

Sermon

A Soldier of the Cross

2 Timothy 4:1-8, Ephesians 6:13-20

Jeff Jackson

“Living For the One Who Branded Us...Jesus”

INTRODUCTION:

A Soldier with a Mission by Kate Loop

*“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 3:14*

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2

TEXT:

2 Timothy 4:1-8 NLT

I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will someday judge the living and the dead when he comes to set up his Kingdom: ²Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.

³For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. ⁴They will reject the truth and chase after myths.

⁵But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you.

⁶As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. ⁸And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.

Ephesians 6:13-20 NLT

¹³Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. ¹⁴Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. ¹⁵For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. ¹⁶In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. ¹⁷Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

¹⁹And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God's mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. ²⁰I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God's ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should.

I. The Commission of A King's Soldier

Notes: _____

2 Timothy 2:3-4

³ Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.

Christian Pledge:

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands; one Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again with life and liberty for all who believe.

II. The Criteria of the Uniform of a King's Soldier

Notes: _____

SPIRITUAL VICTORY COMES ONLY TO THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED FOR BATTLE

Psalms 18:35-40

³⁵ You have given me your shield of victory. Your right hand supports me; your help has made me great. ³⁶ You have made a wide path for my feet to keep them from slipping. ³⁷ I chased my enemies and caught them; I did not stop until they were conquered. ³⁸ I struck them down so they could not get up; they fell beneath my feet. ³⁹ You have armed me with strength for the battle; you have subdued my enemies under my feet. ⁴⁰ You placed my foot on their necks.

III. The Chains of a King's Soldier

Notes: _____

Colossians 3:1-2

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. ² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

Douglas McArthur

The soldier above all others prays for peace, for it is the soldier who must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war.

Martin Luther

To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.

Philippians 4:4-14

⁴ Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! ⁵ Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.

⁶ Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

⁸ And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. ⁹ Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Paul's Thanks for Their Gifts

¹⁰ How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. ¹¹ Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. ¹² I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. ¹³ ***For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.*** ¹⁴ Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.

(Conclusion on the next page)

CONCLUSION

Tim Challies, regarding the song *Onward Christian Soldier*

“The words of the hymn make it clear that the focus is on this spiritual battle—that our foe is Satan, not men, and that our King and Commander in Chief is the eternal, omnipotent Christ whose kingdom cannot fail.”

Onward Christian Soldiers

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;
Forward into battle see His banners go!
*Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.*
At the sign of triumph Satan's host doth flee;
On then, Christian soldiers, on to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise;
Brothers lift your voices, loud your anthems raise.
Like a mighty army moves the church of God;
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod.
We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.
What the saints established that I hold for true.
What the saints believèd, that I believe too.
Long as earth endureth, men the faith will hold,
Kingdoms, nations, empires, in destruction rolled.
Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and wane,
But the church of Jesus constant will remain.
Gates of hell can never gainst that church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise, and that cannot fail.
Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices in the triumph song.
Glory, laud and honor unto Christ the King,
This through countless ages men and angels sing.

Christian Pledge:

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands; one Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again with life and liberty for all who believe.