The Good Soldier

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday August 20th, 2023

Text: II Timothy 2:3-4 Scripture Reading: I Timothy 6:12

### Intro

1. Near the end of his life, Paul was constantly surrounded by Roman soldiers.
	1. He lived in the presence of the greatest military power ever known.
	2. Night and day a soldier was with Paul to ensure he would not escape *(Ephesians 6:20; II Timothy 1:16: Paul was in chains!)*
	3. The Roman Legion is considered to be the world's first professional army.
	4. Their armor was distinctive, and with it they subdued the world!
2. Paul used figures of speech to describe the saint’s walk with God:
	1. He told Timothy to “fight the good fight” (I Timothy 1:18).
	2. Paul also told Timothy to “suffer hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 2:3).
	3. Paul likened the life of a Christian to that of a soldier’s (II Timothy 2:4).
	4. The soldiers of Paul’s day wore distinctive armor, so does the Christian! *(Whatever time period, saints may identify with the armor of their day!)*
3. Christians are to put on the “full armor of God” (Ephesians 6:10-11)
	1. “Panoply” was the whole armor of the heavily armed Roman soldier.
	2. We must position ourselves to stand for the truth (Ephesians 6:11, 13-14).
	3. Unblemished character; zeal tempered with wisdom; knowledge of God’s Word.
	4. Since we are not fighting a fleshly battle, our weaponry must not be carnal, but spiritual! *(Eph. 6:12; II Cor. 10:3-5)*
4. II Timothy 2:3-4: In his last recorded letter to Timothy Paul urged him to be a “good soldier.”
5. Saints are to be “good soldiers” of Christ!

#### The Good Soldier Endures Hardship – II Timothy 2:3

* 1. To be a good soldier requires one to endure hardships:
		1. Hostility of the enemy
		2. Travel
		3. Strain on the family
		4. Sacrifice
	2. Soldiers of Christ are to endure hardships (II Timothy 2:3):
		1. We may suffer because we are Christians! (I Pet. 2:20; 4:15-16)
	3. Soldiers know the danger and volunteer anyways (Mt. 10:22-28; Jn. 15:18-21)
		1. Willing to endure and sacrifice (Js. 1:2-3).
	4. Jesus endured hardship and sacrificed – Heb. 12:2-3 (Ex. 15:3: God is a Warrior!)
		1. Paul also endured hardship and sacrificed *(II Cor. 11).*
		2. He asks Timothy to suffer with him as a “good soldier of Christ.”
		3. We know the danger *(Mt. 10)* and must be willing to endure and sacrifice if called to do so!
	5. Christian Soldiers expect hardships and must endure them!

#### The Good Soldier Joins the Battle – I Timothy 6:12

* 1. The soldier’s life is spent on duty, ready for service.
	2. Christian soldiers are called to join the fray – II Timothy 2:4; I Timothy 6:12
		1. Not to get entangled in the affairs of the world but to “Fight the good fight of faith.”
		2. Eph. 6:10-12: We are to put on the “full armor of God” to join the battle against evil.
		3. Soldiers strap on armor (take up arms) to go to battle.
	3. Christians are engaged in spiritual warfare *(II Cor. 10:3-4; Eph. 6:12):*
		1. We often have to battle ourselves to overcome fleshly desires – Rom. 7:22-23
		2. A constant battle between the Spirit and the flesh – Gal. 5:17
		3. Fight against false doctrines and immorality – I Timothy 6:3-5,13-14,20-21; Jude 3
		4. Paul was able to say, “I have fought the good fight…” – II Timothy 4:7
	4. Christian Soldiers are to be on duty – ready to fight!

#### The Good Soldier Is Not Entangled – II Timothy 2:4

* 1. Soldiers on duty must concentrate on being in battle.
		1. While soldiers get involved in battle, there are some things they are not to get involved in.
	2. Soldiers of Christ are not to get “entangled in the affairs of everyday life” (II Timothy 2:4)
		1. The affairs of everyday life are not bad in themselves.
		2. Key word: “Entangled” – We can get too involved.
	3. Jesus calls these things “worries” (NKJV: “cares”)
		1. Lk. 8:14: Soldiers of Christ who get “entangled” are the “thorny ground” who allows “worries” of the world to choke out the word.
		2. Such an individual becomes “unfruitful” (Useless to God – John 15:2, 6).
	4. “Entangled” soldiers disobey orders, go AWOL, and desert their duty!
		1. “Entangled” soldiers of Christ do the same:
			1. Will not let light shine *(Mt. 5:16)*
			2. Will not please the Commander *(Rom. 8:6-8)*
			3. Will not be an example of righteousness *(Phil. 1:27)*
			4. Will not fight against false doctrine *(II Timothy 3:16-17)*
	5. Christian Soldiers are not to get “entangled” in the world but serve God!

#### The Good Soldier Pleases the Commander – II Timothy 2:4

* 1. Soldiers accept orders from their Commander-in-Chief (chain of command).
	2. Christian soldiers are called by the gospel and are to please God! (II Timothy 2:4)
		1. II Cor. 5:9: We want to be pleasing to God!
	3. God the Commander is pleased with faithfulness (Mt. 7:21; I Jn. 2:17):
		1. Rev. 2:10: Be faithful until death.
		2. II Timothy 4:6-8: “I have kept the faith.”
		3. Christian soldiers must be loyal (Mt. 7:21-23: Not to their own righteousness)!
	4. Christian soldiers must be obedient to orders – Rom. 6:17
		1. Soldiers learn to respond to orders quickly and obediently.
		2. Jesus will save the spiritual soldiers that obey – Heb. 5:8-9
	5. Christian Soldiers are to be obedient to God to please the Commander!

## Conclusion

1. II Timothy 2:3-4; I Timothy 6:12: Paul says the “good soldier of Christ Jesus” does these things:
	1. Endures hardships
	2. Joins the battle (active service)
	3. Not entangled in affairs of the world
	4. Pleases God (the Commander)
2. An O.T. example: Elijah (II Kings 2:11-12):
	1. He had fought:
		1. Ungodly politicians
		2. False prophets
	2. Received the reward: taken up into heaven without tasting death!
3. Faithful Christians are those who fight! *(I Timothy 1:18; 6:12)*
4. In any battle there are casualties and injured – what shall be done with the wounded?
	1. “Restore” – Galatians 6:1
	2. “Encourage” – I Thessalonians 5:14
	3. “Turn them back” – James 5:19-20
5. There is an eternal reward for the one who remains faithful until death! (Revelation 2:10)
6. Will you serve God as a “good soldier of Christ?”
7. If you are not a Christian, Jesus wants you to be! Repent and be baptized into His name!
8. If a Christian in error, don’t wait till it’s eternally too late. Repent and be renewed!
9. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!