

Being A Good Soldier

SLIDE 1 (Text - bring attention to words in caps and bold print)

2 Timothy 2:1-4 “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is Christ Jesus. [2 and the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. [3 You therefore must **ENDURE** hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. [4 No one **ENGAGED** in warfare **ENTANGLES** himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who **ENLISTED** him as a soldier.” (NKJV)

Introduction



SLIDE 2 (Picture)

The American and Christian flags represent two types of freedom. One is freedom that allows us to go where we want to go, say what we want to say, to live where we want to live, to dream big dreams and pursue them.

SLIDE 3 (Veteran Quotes Below with the Dots)

Someone wrote:

- It is the veteran, not the reporter, who has given us the freedom of the press
 - It is the veteran, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech
 - It is the veteran, not the campus organizer, who has given us freedom to assemble
 - It is the veteran, not the politician, who has given us the right to vote
 - It is the veteran, not the preacher, who has given us freedom of religion
- Today is Veterans Sunday and all over the country today we recognize veterans that have served their country. However, we must not forget those that have given their life so that all Americans can be free.

Slide 4 (Statistics of Americans who gave their lives serving their country)

● American Civil War	655,000
● World War II	405,399
● World War I	116,516
● Vietnam War	58,209
● Korean War	36,574
● American Revolutionary war	25,000
● War of 1812	15,000
● Mexican-American War	13,823
● Iraq War	4,576
● Philippine-American War	4,196
● War in Afghanistan	2,432
● Spanish-American War	<u>2,246</u>
● Total Deaths	1,222,572

- Let us **“PAUSE”** here for a moment of silence in honor of those who gave their lives and their families that have, and still grieve for their loss.
- There has been so much sacrifice and loss over the centuries for us to have our freedom.
- THE CHRISTIAN FLAG REPRESENTS CHRISTIAN FREEDOM** that can only be found in Christ. Remember when Jesus was talking to the Jews about being free He told them, and us today,

Slide 5 (Scriptur)

St. John 8:31-32 “Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, if you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. [32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

- The born again child of God, which takes place when one confesses his sins, repents, and accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of his/her life is set free from the bondage of sin.
- This does not happen by turning over a new leaf, coming to church alone, singing on the Worship Team, being baptized by itself, or preaching in the pulpit.

- It is a spiritual transformation. Old things are passed away and all things become new.

Slide 6 (Show the three Scriptures as I come to them)

- **John 8:36** “So if the Son sets you free you will be free indeed.”
 - Free from the bondage of sin,
 - the penalty of sin,
 - the guilt of sin
 - **Romans 6:23** “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- In Christ we are free indeed
 - We have freedom to live
 - Freedom to serve
 - **Galatians 5:1** “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” (NKJV)

- To become a military veteran involves hard work, physical conditioning, training, and sacrifice. It also takes the same effort to become a Spiritual Veteran and Paul knew something about that.
 - Paul was a religious man who thought it best to help wipe out Christianity
 - On his way to Damascus he met Jesus
 - He was converted, or born again, if you please, and became a soldier for Christ
- Paul’s Words to Timothy
 - A. At the end of his road of life the Holy Spirit prompted him to write to the young pastor Timothy, passing the torch on to him

Slide 7 (Scripture)

[GET CONGREGATION TO READ WITH ME]

- ✓ **2 Timothy 2:1** “You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in the warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.” (NKJV)

Slide 8 (B)

B. He talks about four things it takes to become a Veteran soldier of Christ

ENDURE, ENGAGE, ENTANGLE, ENLIST

✓ **Let's start with the last word "ENLIST"**

- **We cannot become a Veteran if we do not enlist**
- **In the New Century Version translation it says "A soldier wants to please his enlisting officer" (v. 2)**
- **In my day when you turned 18 men were eligible to be drafted but today they have recruiters that try to get you to volunteer to join some branch of the service**
- **Men and women today volunteer for various reasons, college funding, they are patriotic, it is a family tradition, and some just want a sense of direction**
- **Simply put it is a life changing decision**

□ **God does not force anyone to serve in His Army**

- **What He does do is send the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sins**
- **But it is our choice to decide to join**
- **I feel it is important for us to be reminded that coming to church or, turning over a new leaf, joining the church is not necessarily enlistment. Jesus was emphatic, "you must be born again"**
- **We must be willing to carry His cross to serve in His army (Luke 14)**
- **Listen, when we repent and He wipes away all our sin and guilt how can we not want to serve Him and give Him our all**
- **Once we drink from His well of living water nothing else will satisfy**

