

Soldiers of Christ

(Reading: Eph. 6:11-18; Song #231)

Introduction: General McArthur said, “In war, there is no substitute for victory.” As Christians, we are at war! Paul told Timothy in 1 Tim. 1:18, “wage the good warfare.” Again in 1 Tim. 6:12 he said, “fight the good fight.” We are at war! As soldiers of Christ, we need to know a few things.

I. What type of war are we engaged in?

A. We are engaged in a spiritual war for our souls! Like Timothy, we are called to fight in order to obtain eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12). Our calling is known by our confession of Christ before men.

B. This war is not anything like the wars nations fight in this world (2 Cor. 10:3-6). We don't fight with guns, planes and tanks. We fight with the very words we speak according to the knowledge we have in Christ. Our goal is to bring everyone to the obedience of Christ.

C. This is easier said than done because our war sometimes comes from within (1 Pet. 2:11); a kind of a self-inflicted wound.

II. Who is the enemy?

A. The world is our enemy (James 4:4). Friendship with this world makes us a traitor and an enemy of our Lord and King.

B. This enemy has a leader. In the Parable of the Sower this leader is identified as the Devil (Matt. 13:38-40a). Our enemy is the Devil and those that follow him in this world.

III. What should we fight with?

A. Truth, Righteousness, The Preparation of the Gospel of peace, Faith, Salvation, The Word of God and Prayer (Eph. 6:11-18). That is our armor!

1. Stand against: the wiles (the craft of deceit) of the devil, principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness, and the fiery darts of the wicked one.

2. We are under siege. We are under attack. We need this armor so we can stand and not fall.

B. How to use this armor (Rom. 12:9-21). Overcome evil with good.

IV. With whom do I serve in battle?

A. Christ our Captain and others who are sanctified through Christ's death that we may obtain salvation through suffering (Heb. 2:9-18).

B. Follow Christ and we will receive honor from God (John 12:26)!

V. What can I expect in battle?

A. Hardship (2 Tim. 2:3-4)! Good soldiers become accustomed to difficult circumstances.

B. The early Christians suffered in their battle (Heb. 10:32-33). Likewise, we can expect struggle and suffering, reproaches and tribulations.

C. Some of us may become prisoners of war. Imprisoned, tested and tormented (Rev. 2:10).

VI. Can we win? (Most certainly!)

A. Victory is ours if we remain steadfast (1 Cor. 15:57-58). Remembering our labor is not vain.

B. Through our love, belief, obedience and faith we can be victorious (1 John 5:1-5).

Conclusion: Paul, in the twilight of his life said he fought the good fight (2 Tim. 4:6-8). He was a fellow soldier. He had something substantial to look forward to... heaven! How about you? Are you fighting the battle? Have you suffered hardship? Are you using the armor God has provided? Do you even know there is a battle going on for your heart and soul?