray and Bev Morris - Bev and been diagnosed with Alzheimers

Sandra Carson's daughter Candace is having some mental health issues

Bob & Sadie Easley - Health issues

Ed Ehring's sister Julie Robison is suffering from Alzheimer's.

Vicky Hoffman - legally blind but her eyes are getting worse

Our service men and women in Afghanistan

Those families affected by the hurricane in Louisiana

Children and teachers and the new school year begins.

Prayers for those working in health related jobs, for protection. Especially those from our own families:
Karen at St Joseph - Susan - State School - Zella Johnson