

“I’m in the Lord’s Army”

Perhaps you sang this song as a child in Bible Class, but let’s think about being “in the Lord’s army” again now that we’re “all grown up”...

- Jesus is the *Commander in Chief*, Eph.1:19b-23, “*These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He (God) put all things in subjection under His (Jesus’) feet, and gave Him (Jesus) as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*”
- There are certainly *Officers*, Eph.4:11, “*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,*” but,
- The rest of us are supposed to be *soldiers*: Paul called *Epaphroditus* as not only his *brother* and *fellow-worker* but also his “*fellow-soldier*” in Phil.2:25; he also referred to *Archippus* as a “*fellow-soldier*” in Phile.2; and likewise called upon *Titus* to be “*a good soldier of Christ Jesus,*” 2Tim.2:2.

Thus the NT certainly enlists the *soldier* motif. But how does one become a part of the *Lord’s army*? Contrary to what some might believe or espouse (that they were overwhelmed and conscripted by force), His is a strictly *volunteer army*! Yes, Saul of Tarsus was *recruited* and even *blinded* by the Commander in Chief, but still had to “*rise and enter the city*” to *enlist* and be *sworn in* and *kitted out*, cf. Acts 9:6-18. So there are no *draftees*, only *volunteers* are accepted.

So far, so good- we’ve “joined up” with the *right side*, but let’s go back to 2Tim.2 and *line up* for a bit of (self) *inspection*. Exactly what *kind* of soldiers are we? Or more specifically, “**What kind of soldier am I (or are you)?**”

- One *willing* to “**suffer hardship,**” v.3a? Or, when the going gets tough and the battle rages, one who hastens a cowardly retreat, cf. Rev.21:8?
- A “**good soldier,**” v.3b? Just as there *good* and *bad* doctors, lawyer, plumbers, and mechanics, there are *good* and *bad* soldiers! For soldiers in the Lord’s army, the *Code of Conduct* manual is clear, cf. vv.15-26!
- “**Of Christ**” or just a *self-serving mercenary*, v.3c? Motivations matter. Some *serve* and *fight* from “*pure motives,*” and some only do so from “*selfish ambition*” (Phil.1:15-17) and thus become “*enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is their same, who set their mind on earthly things,*” Phil.3:18b-19.
- “**Active Service**” or *AWOL*, or *Retired*, v.4a? What’s your status in the Lord’s army? In truth, there is only one “*Active Service*”- anything else is just “*Dishonorably Discharged,*” Luke 11:23.
- One who “**entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life**” so as to be of no *military value* to the *one who enlisted* you, v.4b? Unfortunately, many suppose themselves to be in the Lord’s army, but the branch that only serves a few weekends a year because that’s “*all MY schedule will allow.*” Please read 2Pet.2:20.

So, have you *enlisted* in the Lord’s army, or are you still fighting on the (losing) side of Satan? Are you a *good soldier* who’s willing to *suffering hardship* on *active duty*, or too *entangled in the affairs of everyday life*? Think about these things, won’t you? (Philip C.

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