

GOOD SOLDIERS OF JESUS CHRIST

2Tim.2:3,4

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Read 2Tim.2:1-10 with brief explanation and with emphasis on Vv.3,4.
2. The Scriptures speak of the Lord's army because:
 - a. That's who Christians are in the heavenly warfare.
 - b. There is a fight to be fought and a battle to be waged.
 - c. There is an enemy to overcome.
3. The purpose of our study is to call attention to some characteristics of a good soldier of Jesus Christ to serve as a means of encouragement for us to "hold fast the profession (confession) of our faith without wavering."
4. There are some six characteristics of a good soldier of Jesus Christ we wish to examine.

II. DISCUSSION

A. A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST ENDURES HARDNESS, V.3.

1. That is, he must "suffer hardship."
2. He must be prepared at all times to so suffer for the Lord, with the Lord, and with fellow-soldiers of Christ.
3. He must not only do it, but do it manfully. See Rom.8:16-18; 2Tim.1:8,12; 2:9,10,12; 4:5; Jas.5:10.
4. A good soldier of Jesus Christ must fearlessly meet the enemies of his Lord, and even die for the faith if need be. Cf. Rev.2:10.
5. Our heavenly Commander wants no feather-bed soldiers. Cf. Heb.12:1-8
6. Hardships will come (2Tim.3:12), but salvation is promised to those who endure to the end (Mt.10:22); who do not grow weary in well doing, or faint not (Gal.6:9).
7. 1Pet.4:16; Mt.5:10-12.

B. A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST, ONE THAT WARRETH, DOES NOT ENGANGLE HIMSELF WITH THE AFFAIRS OF THIS LIFE, V.4a.

1. No soldier on or in service does this. See 2Pet.2:20 for the same word.

2. He must be willing to stand free from the entanglements of mere human occupation, so as to devote his whole energies to the fight without mundane distraction or dispersion of thought to the business of his Master and heavenly Commander.
3. He must ever fight the good fight of faith; never get bogged down with the affairs of this life, 1Tim.6:11,12; 1:18; Lk.8:14.
4. A good soldier obeys the orders of his Commander strictly; to conquer will be his ruling compassion. And he serves as part of a fighting team.
 - a. The life of a soldier of Christ, in the Lord's army, like that of any soldier in any army involves: self-sacrifice, endurance, hardship, self-discipline, vigilance, obedience, ready cooperation with others, sympathy, enthusiasm, zeal, loyalty, unswerving and organized opposition to a vigilant, unswerving and organized foe. Eph.6:10-18; 2Cor.2:11.
5. The efficiency of service as a soldier must not be impaired by being excessively engrossed with other occupations.
 - a. The soldier is wholly devoted to his profession, and his term of service is spent either in actual warfare or in preparation for it.
 - b. It is either perpetual warfare or perpetual preparation for it.
 - c. He abandons all other occupations because they would interfere with his efficiency as a soldier.
 - d. So the soldier of Christ, whose enlistment is for life, if he is to render good service, must not be entangled with worldly affairs, even his job, his career, his family.
6. This, of course, does not mean the Christian, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, can have nothing to do with, or completely ignore these, or neglect them, or must keep self totally aloof from, the affairs of this life.
 - a. For that would be a flat contradiction of what Paul teaches elsewhere, 1Th.4:11,12; Eph.4:28; 1Tim.5:8; Ac.20:35.
 - b. He has a duty to perform "in the affairs of this life," but in performing it, he must not become entangled in them so that they interfere with the obedience and service he owes to Jesus Christ his heavenly Commander in the fight of faith.
 - c. They are means, not ends; they must be made to help him on, not allowed to hinder or hold him back.
 - d. If they become entanglements rather than opportunities, he will soon lose that state of constant preparation, alertness and readiness on the front lines of battle that are indispensable conditions of success and acceptability in the Lord's army.

- e. Carnal ease is not becoming of a good soldier in any army; it will cause your destruction.
- 7. What are some of the things with which we as soldiers of Jesus Christ are in danger of entangling ourselves?
 - a. The love of the world (1Jno.2:15,16), thus becoming entangled with out sins because of:
 - (1) Their deceitfulness, Heb.3:12,13; Rom.7:7-11.
 - (2) Their powerful influence and force of habit that leads us to be the slave of sin, Jno.8:31-34; Rom.6:16,20-22.
 - b. From the ordinary affairs of daily life, which is perhaps the primary thought of our text, that may entangle us.
 - (1) From weakness of judgment about such things.
 - (2) From inordinate affections regarding such things.
 - (3) From the rebellion of the will due to the powerful influence of such things.
 - c. But we can resist all of this, because we can resist the devil who is the evil influence behind all such. Jas.4:7; 1Pet.5:8,9.
- 8. The humblest warrior in the Savior's army can be valiant and victorious. and each one ought to be!
 - a. Excuse here is quite vain.
 - b. None who are saved have a right to be idle; all are to be engaged in the fight, to be active warriors in the Lord's army, and the work of the Lord's vineyard.

