

He would have Timothy run in the same race and win the approval of Christ.

The last illustration is that of the husbandman. "The *laboring* husbandman ought to partake first of the fruits." Not simply the man who is called a husbandman receives the reward, he must be a laborious toiler who would partake of the fruits. Paul had been himself in "labors more abundant," and was well entitled to press home on Timothy the importance of remembering that the servants of Christ are not called to be "Lords over God's heritage," but to toil in the great field. The experience of every age of the Church proves that hard work is more necessary than great brilliance on the part of the servants of Christ.

The application of all this to the Christian ministry of these days is, I think, very plain. The Church must have for her pastors and teachers men called of God. The world is crying out for true soldiers of Christ. Thank God, we have many true and worthy men in the various fields of labor, we need very many more. The Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us," waxes louder and louder. Only such a ministry as this text recommends—one that is willing to endure hardness, to be self-denying, temperate in all things and laborious—will please Christ, the Chief Shepherd. Pastors of this stamp will feed the flock.

Our foreign mission fields call for men

who are willing to labor and encounter manifold dangers. Witness the experience of the missionaries of our Church in Honan. Surely nothing but a sense of obligation to Him who has called them could induce men and women to spend their lives in that country, exposed to insults, to many privations and far from home and congenial society. Thousands of young men are needed at once to go forth to the ends of the earth with the gospel, ready to endure all things for the sake of Christ. Many of our fields at home are discouraging. Often our ministers are called to labor in small and diminishing congregations. Even where the circumstances are more favorable, toils and anxieties press.

May we be enabled, by divine grace, to take Paul's admonition to ourselves. It is true that there are many things to discourage; faithful men must toil incessantly. Many find little recognition or reward among men. But there is no other way. We are permitted to labor for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, to lead the lost home, to feed the flock of God, to be witnesses for Jesus in the world. How important is the charge committed to us. Let us be true to Him who hath sent us forth, our days of toil will pass swiftly away. Soon shall the good soldier of Jesus Christ hear the Master say "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."