

THE ARMY OF THE LORD
By Dr. Hal Webb, Evangelist

"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," I Tim. 2: 3&4.

My first close encounter with the military began on my 18th. birthday. America was at war and many men would be needed to put down evil overseas. I often said I had three reasons to report for duty. First I was patriotic, second my country needed me, and third, they came and got me. Jokingly, I have been careful of drafts every since. Ha! In this short sermon I want to point out the similarity between what I went through and we as a part of the army of the Lord. First, my allegiance had to change. No more "mama's" boy and doing my own thing. The day I left home my life had to take on a complete change of ownership and action. The same is true for us as Christians who belong to Christ, and **He is the Supreme Commander In Chief**. Our modern faith seems to allow us to report for duty if convenient to us, in sloppy apparel, if the weather is OK. When the roll is called we need to be present at every church service. We need **Loyalty To Our Church** instead of failing to report for duty. Do you put things ahead of duty, and feelings before the job to be done? I love my church and my pastor and love prayer meeting attendance and Sunday night desertion hurts. It becomes a discouragement to those who report faithfully and to the pastor. Your reason for a lack of loyalty to the church will be the subject considered at the judgment throne of God. Doesn't that bother you? How can you stay home and soak in the garbage of your television or allow conflicts to keep you from reporting for duty and information? Try

doing that with your job. What message are you sending to your children who see you making the wrong decision so often? We are raising a generation of do my own thing instead of putting Christ first. No one can fill the place at roll call where you belong, as the pastor calls the church to attention. Church ranks are thinning these days as so many believers don't want accountability to our Lord, to our pastor and to the church. Isn't it about time you got back into the spirit of faithfulness to every roll call? Your words are hollow if your attendance is not faithful. *You must desire the milk of the word that ye may grow thereby,*" I Peter 2:2. Many believers are stunted and giants of the faith are few, just because they have lost the desire to show up for duty. Are you faithful to your church? Come on, stand with the ranks, show up and get involved now. In the military **Appearance Is Important**. There was a uniform to wear, to be kept clean and pressed making us stand out as Army men. Shoes must be polished, ties straight and the overall look of discipline was required. We had to look like men of the US Army. Is it asking the soldiers of the cross too much to look different from the world in how we dress. I think not! Check out the Marine and his proud look of soldier identification. We are to be "examples of the believer", I Tim 4:12. In this day of sloppy dress and ugly clothes our commander wants us to be clean, neat, with the look of discipline. After church the other night I stopped to get us a spicy chicken sandwich. Sitting there I could hardly believe the girl that walked to the counter. It wasn't just her sloppy pants but they were pulled down as low as possible to show 3 inches of her rear complete with tattoo. Talk about cheap, sensual stupidity. A girl that displays her body will soon lose her virginity and cause boys to visually sin with lustful desire. What ever happened to looking, pretty, attractive, and quality by following the Biblical "hands off" till marriage. Why must you pursue

the immoral crowd and dress disobediently when the Bible clearly calls for a "*difference between us and them*", Acts 15:9. Ophra had a stylist on who said pants were a great way for a woman to flaunt sex before men. I don't watch her program but the point was clear. We all know the unisex crowd love them and I just feel bad for mothers who are a bad example and their daughters who are not required to look like ladies. Honestly, did you ever read Deuteronomy 22:5? Why is that verse any different than others that warn of sin? Why not be fully obedient to the Word and dress like the quality people the world expects us to be. Remember boys, a tie won't strangle you and you need to look like the gentleman a quality girl will look for. Millions of believers see no reason to be in the uniform of a quality person who has it all together. Yet in today's scene how you look is crucial to your commander. Another soldier thing is to clean your weapon, keep it handy, and know how to use it. We must **Carry and Shoot The Word Of God**. I remember we had to be so familiar with our weapon we could take it apart, clean it and reassemble it in the dark. What about your knowledge of the Bible? Have you ever used yours to win a soul to Christ? Can you find the books without looking in the index? Do you read it daily with study and understanding or is your weapon dusty and failing to assist in the battle for souls. I remember World War II where I fought in the Rhine, the Ruhr and the Bulge. We carried our weapon, fully ready to fire and even slept with it. No generation of believers has ever had so many things to help us understand and fire the Word of God at the enemy. Yet we have very little affect on our neighbors nor offer much opposition to the devil. Our weapon collects dust, seldom is opened and used in the battle and where did I lay it? Again at the judgment seat of God we will answer to our treatment of the weapon of the Word of God. Then beloved there is the **Need For Obedience**. In the military the

soldier quickly learns to obey without question. The 5 AM rising caused me to quietly grumble but the recruits who openly complained spent hours cleaning the latrine with their tooth brushes. Most Christians have trouble with obedience. We have heard and know what we should do but we whine and whimper in stubborn rebellion. We balk at pastor's orders and refuse to accept his messages. We quibble over theories and that which grieves us and argue and look for ways to avoid responsibility. Training to serve God is tough and the soldier must learn to accept the wishes and warnings of our cadre. "Yes Sir" is the most pleasing way to respond to things expected of you. Refusal to obey can lead to proper discipline and even discharge from the troops. Many Bible verses deal with "*Obedience to the faith*", Rom. 1:5. and "*by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous*", Rom. 5:19. Or "*yield yourselves servants to obey*", Rom 6:19. In the marriage relationship the women are "*commanded to be under obedience*", I Cor 14:34. Paul spoke of "*remembering the obedience of you all*", II Cor. 7:15. There are 68 verses in the Bible that command you and I to **Obey** I pray that the words of this epistle will help you to examine your life as a member of the Army of the Lord. I believe we have just begun the fight and the enemy is closing in for the kill. We must "*be strong in the Lord and the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against the flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Therefore take on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand*", Eph. 6:11-14. I am praying that we will all stand together in the testing times of these last days. I pray these thoughts will help you to report for duty.