

Week 3

The Ways of the Warrior



Day 15: Will of the Warrior

Monday, October 14th

“My hope is that when I die, all of hell rejoices that I am out of the fight.” C.S. Lewis



Today's Challenge: Fight Against Injustice.

Today look for an opportunity to take a stand for someone who can't fight for themselves. You can speak up, share out, pray intentionally or give. Follow the Lord's lead.

One of the most important missions of US Army Military Police Soldiers in Iraq was to train Iraqi Police (or IPs). The training program referred to as Police Transition Training (PTT) had been pioneered by the Military Police just a year earlier, before the First Sergeant and his unit arrived. There had been so many Iraqi men, from all over the country, that wanted to be Police Officers that their ranks quickly overwhelmed the number of Military Police Soldiers in the country. As a result, Soldiers from other job specialities were being used to monitor PTT, which created inconsistency within the program.

“First Sergeant, these guys are ate up.” Waters announced coming back inside the IP Station. “What are they doing?” the First Sergeant questioned his driver. “It's not what they're doing. It's what they're *not* doing. Half of them aren't wearing their body armor. The other half of them aren't wearing it right. Half of them are walking around with their weapons in green status (not ready to fire). The other half, I'm not sure I trust to walk around with their weapons ready. One of them walked by us and dropped his pistol on the ground. It was in Black Status (ready to fire).” Waters rambled on telling his first Sergeant of the many problems that they were finding with the IPs.

“You guys have to realize that these guys were plucked off the street, sent to a ad-hoc police academy, ran by civilians, some of which were former Iraqi Police Officers, and then they just get thrown out here into IP stations. It's our job to train them how to do it right. We have to train them how to fight. One of the best ways for us to do that is to lead by example.” the First Sergeant explained

snapping the front plate of Waters's body back into place with a nod. Waters silently acknowledged the First Sergeant's point and exited the station.

After monitoring his Soldiers instruct the IPs over conducting a routine traffic stop, he shook his head and looked at the ground, taking in a deep breath of the sweltering air. Husan, his unit interpreter, stood to his right. In normal fashion, the First Sergeant stood slightly canted toward the Former Iraqi Air Force Colonel. "Husan, what was your police force like before we came here?" he asked looking back toward the exercise in futility. "Much like it is now. You have brought your ways and your techniques here, but they are not how our police have done things for decades. You cannot change things overnight here. As you have seen things in Iraq move at a much different pace than you want them to." Husan replied, with a very different answer than the First Sergeant expected to hear. He was sure that Husan, being a former Intelligence Officer, could see his frustration and the frustration of his Soldiers. "Any advice?" the frustrated First Sergeant asked looking toward the Iraqi man. "Give it time." the middle-aged Iraqi man said with a smile. The First Sergeant nodded, with an emotionless look and then turned his attention back to the IPs...

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love."

1 Corinthians 16:3-14



Daily Reading

In war, just as in life, things do not always go as we believe that they should. Sometimes things take longer than we anticipate. Sometimes things that we wanted to happen do not happen in the way that we wanted them to. Sometimes God's Will is totally in conflict with what we want. In spiritual warfare, just as in physical warfare, this is no exception. We must be willing to follow where the Spirit leads in a more flexible manner, bending to the Lord's Will in all things instead of conforming to the ways of the world.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, we find a lone man kneeling and praying. We all know who it is of course; it's Jesus! On the very night that He was betrayed by Judas Iscariot and arrested (Mark 14:32-50), we find Jesus praying. Did He not know what was about to happen? Why did He not run? We know from scripture that He knew well what was about to happen. Instead of trying to fight this and save Himself from indescribable pain and suffering, He yielded to God the Father. According to the account found in Luke 22:41-45, Jesus was in such despair and distress that, "He withdrew about a

stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow." Jesus asked for God the Father to "take this cup" from Him, IF (and ONLY IF) it was God's Will. Jesus always exhibited incredible Faith, but in the garden He proved that He was a warrior! Jesus had the Will of the Warrior!

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines "Will" as, "the faculty by which a person decides on and initiates action; control deliberately exerted to do something or to restrain one's own impulses (Noun)." In other words it is what guides us in making a decision. As Christian Warriors we must ensure that our will, matches God's Will for our life. We read about God's promise for those that do His Will in Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight."

