

# Your Identity In Christ

## You Are a Soldier

The Bible demonstrates that those who are in Christ have a rich spiritual identity. This involves being a soldier of Christ. Yet, while it is common for people to identify as “Christians,” many may be unfamiliar with what it means for Christians to be soldiers. Still, we see this concept plainly taught in the pages of Scripture (2 Timothy 2:3). Therefore, if you are going to fulfill your true purpose in Jesus Christ, you must embrace your identity as a soldier of Christ and all this involves.

**1) You are fighting in a spiritual war.** To be a soldier implies there is some kind of life-or-death military conflict (or the potential for one). However, unlike traditional warfare with a physical enemy, physical weapons, physical stakes, etc., the war we are each involved in is a spiritual war with a spiritual enemy, spiritual weapons, and spiritual stakes (Ephesians 6:10-18; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6). For, our conflict involves the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan (Acts 26:17-18; Colossians 1:13). While Satan is often honored as king (whether knowingly or unknowingly) by people throughout this world (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19), he is clearly presented in the Scriptures as being the enemy of God and all that is good. Even the name “Satan” means that he is the adversary (enemy, opponent, 1 Peter 5:8). Then, the stakes in this war are either spending eternity in Heaven or in Hell (Romans 2:6-11). As a Christian, then, you must embrace the fact that this war is being fought. There are battles raging every day in your own life and in the lives of every person you meet! Thankfully, Jesus has already provided the victory to those who will follow Him (1 Corinthians 15:57; 2 Corinthians 2:14; Colossians 2:15)!

**2) You must focus on the mission.** There is a difference between a soldier and a civilian. For example, if a soldier still acted as a civilian, he/she

would not recognize the authority of the commanding officers, would pursue whatever most benefits or pleases himself/herself, would not train properly for combat, etc. If someone who was enlisted in an army would conduct himself/herself like this, the results would be catastrophic for that individual, for others, and for the mission. The same thing is true concerning the Christian soldier (2 Timothy 2:1-4). If you do not carefully view yourself as a soldier of Christ, you will not constantly be looking to the instructions of your commanding Officer (King Jesus). Rather, you will be doing whatever pleases yourself and will not train yourself properly for combat by studying God’s word and learning to put on and use the armor God has given you. As a result, you will be spiritually killed in the moment of battle (James 1:14-15)! Instead of this, you must embrace being enlisted as a soldier of Christ. You must recognize the eternal stakes of this war for yourself and everyone in this world and commit yourself to fighting in a way so that both you and others will have eternal life in Heaven (1 Timothy 6:11-12)! Yet, to accomplish this mission, it will involve enduring many hardships as a soldier (2 Timothy 3:10-12; Acts 14:21-22). You will be required to exercise great self-discipline so that you sacrificially train and fight every day according to the instructions of King Jesus, not turning back to the ways of civilian life (i.e. the ways of this world, Romans 12:1-2). For, neither you nor others can afford for you to think about your life in the same way as people who are not actively fighting in this war for the soul!

**3) Fight for your own soul.** Jesus has given you everything we need to fight and win in this war against Satan and sin (1 Corinthians 10:13; Ephesians 6:10-13). However, you must still choose to take up the spiritual armor He provides every day and use it in the way that He intends (Ephesians 6:14-18). It’s not enough for you just to enlist in Christ’s army at some

point in your life. Rather, you must actively engage in the daily battles Satan rolls out against you. These primarily involve battles between your fleshly desires and your spiritual nature (Galatians 5:16-26; 6:7-10)! Therefore, you must go through the course of every day constantly on guard for the areas in which Satan will engage you in battle (1 Peter 5:8-9), submitting yourself to God in everything (James 4:7).

**4) Fight for the souls of others.** You are not the only one who is fighting in this spiritual war. Others who are doing so can be divided into three categories. First, you must fight for the souls who have been taken captive by Satan and have never come to know Jesus (2 Timothy 2:24-26; Matthew 9:35-38). Second, you must fight for those who have once known Jesus but have been recaptured by Satan (James 5:19-20; Jude 1:22-23). Third, you must fight for those who are currently living as fellow soldiers for Jesus Christ (Galatians 6:1-2; Hebrews 3:12-13). Every day, you must see people as eternity-bound beings who are fighting in this war for the soul (either on Satan's side or Jesus's). While it is easy to get distracted by many things of this life and fail to see others in this way, you must diligently work to keep your focus and see every person in this way so as to help them however you can!

Being in Christ (a Christian) means that you are a soldier of Christ. But, as we have seen, this is not an empty title or merely a way of describing yourself. Instead, this means that you are fighting in a spiritual war and must be intensely focused on the mission of Jesus that involves both fighting for your own soul and fighting for the souls of others. Fighting well in this spiritual war is essential to experiencing the victory Jesus has provided!

## Thought Questions

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

**Teaching:** What did you learn from this lesson?

**Rebuking:** What are some ways this lesson challenges you to live differently?

**Correcting:** How does this lesson help you make positive changes for Christ?

**Training & Equipping:** How can you apply this lesson to be trained and equipped in God's service?