

The Christian Soldier

Eph. 6:17

Int.

1. Aim: To show how a Christian must fight the good fight of faith to receive a crown of life.
2. We are soldiers for Christ
 - a. 1 Tim. 6:12 "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."
 - b. 2 Tim. 2:3 "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."
 - c. 1 Cor. 16:13 NKJV "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."
3. The Christians armor is described in Eph. 6:11-18
4. Our marching chant is "Onward Christian Soldiers"
5. How can we be a good soldier in the Lord's Army ?

Discussion

I. ENLISTMENT

A. U.S. Army

1. The draft has been replaced by an all volunteer army
2. Inducements to volunteer
 - a. Pay - sign up bonus
 - b. Education and job training
 - c. Medical benefits
 - d. Travel
 - e. Patriotism

3. Certain requirements must be met
 - a. Physical and Mental
 - b. Oath of allegiance
 - c. Then sign up to become a Soldier

B. Enlistment in the Lord's Army

1. All volunteer - no draft system - Matt. 11:28-29 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."
2. Inducements to enlist
 - a. The cause is right -
 - b. Greatest commander - Heb. 2:10 "Captain of their salvation" = chief leader
 - (1) Performed miracles
 - (2) Withstood temptations - Heb. 4:15
 - (3) Overcame death
 - (4) Calls men to follow - John 14:6
 - (5) Invites us to follow Him in this world and go home with Him to heaven
 - c. Rewards
 - (1) Best life on this earth
 - (2) Home in heaven after life on this earth
3. When should we enlist
 - a. Now - not next year, that may be too late - Jas. 4:14
 - b. Procrastination can cost you your soul - I I Cor. 6:2

4. Enlistment requirements
 - a. Believe in cause - if not you will not fight = Belief or Faith
 - b. Forsake Satan = repentance
 - (1) Only 2 kingdoms - Satan and Christ
 - (2) Must forsake Satan to serve
 - (3) II Tim. 2:4
 - c. Trust in leader - necessary = confession
 - d. Obedience = Baptized
 - (1) Must get rid of our sins
 - (2) 1 Pet. 3:21
 - (3) Acts 2:38

II. UNIFORM

- A. U.S. Army
 1. Worn to identify a group of one - to distinguish soldiers from civilians
 2. Issued to all upon enlistment
 3. Must be worn at all times during warfare

- B. Uniform for the Christian Soldiers - Eph. 6:11-18
 1. Truth - v. 11-13
 - a. Must love truth and be dedicated to it.
 - b. Stand for truth even if everyone else deserts
 - c. Truth will preserve us in the fight

2. Breastplate of righteousness
 - a. Righteousness is truth in action in one's daily life - right living
 - b. Probably more are first attracted to Christ by righteous living than by preaching.
3. Shoes - v. 15 - 16 - preparation
 - a. Feet are to be prepared
 - b. Study of God's word is essential
 - c. Regular Bible study will give strength that nothing else will give
4. Helmet and Sword - Salvation
 - a. Hope of salvation - victory
 - b. The weapon to use is the Bible
 - c. Heb. 4:12
5. Faith, Prayers and Perseverance make the uniform complete
 - a. Faith - enable the Christian to obtain help from God
 - b. Prayer - avenue for instant communication with God
 - c. Perseverance - strengthens our character as we stand against the foe
6. We have the best uniform and equipment but we must learn to use them...

III. TRAINING

- A. U.S. Army trains all new enlistees
 1. Basic combat or infantry training and then have Advanced Individual Training
 2. A new enlistee untrained is not ready for battle, really a liability

3. This period of intensive training
 - a. Conditions the body
 - b. Learns to take orders without question
 - c. Learns the proper use of weapons
 - d. Learns how to fight
- B. Christian soldiers need to be trained
 1. We are babes in Christ - 1 Cor. 3:1-3 - we do not know how to fight
 2. Need to learn to take orders and obey without question - Matt. 28:18
 3. Training to learn about the Bible
 - a. 2 Tim. 2:15
 - b. 1 Pet. 3:15
 - c. This is the only weapon that we have - the sword, the word of God -Eph.6:17
 - d. What kind of army would we have if 95% of our soldiers didn't know how to use their one and only weapon?
 4. Some feel that partaking of the Lord's Supper each Sunday is all that is required
 5. This is the condition of some that are referred to in Heb. 5:12-6:1 - they are old soldiers but still not trained and ready to fight.

