

## Soldiers for the Lord

I Timothy 1: 17-19

Today we celebrate a day that has been set aside to honor those who served our country in the armed services. These are certainly worthy of recognition for their noble service for this great nation. We are all grateful for their sacrifice and devotion to defend the freedoms that we all enjoy. I am sure this is a day that is on the minds of many as we continue to find ourselves in the midst of war and conflict. There has never been a generation who has been exempt from sacrifice. There are several within our own church family who has served and we honor them.

As I considered the recognition of veterans, I was also mindful of those who have served in the Lord's army. Many have sacrificed of themselves and devoted their lives to faithful service unto the Lord. Just as it is in the world today, we too find ourselves in the midst of a difficult battle. The war is no longer confined to the larger cities and culturally diverse areas of our land. We have been forced to fight battles right here on the home-front. The enemy has advanced and there is no place that Christians are free from the fight. There is a desperate need for more to take up the banner of Christ and serve Him in this spiritual warfare that we are engaged in.

If there has ever been a time in the history of our nation for Christians to stand, the time is now! There seems to be no end to the assaults on our faith and religious freedoms. There seems to be no limits concerning the tactics that the adversary will use. Church we need to boldly stand for our faith. (In these verses, Paul is encouraging and challenging young Timothy to remain steadfast in the fight.) I want us to consider the [certainties](#) that are found in these verses regarding: [Soldiers for the Lord](#). First we must consider:

**I. The Soldiers' Commander** (17) – [Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.](#) Paul speaks of the King, our great God. He is the Captain of the Lord's host, our Commander in Chief. If we are to be successful in the fight, we must follow the direction of our King. There has never been a successful campaign apart from good leadership from a commanding officer. I want to take a moment to discover what sets our Commander apart from all the rest. There is none like Him!

**A. He is Omnipresent** – Our nation has seen some great military leaders, Washington, Grant, Lee, Jackson, Patton, MacArthur, Schwarzkopf, etc. These men were talented and brave, but yet they were limited. They were bound by physical limitations. They were unable to see the whole front at one time; their bodies would only allow them to endure so much. With time these men were no longer able to serve and someone else had to take their place.

- That isn't the case with the Christian's Commander. There has never been a changing of the guard. He has never stepped down from His post. He remains seated at the Father's right hand in glory. There has never been a time when our Lord didn't exist, and there will never come a time when He passes of the scene. **Jn.8:58 – Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.**
- He is the **eternal, invisible God**. He is not limited by space or time. The Lord has been with His people in every generation. He is not limited to one specific place. Our Lord can be in the midst of each of our battles at the same time. He is the eternal, ever present Commander! I rejoice that we serve an omnipresent Lord. Call His name and He is there to provide for your need.

**B. He is Omnipotent** – The text reveals that He is the **immortal God**. He is the God of all power. Our world has known some powerful men. Many ruled over vast kingdoms, but there came a time when they died. We are serving One who even has power over death. They crucified Him on the cross where He bled and died, but He did not stay dead. On that third day He rose again to die no more. **Rev.1:8 – I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. Rev. 1:18 – I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.**

- Aren't you glad that we serve a Lord who has all power? Many times we face situations that are beyond our control. There are things that come our way that we just can't handle. In those times we have One who has all power. I have no doubt that if Jesus has power over death, hell, and the grave, He can handle whatever situation I may face.

**C. He is Omniscient** – We also find that our Lord is **the only wise God**. We cannot underestimate the value of wisdom in warfare. There have been many battles throughout history where bad decisions were made, lives were lost, and armies suffered defeat. Things didn't go as planned or the commanding officer couldn't see how the battle would unfold.

- The Christian soldier never has to fear such a mistake from our Commander. He is the omniscient Lord; He possesses all wisdom and is all knowing. The Lord doesn't see things as we do. I can't explain it, but the Lord sees it all at the same time. He sees the entire spectrum, from creation until the end! Who better to lean upon and trust than the all knowing God? We will have those times when we don't know which way to turn or what to do, but the Lord is never at a loss for wisdom. We will never face a situation that He doesn't understand or have the ability to solve.

## **I. The Soldiers' Commander (17)**

**II. The Soldiers' Commission** (18) – [This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;](#) Here we find the soldiers' duty to his Lord. I realize that we are all at different places with the Lord, at different levels of maturity and serving with different gifts, but God has a specific task for each of us to fulfill. Each of us is obligated to serve the Lord as a faithful soldier. This is revealed in:

**A. Our Rank** – [Paul refers to Timothy as his son.](#) Paul was not Timothy's father in the flesh, but he was in the faith. Paul had led Timothy to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. He reminds him of his standing with the Lord. There were no other requirements to serve the Lord. Being a son of God is all that is required. If you have received Christ as your Savior, you are a child of God. [Jn.1:12 – But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:](#)

- Becoming a child of God has many benefits, but it also has obligations. There is absolutely no reason for any Christian to be content to sit on the sidelines and refuse to get involved. The saved are called to serve. If you are a Christian, you are a soldier for the Lord. You need to find your place and stand firmly in it until the Lord calls you home! So, how do we know that there is a work for all to do? Well notice not only our rank, but:

**B. Our Readiness** (18b) – Paul reminded Timothy of the [prophecies that went before him.](#) Timothy was young in the Lord. He had a lot to learn and needed to grow in the Lord, but he was ready for the fight. He began his ministry rich in the hopes, prayers, and expectations of those who had placed their hands on him in faith. He was being prayed for, held up by the saints of God.