C. A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST PLEASES THE CAPTAIN OF HIS SALVATION WHO HAS CHOSEN OR ENROLLED HIM IN HIS ARMY, V.4b.

- 1. Each soldier in the Lord's army is one who has volunteered for service and has been "enrolled" by the Captain of his salvation, by virtue of his having been "called" by the gospel of Christ, 2Th.2:13,14; Heb.2:9,10.
- 2. He is there because he loves the Lord and the truth, having proven that by his faith and his obedience to the gospel, Rom.6:16-18; 2Th.1:6-10; 2:10-12; Jno.14:15,21,23,24; 1Jno.5:3.
- 3. The good soldier of Jesus Christ does all of this with one motive – to please, not self, not spouse, not family, not girlfriend, not men, not some religious system, but **one PERSON** – that is, "him who has chosen (enrolled) him to a soldier."
 - a. He is there to be "a soldier," not something else.

- b. He wars a good warfare to please one PERSON – that person is Jesus Christ!
- c. He strives to please Jesus, and Jesus alone, even as Jesus did the Father in heaven.
- d. It is duty more than safety.
- 4. The will of the good soldier of Jesus Christ is to be wholly absorbed in that of his heavenly Commander. Cf. Mt.16:24-27; Gal.2:20; 6:10.
- 5. A soldier always.
 - a. You cannot be a saint on Sundays and a sinner during the week.
 - b. You cannot be a saint at worship and sinner on the job.
 - c. You cannot be a saint at home and a sinner away from home.
 - d. Your cannot serve God and mammon at the same time.
 - e. You are a soldier everywhere or nowhere!
 - f. Your cannot be a good soldier of Jesus Christ and aid and abet the devil’s cause, a spiritual traitor or turncoat!

D. THE GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST IS NOT AFRAID TO FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH.

- 1. Today, as in the past, in the case of Gideon’s army, to be brought against the Midianites, there is no room in the Lord’s army for spiritual cowards, Judg.7:1-3; Cf. 21:8. See Stephen in Ac.7.
- 2. The Lord has always required his people to openly declare themselves as to whose side they are one. See Exo.32:25-29.
- 3. The Lord always looks to his soldiers to be courageous and to fight with all their might, having put on and using the whole armor of God, Eph. 6:10-11.
- 4. Paul is a good example, 2Tim.4:6-8.
- 5. He had charged Timothy to “war a good warfare” (1Tim.1:18), and to “fight the good fight of faith” (1Tim.6:12).

E. THE GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST IS NOT IGNORANT OF THE ENEMY AND HIS PURPOSE AND DEVICES.

- 1. 2Cor.2:11; Eph.6:10-12.
- 2. Satan is:
 - a. Subtle, 2Cor.11:3.
 - b. Deceptive, the great Deceiver, Gen.3:1-6; 1Tim.2:14; Rev.12:9; 20:10; Cf. 2Th.2:9; Deut.13:1-3.

- c. One who seeks to and often times succeeds in hindering even the saints in efforts for good, 1Th.2:18.
- d. One who seeks to devour and must be resisted, 1Pet.5:8,9; Jas.4:7

F. THE GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST IS NOT ONLY WELL EQUIPTED FOR BATTLE, BUT IS SKILLED IN THE USE OF HIS EQUIPMENT.

- 1. Eph.6:10-18.
- 2. 2Tim.2:15.
- 3. 1Pet.2:2; 2Pet.3:18.
- 4. 2Cor.13:5.
- 5. 1Cor.16:13.
- 6. 1Pet.3:15.

III. CONCLUSION

- 1. Good soldiers of Jesus Christ who fight the good fight of faith:
 - a. Lay hold on eternal life, 1Tim.6:12.
 - b. Have the crown of righteousness laid up for them, 2Tim.4:6-8.
- 2. This is not promised to any others.
- 3. We urge you to enlist in the Lord's army today. Let him "enroll" you today by and through your faith and your obeying the gospel.
- 4. Then by faith live in hope of eternal life, while by patience you wait for it.