IV. FIGHT

- A. U.S. Army prepares the soldiers to fight
 1. The President is the Commander in Chief
 2. In case of attack or aggression by an enemy then he sends the soldiers to fight
 3. Purpose of soldiers is not to stay in training always.
 4. If they do not fight when the enemy attacks then their training is useless

B. Christian Soldiers are to fight

1. This is a militant battle
 - a. Some are in the army only to worship - but we must also fight
 - b. We must not retreat or stand still
 - c. Militant = engaged in warfare - fighting
 - d. This is a hot war - "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;" 1 Tim. 1:18
 - e. Onward Christian Soldiers !
2. This is a Good fight
 - a. It is good because it turns men from darkness - Acts 26:18
 - b. This is the war to end all wars and then we will have an eternity of peace not just a generation !
3. This is a battle for the minds of men
 - a. We are fighting to save souls from hell and deliver them to heaven
 - b. This battle is to show men how they can have eternal life instead of eternal punishment !
 - c. We must fight continually for the fields are white unto harvest
4. Don't be a pacifist - or conscientious objector
 - a. Pacifist = opposed to war, refuses to bear arms, believes in non-resistance
 - b. We are commanded to take our stand against the devil, against sin and fight
 - c. No crown of righteousness is promised to those who refuse to fight the good fight.

d. If you are not a soldier of the cross, then you are an enemy - Matt. 12:30 "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

C. Stand up for Jesus - get into the fight and fight the good fight of faith

D. Many soldiers have quit along the way and deserted their battle. They are

V. A.W.O.L.

A. U.S. Army

1. Absent Without Official Leave
2. After 30 days of AWOL you then become a deserter
3. Serious charge for a soldier, people look upon them with shame and condemnation

B. Some are AWOL in the Lord's Army

1. There were some in N.T. times
 - a. Demas - 2 Tim. 4:10
 - b. Ephesus - Rev. 2:4
 - c. Laodicea - Rev. 3:15, 16
2. Many are A.W.O.L. today
 - a. Those who go into error
 - b. They have become deserters - backsliders
 - (1) They do not think enough of Christ to be present at the services.
 - (2) They do not want to come to Bible Study on Sunday morning or Wednesday night.

- c. There are some soldiers who attend but will not give of their time or use their abilities. They want someone else to do the fighting, not them.
 - d. Another type of person who is AWOL is the one who is against everything.
 - (1) They are satisfied with the "Status Quo"
 - (2) They resist every noble and worthy effort in carrying the gospel to all the world.
3. The Lord's Army does not need soldiers who are AWOL.
 4. The Lord's Army needs good soldiers who are willing to stand shoulder to shoulder to take the world for Christ !

CONCLUSION

1. The Christian Soldier never has a furlough = vacation
2. A Christian Soldier is willing to die for his cause
 - a. Rev. 2:10b "...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 - b. He will remain loyal to His Army even when the price is his life.
3. Finally he will be given an HONORABLE DISCHARGE
 - a. This is at the time of death
 - b. II Tim. 4:6-8
 - c. 1 Pet. 1:9 "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."
 - d. Live so that when death claims your boy, Heaven may claim your soul !
 - e. When we serve as a good soldier of Jesus Christ then God will say: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:"
Matt. 25:34

4. If a soldier has not served properly he will be given a DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE.
 - a. In the U.S. Army there is the Uniform Code of Military Justice UCMJ
 - i. If a Soldier has participated in illegal activities then he will be tried.
 - ii. If he is found guilty he may be Court Marshaled and given a dishonorable discharge.
 - b. In the Lord's Army
 - i. If we walk disorderly then the church will withdraw fellowship
 - ii. 2 Thes. 3:6
 - iii. Unless this brother / sister repents then they will lose their soul
 5. If you want to enlist in the Lord's Army then you must obey the gospel.
 6. If you have enlisted but have been AWOL then you must repent and confess and pray
-
-

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Morning - Oct. 7, 2007
Evans Church of Christ
515 Gibbs Road
Evans, Ga. 30809
706-855-1249
evanscoc@bellsouth.net
www.evansgachurchofchrist.org