- He was not the preacher that Paul was; he didn't possess the wisdom or skill that Paul did, but he was ready nonetheless. He had the call of God upon his life, the Spirit of God in his heart, and the encouragement of the church at his side. There would be much "on the job training," but Timothy was ready to fight the good fight of faith and serve the Lord.
- I fear that far too many Christians never reach the place where they feel that they are ready to serve the Lord. It isn't about having enough education or experience. The Lord's call upon our lives is sufficient. We can glean these other things as we go, but don't refuse to serve the Lord simply because you feel you are not ready. If God has a work for you to do, He is going to accomplish that task through you. It isn't up to us to work it all out, just believe and go with a willing heart!

**C. Our Responsibility** (18c) – Paul reveals that the soldiers' responsibility is actually two-fold. Timothy was responsible to meet his obligations.

**1. A Man of Valor** – [that thou by them mightest war a good warfare](#); Timothy wasn't being sent out on a leisurely trip; he was going into the midst of war. He knew his rank and he was ready. It was time to step up and fight. We need those who will recognize their responsibility and fight for the Lord. There are many who just don't want to get involved; they don't have the courage to stand. They are afraid that someone may get offended or not associate with them anymore.

- Listen, we are in the midst of a spiritual warfare on the home-front and we need those who will find the courage to stand for the Lord. The enemy has invaded; he wants to destroy and control our homes, our lives, our communities, and our churches. If the Christian doesn't stand, who will?

**2. A Man of Vision** – This wasn't just any war; it was a [good warfare](#). You might wonder how that could possibly be. What is good about war? Well when innocent people are oppressed and slaughtered, war can bring about peace. Where would we be today if the Allies hadn't gone to war with Nazi Germany? There are some things that are worth fighting for.

- Our Christian liberties are worth the effort. Our homes and the future of our children are worth going to battle over. Securing a decent environment to raise a family is worth the fight. The point is, we must know when to fight and how to fight. If it is a worthy cause, fight a good warfare. But don't cast your pearls before the swine. Don't get tangled up in futile arguments or petty fights. Fight the good fight for the cause of Christ!

### **I. The Soldiers' Commander** (17)

### **II. The Soldiers' Commission** (18)

**III. The Soldiers' Compulsion** (19) – [Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck](#): In this last verse we find what compels the soldier to fight. We find what gives him the courage and desire to press on. We must possess:

**A. A Steadfast Faith** – [Paul exhorted Timothy to hold the faith](#). He wanted him to keep in mind the things he had received. He must remember all that Christ had done for him. He wanted Timothy to look at the difficulties of life through eyes of faith.

- There is more to life than what we see with our physical eyes. There is a cause that is greater than we are and that is serving the Lord and sharing the gospel with the perishing. When we grow weary in the battle, just keep the faith. [Gal.6:9 – And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.](#)

**B. A Sensitive Heart** – Also Timothy was to keep a [good conscience](#). He was to lay hold on the things which he knew were right and true. He was to live his life according to the convictions of Scripture. His warfare and life were to be based upon the will of God.

- A good soldier will have a heart that is sensitive to the will and Word of God. We will never achieve success in the fight if we are not sensitive unto the Lord.
- Let me say that the secular view regarding our conscience will get you in trouble. The world will tell you to do whatever feels right. But, you must be careful that you aren't trusting the feelings of the flesh. Our conscience isn't so much about right or wrong, but revealing those things that we need to resist in order to maintain our relationship with the Lord.

**C. A Submissive Spirit (19b)** – [which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck](#): Paul warns of becoming like those who have erred from their faith and found themselves shipwrecked. I believe that Paul guarded himself against that continually. [1 Cor.9:27 – But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.](#)

- Many start out well, but often find themselves weary from the battle and abandon their faith. We all know those who have given up because they simply couldn't fight the good fight any longer. If we are to endure the difficulties of the battle, we must stay close to the Lord. We must submit ourselves to His leadership and seek His presence and strength each day. There is no place for "lone rangers" in the army of God. We cannot make it apart from Him.

If you are a Christian, you have been called upon to fight. We are living in a day where we desperately need all who are able to stand for the Lord. Are you willing to stand and make a difference?

Maybe you have never trusted Christ as your Savior. You may not realize it, but the lost are aligned with a defeated foe and will one day face the same wrath and judgment reserved for Satan. Why not come to the Lord and begin fighting the good fight of faith?