

5 Things a Soldier Needs to DO and 5 things a Soldier Needs to HAVE

“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” (2 Tim 2v3)

I was once an officer in the U.S. Army, and while I was in I learned a lot about leadership, offensive and defensive warfare, weapons capabilities, enemy organization and capabilities, etc among other things. Since the Holy Bible often makes the comparison, I wanted to take a few examples from physical warfare and apply them to our spiritual conflicts that we face daily (Eph 6v12).

Here are 5 things that are very important for physical Soldier to have, and are even more important for a spiritual Soldier (Eph 6v11-18)

1. Have your weapon with you at all times and know it's capabilities and how to use it. Keep it clean. Handle it every day. Be able to take it apart and put it back together with your eyes closed.

“take the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God...” Eph 6

I should keep my Bible with me and read it and study it constantly and be ready for **“the defense and confirmation of the gospel”** and **“to give an answer to every man that asketh of you the reason of the hope that is in you”**, and to **“preach the word.”** I should know what it says about itself and what it's good for (i.e. **“...your salvation, wherein ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel...”**)

2. Know your mission.

It's easy to get distracted trying to perform tasks that make you feel busy, but ultimately are not accomplishing the tasks that they sent you over to perform. Focus on exactly what the commader sent you to do!

I can get so distracted by the things of this world, even the good and wholesome things like working at a job to pay the bills etc.

I should be **“always abounding in the work of the Lord”** getting the gospel out to sinners and showing Christians that God's word can be trusted and counted on no matter what, and that the Spirit of God will lead and guide us into **“all truth”** and **“sound doctrine”** by His word, when ask Him for wisdom.

3. Watch out for your buddy (or, “mate” as the Brits and Aussies called them!)

. In theater, you ALWAYS move in pairs. Two can often fight off something that would overpower a single soldier.

Take care of your brothers and sisters in the Lord. Encourage them with the Blessed Hope and

warn them of false doctrines and false teachers **“crept in unawares”**. (1 Tim 1:19-20)
“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another” (Eph 4v32)

4. Know the enemy.

We trained to know the enemies weapons, tactics, and “tricks”. For instance, we knew that they pretty much used exclusively Russian Kalashnikov rifles, so we learned how to operate, clean, and repair them. Same with rocket propelled grenades, “dish-kah” machine guns, and the fearsome Dragunov sniper rifle. (Interesting note: Brits, Australians, and Americans are generally much better marksmen than the people we normally fight- probably since we/they grew up hunting deer, dingoes, etc)

For instance, they’d built bombs and hide them in soft drink bottles, piles of trash, even dead dogs and donkeys on the side of the road.

(They’d also use a cell phone as the ignition source, so if you ever saw someone on a cell phone you knew they could be the trigger man)

“Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour” 1Pet 5v8

5. Look forward to going home.

Keeping your thoughts on the future to when you can go home can be a huge morale booster. No matter how hot it gets or how bad, you always know that one of these days, Lordwilling, you’ll be going down to the airfield and getting on a helicopter to take you to the airport, then on jet to fly home.

The feeling of knowing I was going home is still so vivid in my mind that I can remember every detail and emotion associated with it. All the sweat and toil and hardship coming to an end and heading back to see Mary Elizabeth...It was absolutely exhilarating!

(I can only imagine how I’ll feel if I see the Lord Jesus Christ peering out through the **“lattice”** just prior to His return!)

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” Titus 2v13

(I’m going to add a quick 6th to this list. Don’t be a fat Soldier that is overweight and can’t “march” advance onto the battlefield and then fight. Stay in top shape so you can “shoot, move, and communicate”! Fat Soldiers don’t pose much of a threat to the enemy, plus they make easy targets!

“I keep under my body and bring it into subjection”

Here are 5 “THINGS” you need:

1. Your weapon (this is a repeat of the first list, but it really is that important.)

However, I'll add a thought to it.

You need your "primary weapon", for me it was a M4 carbine .

You also need a "secondary weapon." I carried a Beretta Model 92 9mm pistol. Finally, we'd carry a knife, but we were also trained constantly in jiu-jitsu style fighting.

Even unarmed, the goal is to be a threat to the enemy.

How I apply that in my life is to have my big black wide margin Cambridge AV "primary" weapon, a small new testament that I carry with me, and smaller versions around the house, vehicle, work desk, about my person, etc, and my "jiu jitsu" is memorizing all of the scripture that I can! The goal is to NEVER become disarmed!

2. Your armour.

I wore a helmet, a vest with thick armour plating on my chest, back, shoulders, and groin and ballistic sunglasses that were able to withstand shrapnel blasts in order to protect your eyes, as well as knee and elbow pads since a lot of our training and missions involved urban settings.

(When ready to fight and "loaded for bear" I weighed over 350 pounds!)

We also rode in armoured vehicles.

Ephesians 6 is an INCREDIBLY up to date list of the things that a modern soldier on the modern battlefield needs to wear.

3. Water.

You MUST keep water on you at all times. We were often in temperatures in the 130-140F range, so it was HOT! You can pass out pretty quick if you're not drinking lots of water. (One particularly hard day I drank over 5 gallons of water and never urinated a single time!)

Obviously, some excellent illustrations about the importance of the word of God as a sustaining source in our life can be used.

"whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" John 4v14

4. Wear your colors.

In addition to the U.S. Army uniform, I wore my "big Red One" unit insignia on both shoulders (as we all did). We also wore an American flag, and the Brits wore the Union Jack, etc. We wanted the good guys to know who we were and the bad guys to know we were against them.

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven" Matt 5v16

5. A map.

Knowing where you are at all times, as well as where you're going is extremely important.

"I am the Lord thy God... which leadeth in the way that thou shouldest go" Is 48v17

God the Holy Ghost, through the pen of Paul, sure did use a lot of military analogies when teaching spiritual truths....I guess it's because physical warfare is so close to spiritual!

There are lots more analogies that could be made, but I hope that these few "provoke" you think on these things and make sure that you're armed to the teeth and are posing a threat to "your adversary the devil"!