

## A GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST

### BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY SPARKLERS

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*“Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”—2 Timothy 2:3.*

The name soldier, applied in the Bible to the followers of Jesus Christ, is an appropriate one; for it implies a special enlistment, or contract for service—a contract in which the life is freely offered, a contract in which the individual is under rigid discipline, and in which his will is entirely ignored and the will of the Divine Government, as expressed through the “Captain of our salvation,” is absolute Law, to be obeyed at any cost.

Doubtless many Christian soldiers have taken note of the courage and devotion manifested by the soldiers of the various armies of the world, now in conflict. We notice their obedience in going down into the trenches, enduring exposure and all kinds of privation, and, in many cases, receiving wounds or death or seeds of disease. We are amazed at their courage, loyalty, devotion. Doubtless many of the soldiers of the Cross have said, as they compared experiences, “If these men fighting for they know not what, receiving a small wage, very plain food, and often very uncomfortable conditions every way, are so loyal, ‘what manner of persons ought we to be’ who have enlisted under the banner of the Lord, pledging ourselves to faithfulness, ‘even unto death’?” What manner of persons ought we to be, after receiving such large rewards of Divine care, blessing, comfort and peace in the present life, and having through Christ such a glorious anticipation in respect to the future, if we are faithful? What manner of persons ought we to be—how zealous, how devoted, how loyal, how self-sacrificing! If others can renounce their wills and obey orders, the purport of which they do not understand, how ready should we be to accept the Message of our Captain unquestioningly, regardless of our knowledge of eventualities!

And what a glorious Cause is ours! If we lay down our lives in following our Captain’s lead, it is for the good of others. With our Master we die that others may live, we endure that others may have joy and rejoicing through the knowledge of our God and His glorious coming Kingdom. How rich is our pay—in the present life the peace of God, passing all understanding, and the assurance that all things shall work together for our good and that every sorrow, every tear, will result in “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” in the life to come—joint-heirship with our Master in His Kingdom of a thousand years and in the eternal glory of Ages to come!—2 Cor. 4:13-18.

**Quite in Contrast**

In contrast, note the description of a soldier of the present time, by the trenchant pen of Jack London, the novelist. Under the caption, "A GOOD SOLDIER," he writes:—

"Young man, the lowest aim of your life is to be a good soldier. The good soldier never tries to distinguish right from wrong. He never thinks; never reasons; he only obeys. If he is ordered to fire on his fellow-citizens, on his friends, on his neighbors, on his relatives, he obeys without hesitation. If he is ordered to fire down a crowded street when the poor are clamoring for bread, he obeys, and sees the gray hairs of age stained with red and the life-tide gushing from the breasts of women, feeling neither remorse nor sympathy. If he is ordered off as one of a firing squad to execute a hero or benefactor, he fires without hesitation, though he knows the bullet will pierce the noblest heart that ever beat in human breast.

"A good soldier is a blind, heartless, soulless, murderous **machine**. He is not a **man**. He is not even a brute, for brutes only kill in self-defense. All that is human in him, all that is divine in him, all that constitutes the man, has been sworn away when he took the enlistment oath. His mind, conscience, aye, his very soul, are in the keeping of his officer.

"No man can fall lower than a soldier—it is a depth beneath which we cannot go."