In Matthew 6:10 Jesus is giving the "Sermon on the Mount" and teaching people how to pray. As He teaches in the "Lord's Prayer" we are told in explicit terms that God's Will is to be done; "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." As spiritual warriors we must align our will with God's Will, just as Jesus did. We must submit ourselves fully to Him. By this we are making the proclamation that we want His ways to rise above our ways.

We receive warning in Ephesians 5:15-16, "Be very careful, then, how you live-not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." This passage again reminds us, as so many do in this series, that evil is alive and working. It also tells us to make the most of the opportunities that God lays before us. As Christian Warrior's we must live with hearts that are turned toward Him and are ready and waiting for these opportunities. We must face each day with open eyes and open hearts to see these opportunities. Then we must *will* ourselves to execute upon these opportunities as the Spirit leads.

As Christians, we must always strive to see what we are reassured of in Proverbs 16:4, "The LORD works out everything to its proper end - even the wicked for a day of disaster." The Lord's timing is ALWAYS perfect. Just as we must align our will with His, we must also align our timing with His. This takes surrender, yielding, waiting and incredible Faith. At times it can appear, as it did in many of David's Psalms when he was being pursued by his enemies, that our enemies are winning. But, in God's time the wicked will be vanquished.

Hebrews 10:36 reassures us of the blessing that awaits those who do God's Will, "You need to persevere so that when you have done the Will of God, you will receive what he has promised." That promise is the reward that we will receive when our mission on Earth is over and we are called Home. For those who persevere and fight the good fight, we will receive that reward. We must build other

Christians up to fight as well (1 Thessalonians 5:11). We must speak to the lost and show them the Love of Christ. Our will must be His Will...



Kid Friendly Ideas



Day 16: Spirit of the Warrior

Tuesday, October 15th

“We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter, and we will not fail. Peace and Freedom will prevail.” George W. Bush, 2001



Today's Challenge: Fighting the Flesh

You know what it is. The struggle that you fight almost daily. You know you should but you don't. Or maybe you know you shouldn't, but you do. Today, ask God to fill you with His Spirit that you can conquer this battle. Pray that God will give you the first step towards overcoming. Then for the rest of the day, look and listen for the Lord's answer.

The First Sergeant, his Supply Sergeant, and his Human Resources Sergeant, had been tasked to give a block of instruction to newly assigned Sergeants of the Iraqi Army. The Iraqi Army Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) Academy had only been in existence for a little over five months, but this was the third class of “Sergeants” that it had produced. Before the American Army came to Iraq and reformed its ranks, the term Non-Commissioned Officer (a Sergeant) had been a foreign term within their army. Much like the former Soviet Union's Army, which served as the blueprint for how the Iraqi Army had been built, this army relied totally on high ranking officers to micro-manage everything.

When the US Army came, it brought with it the ideas that had been developed in its ranks at Valley Forge. A hand full of the best Soldiers from each company of every Regiment of the Continental Army were selected to receive special training. Then, those “NCOs”, would go back to their companies, train and lead those Soldiers in the upcoming battles of the Revolutionary War. This concept of depending upon a Soldier, a Sergeant, who in some cases were no more than 20-years-old, to decide the outcome of a battle was foreign in most armies. The US Army was trying to develop this concept, so that at some point in the future, the Iraqi Army would be able to lead and sustain itself.

Before they had arrived at the academy, the 52nd Military Police Brigade's Command Sergeant Major (CSM) (the most senior Sergeant in that Brigade), had spoken to the First Sergeant and explained to him how the Iraqi NCO Academy would very different from the NCO Academies of the US Army. The First Sergeant had graduated from all three of the US Army's NCO Academies, being the class honor

graduate for two of the three. Even with the CSMs warnings the First Sergeant had high expectations for these Soldiers.

The classroom portion of their instruction had gone relatively well, considering they had conducted the training through an interpreter the entire time. The time had come to take the NCOs outside to conduct the hands-on portion of the exercise. The Iraqi NCOs would have to negotiate an obstacle course, which had been constructed by civilian contractors from Jordyn. The First Sergeant and his men had on their full body armor and helmets armed with their M4 Rifles and M9 Pistols.

