A GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST JESUS

2 Timothy 2:3 Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Am I a Soldier of the Cross? Isaac Watts, pub. ca. 1721

Am I a soldier of the cross, A follow’r of the Lamb?

And shall I fear to own His cause, or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies on flow’ry beds of ease,

While others fought to win the prize, and sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face? Must I not stem the flood?

Is this vile world a friend to grace, to help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign; increase my courage, Lord;

I’ll bear the toil, endure the pain, Supported by Thy Word.

Join with Me in Suffering

2 Timothy 1:8 So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.

2 Timothy 3:12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Luke 6:22&23&26 “Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets…Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.”

Like a Good Soldier of Christ Jesus

“Most Christians act like this world is an Amusement Park, not a battlefield.”

Chip Ingram, The Invisible War

2 Corinthians 10:3&4 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

Ephesians 6:10-12 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

What We Are Fighting to Achieve

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 10:10 “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full.”

Matthew 24:14 “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

What a Serving Soldier Does Not Do

2 Timothy 2:4 No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer.

The word entangled literally means “gets woven into,” made by adding the word “in” to the word meaning “to weave.”

Refuting The Two Extremes: Isolation

Matthew 5:13 “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.”

Matthew 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world, a town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Ephesians 5:11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

Refuting The Two Extremes: Entanglement

The Greek word translated “affairs” does not imply sinful activity, but simply activity that must be limited if one is a soldier in a conflict.

I Kings 20:39&40 As the king passed by, the prophet called out to him, “Your servant went into the thick of the battle, and someone came to me with a captive and said, ‘Guard this man. If he is missing, it will be your life for his life, or you must pay a talent of silver.’ While your servant was busy here and there, the man disappeared.”

Personal examples of entanglement:

Other examples of entanglement:

The Transjordan Tribes: Numbers 32:6&7 Mases said to the Gadites and Reubenites, “Should your fellow Israelites go to war while you sit here? Why do you discourage the Israelites from crossing over into the land the LORD has given them?

Numbers 32:23 “But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.”

Good Soldier Checklist

Am I willing to speak unpopular truth and suffer the consequences?

Am I actively engaged in sharing the Gospel?

Am I actively serving, or am I just a consumer?

Are there things in my life, that although not actually sinful, keep me from doing what I know I should be doing as a Christian?

Am I a Soldier of the Cross?