

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

December 24

2023

A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ

In writing to Timothy, the apostle Paul penned these words of instruction, “*You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier*” (2 Timothy 2:3-4). So, knowing that a Christian is portrayed as being a soldier of Christ, let’s identify some notable qualities of a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ Must Obey Orders

A good soldier of Jesus Christ must be a willful doer of His commands. In John 14:15, Jesus said, “*if you love Me, Keep My commandments.*” You see, a good soldier of Jesus Christ will not just say Lord, Lord, and do not the things He says (Luke 6:46), but will rather a good soldier of Jesus Christ will obey the things that He has commanded (John 14:21). Therefore take heed to these words of Paul, “*And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, (i.e. by His authority) giving thanks to God the Father through Him*” (Colossians 3:17), and be one who obeys the captain of salvation (Hebrews 2:10), He who is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9).

A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ Must Be Armed

A good soldier of Jesus Christ will put on the whole armor of God, and they will be armed for battle. In Ephesians 6:11-13, Paul penned, “*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*” Remember, a good soldier of Jesus Christ

will be fully armed with the whole armor of God, and they will do all to stand against evil.

A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ Must Courageously Fight

Not only will a good soldier of Jesus Christ be fully armed, but they will likewise courageously fight the good fight of faith. In 1 Timothy 6:12, Paul, encouraged Timothy to, “*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold of eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*” Soldiers, know that a good soldier of Jesus Christ must courageously fight the good fight of faith, they must be brave and strong (1 Corinthians 16:13), and they must continue to lay hold of their hope of eternal life.

A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ Must Endure

Likewise, a good soldier of Jesus Christ will endure hardship (2 Timothy 2:3). You see, being a soldier of Jesus Christ is no easy task (2 Timothy 3:12). Therefore, a good soldier of Jesus Christ must always look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and we must run with endurance the race that is set before us, considering Him (i.e. Jesus Christ) who endured hostility from sinners against Himself, lest we become weary and discouraged in our souls (Hebrews 12:1-3).

A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ Must Pursue Victory

Another quality of a good soldier of Jesus Christ is they will diligently pursue the victory over sin. You see, victory over sin and death is only found in Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57), and a good soldier of Jesus Christ will diligently pursue the victory. In 1 John 5:4, John informed soldiers of Christ that their faith is the victory that has overcome the world, and in 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Paul said, “*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*” You see, a good soldier of Jesus Christ, will fight the good fight, they will keep the faith, pursue the victory, and finish the race just as the good soldier the apostle Paul did.

The question now is, what kind of soldier are you? Think about that, and remember, Jesus will reward His faithful soldiers, for as He said in Revelation 2:10, “*...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give the crown of life.*”

Christmas - IN REVERSE!!!

It has been frequently noted that the Scriptures do not authorize any religious observance of the day that men call "Christmas". There is simply no mention of any such observance in the Bible, and we know from historical accounts that the significance attached to this day originated hundreds of years after the church began in the first century. We do not even know the birthday of Jesus. In fact, we can be almost certain it was NOT December 25th. Any attempt to make this a day of special religious significance is without Biblical authority and should be avoided (Col. 3:17).

It is sad, but many in the Lord's church who would defend the statements made above are guilty of a sort of "reverse" observance of Christmas. While condemning the denominational folks for their practice of making a "holy" day which the Bible does not mention, they allow this day - and the season which surrounds it - to crowd God completely out of their lives.

Special activities associated with family and friends, school events, special performances, traveling, entertaining, visiting, partying, etc., are all conducted at a frantic pace this time of year. Many Christians allow these secular activities to push God out of His place (Matt. 6:33). Assemblies of the church are missed, Bible study is neglected, personal work and other efforts of the local church are abandoned. Verbally we denounce the religious observance of Christmas but, in practice, we have established a kind of "reverse" observance. In December we become LESS religious!

So, Christian, as you go through your busy schedule at this time of year, we hope you will stop to realize the things that are most important. Do not allow this man-made day to crowd God and His service out of the picture. Keep working and growing. Keep on keeping on.

✍️ Greg Gwin

God's Plan of Salvation

Hear the word of God. (Romans 10:17)

Believe in Jesus Christ. (John 8:24)

Repent of your sins. (Acts 17:30)

Confess Jesus Christ. (Romans 10:9-10)

Be baptized for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38)

Remain faithful unto death. (Revelation 2:10)

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek” (Romans 1:16).

Belleville church of Christ

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www.bellevillechurch.net

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

Brad Phillips (765) 720-2816