The three Americans stood against the backdrop of the new Iraqi Flag that was painted on the wall of the Academy main building. "Boys, we're gonna lead these cats through this exercise to show them what real NCOs are made of. And I'll be (he cursed) if any of them will beat us. Hooah?!" The First Sergeant quietly, but with great emphasis iterated to his NCOs. It was important for them to set the example for these new Sergeants, that would be sent out to units all over the Iraqi Army. Men who would be called upon to lead Iraqi Soldiers.

It was nearly 110 degrees out and the blazing, Baghdad sun, burnt against their exposed skin. The Iraqi NCOs cautiously entered the area, becoming quiet when they saw the American NCOs. To the First Sergeant's surprise only a few of them had on body armor and none of them had helmets. None of the NCOs were carrying any water either. The First Sergeant took in a deep breath and shook his head, curling his lips under. His NCOs stepped back as they saw the look that they had both seen fall across their First Sergeant's face, many times before. The First Sergeant remembered what the Command Sergeant Major had said about the differences between the Iraqi Army and their own. He took another deep breath and shook off the fact that they were out of uniform. "Let's do this and go back to the LSA." He said to his NCOs.

The three American NCOs led the way, running at full speed through the obstacle course in full combat gear. Toward the end of the course, the First Sergeant looked back to see that there were some NCOs that had sat down in the dirt. They weren't even trying. 'Are they going to at least finish', he thought to himself, totally exhausted. Then an anger arose inside him as he stepped off toward the men who had sat down.

Upon coming to their position, he kicked dirt upon them and cursed. "What are you doing?! Where is your Warrior spirit?! Are you tired? Men remember the Warrior Spirit doesn't come from the arm or the ab, it comes from the heart! It's what separates us from everyone else!" He explained to them as they leaned away from him, brushing the dust from their uniforms. Just then an Iraqi NCO came on the scene and the other Iraqi NCOs all stood up. They all filed back into line and executed the remainder of the obstacle course. "You see things are different in our Army than they are in yours." The Iraqi NCO belted out in English, to the First Sergeant's surprise. The First Sergeant and the Iraqi NCO had a conversation and then he raised his hand signaling for his NCOs to join him. Their day at the Iraqi NCO Academy was over and the First Sergeant was glad...

“but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” Isaiah 40:31 (ESV)



Daily Reading

There are few things more frustrating than a Warrior that does not have the Warrior Spirit! In fact as a life-long warrior in the physical realm, I submit to you that any person who refers to themselves as a “warrior”; but, is not prepared to live the “ways” of the warrior is lying to themselves about what or who they are. In this lesson we will cover aspects of the sometimes elusive concept that is called the “Warrior Spirit”.

Just as we defined the word “will” yesterday, we will now look at the definition for “spirit”. *Spirit* is “the nonphysical part of a person which is the seat of emotions and character; the soul (noun)” (Merriam-Webster, 2019). Just as the war which engulfs us is on a spiritual plane, so is our Warrior Spirit. It is our spirit that motivates, directs, ultimately enables us to fight in this great war.

The Warrior Spirit has been personified in many great warriors throughout Scripture. Samson, David, Joshua, and Gideon:

Samson possessed great physical strength and endurance. He could not be overcome by any man. There was no fight he did not win. Surprisingly, Samson was not a Soldier, in contrast with other more mythical heroes like Achilles. Samson generally executed God’s Will with his incredible strength. King David was called by God when he was no more than a simple Shepherd. David fought and won the epic battle widely known by even Non-Christians, against the Philistine Giant Goliath. In this day the Philistines were stronger and technologically superior to the Israeli Army. David took God’s vision and established an empire that God had promised for Israel. Joshua, succeeded Moses as the leader of Israel, just as they were beginning their campaigns to establish positions in Canaan. Unlike David and other heroes, Joshua’s victories were drawn out and usually not as decisive (except for those days in Jericho). In the time after Joshua’s death and the anointing of Saul as Israel’s First King, Gideon was the fourth “judge”, or man who was filled with the spirit of God that led Israel’s military campaigns. He fought as a ruthless warrior, employing guerrilla warfare tactics, which became the backbone for Israeli military combat tactics. Gideon selected a force of only 300 men to attack their enemy the Midianites. In what would be considered today as a Raid Patrol, Gideon and his warriors, under cover of night, swept down upon the Midianite encampment and overcame them. Gideon became a judge after he was called by an angel. So what is the connection of all of these warriors who displayed incredible Warrior Spirit? Each of them was called to duty by God!