✓ **Endure**

- **In all military branches there are hardships one must endure**
- **When I was in the service my biggest battle was the language I had to listen to as a young Christian**

- Also, I had to get into physical shape. They turned a 120 pound boy into a 140 pound physical young man. I must pat myself on the back for the physical specimen I am still today. Just kidding.
- It is not for those that just want to pretend, or play soldier.
- **Illustration:** I read an article this week about an Air Force Major that was promoted to Colonel and got a new office. The first morning he was in his new office, an airman knocked on the door and asked to speak to him. The Colonel, feeling the urge to impress the young airman, picked up his phone and began talking. “Yes, General, thank you. Yes, I will pass that information along to the President this afternoon. Yes, goodbye, sir.” Then, turning to the airman, he barked, “And what do you want?” The airman said, “Nothing important, sir. I just came to hook up your telephone.”
- The moral to this is we cannot play church. There are some real spiritual wars we have to face. **[Acts 19:15 Eventually, one of the evil spirits answered them, “Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?”]**
- Paul told Timothy, and us today, **“You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ? (v. 3)**
- Paul was flogged, stoned, shipwrecked, imprisoned, and at the end of his life was beheaded for the Gospel of Jesus Christ
 - ❖ People will attack us from all sides
 - ❖ Satan will lay stumbling blocks in our paths
 - ❖ We must keep the faith in all things and “ENDURE”

✓ Engage

- General Sherman once said, “You don’t know the horrible aspects of war. I’ve been through two wars and I know. I’ve seen cities and homes in ashes. I’ve seen thousands of men lying on the ground, their dead faces looking up at the skies. I tell you, war is hell!”

- I personally served in the Vietnam War and he is absolutely correct. War is not a pretty sight.
- As a soldier one must be ready to fight the enemy

Slide 9 (Scripture)

- Paul told the Corinthians in 10:4-5 **“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ?”**
- As Christian Soldiers we have to be ready to engage the enemy
- Remember: **“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”** (1 John 4:4 NKJV)
- We will be tempted to do wrong, or even desert, run away, lay down, or just quit.
- However, we are, through Christ, **“more than conquerors”**
- As Believer’s we oppose false religions, world views that oppose what the Word of God stands for
- We are to be ready to defend our faith in Jesus Christ
- We surrender our thoughts, through prayer and the Word, to Christ
- Our goal must be not to kill our enemies, but make them our allies
- Soldiers rely on their squad, platoon or company to help them in battle, to have their back
- As Believers we rely on our church family to support us and stand beside us. However, we must never forget, we have God on our side

✓ Entangled

Slide 10 (Scripture)

- V. 4a – **“No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life,.....”**
- We must be committed to faith in Christ
- The story was told of a new recruit, shortly after joining the Navy, who asked his officer for a pass so he could attend a wedding. The officer gave him the pass, but informed the young man he would have to be back by 7 p.m. Sunday. “You don’t understand, sir,” said the recruit. “I’m in the wedding.” “No, you don’t understand,” the officer shot back. “You’re in the Navy!”
- Military personnel are expected to be committed
- As believer’s in Christ we must be committed and serve Him faithfully
- To many Christians get entangled in other things of the world

Slide 11 (Scripture)

- **Luke 8:14 “The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.”**
- Be careful about things that will distract us from Jesus
- We must stay focused but if we waiver in any way run quickly to the cross and he will restore us

Slide 12 (Scripture)

- Remember, David said in **Psalm 42:5 “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance.”**
- There is **POWER** in **PRAISE** and **WORSHIP**
 - ❖ Walls of Jericho fell down
 - ❖ David slew Goliath in the name of the Lord

- ❖ **The Demoniac of Gadara was naked, cut himself with stones, broke chains, people were afraid of him. But wait a minute, he met Jesus and was delivered. (Mark 5)**

CONCLUSION

Today we have discussed two flags and two types of freedom. We must be thankful to veterans who have served this great nation. We must also thank the Christian Veterans who have paved the road before us. The apostles, the hall of fame of Faith in Hebrews 11 and the first century Christians that refused to let the light of Christ be put out, even to their death. God is faithful and He will provide for us and we can trust Him. Because of Christ's death on the cross and his resurrection we are free if we have repented of our sins.