The world renowned Chinese Tactician, Sun Tzu, whose wisdom regarding the art of war is still sought today; once said, “Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win.” To the untrained or unskilled warrior this passage might seem cryptic or confusing. But to those who make themselves familiar with the art of war, it is as clear as scripture. On the spiritual battlefield, as we have mentioned before, we are already the victors through what Christ did on the Cross! We are already victorious! If this knowledge does not inspire the Warrior Spirit within Christian Warriors, I’m not sure what else I can offer to develop this.

Well, on second thought maybe I can try. The Word of God says:

“Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.” John 3:6

This is where Jesus and Nicodemus are speaking. In this passage the word *flesh* refers to the condition that man finds himself in prior to receiving Salvation in Christ. John Gill, an English Baptist pastor and theologian, wrote his exposition notes regarding birth of the spirit: “A man that is regenerated by the Spirit of God, and the efficacy of His Grace, is a spiritual man; he can judge and discern all things of a spiritual nature..”.

“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.” Romans 8:5-6

John Wesley, an English theologian and evangelist, who led a revival movement within the Church of England, said this in his commentary on these verses, “For to be carnally minded - That is, to mind the things of the flesh. Is death - The sure mark of spiritual death, and the way to death everlasting. But to be spiritually minded - That is, to mind the things of the Spirit, Is life - A sure mark of spiritual life, and the way to life everlasting. And attended with peace - The peace of God, which is the foretaste of life everlasting; and peace with God...”

“But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin.” Micah 3:8

John Calvin, a French theologian, pastor and reformer in Geneva during the Protestant Reformation, wrote this of the verse in his commentary, “Here Micah in a courageous spirit, stands up alone against all of the false teachers even when he saw that they were a large number...let this striking example be remembered by us, lest we be discouraged, lest the firmness and invincible power of the Holy Spirit be weakened in our hearts, but that we may proceed in the course of our calling...”

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” Acts 2:1-4

Let's picture this. The disciples huddled together in a secret dwelling, hiding from the authorities. They are not sure if or when they would come for them. Jesus had promised them that He would send the Holy Spirit. But at that time He was not with them. They were waiting and then look out! "Tongues of fire" that "came to rest on them"! I don't know about you but if that happened to me I'd know that the Spirit was with me. This is what allowed the disciples to continue to do His work. It is what allows us to continue the work today.

So what is the "Warrior Spirit"? It is the motivation that we possess to fight the battle being led by the Holy Spirit. It is actually MUCH more than that, but when we allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit of God He will make clear to us, exactly what it needs to be to us...



Kid Friendly Ideas



Day 17: The Sweetest Voice in the World

Wednesday, October 16th

“A student said to his master: “You teach me fighting. But you talk about peace. How do you reconcile the two?” The Master replied, “ It is better to be a Warrior in a garden than to be a gardener in a war.”
Samari Axim



Today's Challenge: Pray for the Pastor and His Family

After returning from the shower trailer the First Sergeant received an unexpected email. His mother sent a message asking if he was available to webcam with her. He sank into his chair after the long few days in Baghdad, training Iraqi Army Sergeants. He welcomed the distraction. To be able to place his mind on something other than the war would be a welcomed change of pace, and even though he was exhausted he replied quickly that he was indeed available. He just hoped that all was well back home.

He quickly uncovered the webcam equipment and placed it onto his laptop taking a deep breath. This would be the first time that he had seen his mother since he had arrived in Iraq. He kept his excitement tempered in knowing that webcams were only successful about 50% of the time. The dust storms often wreaked havoc on their capability. He was hopeful that today he would be in the 50% that worked.

After several minutes of setup and connection, the First Sergeant could see the background of his mother's house, 6,500 miles and roughly 8 hours away. The picture was a bit blurry but he could tell that there was no one in the picture. He chuckled slightly and ask if anyone was home. He could hear some rumbling in the background and then the First Sergeant saw a welcome sight.

His 10-year-old daughter appeared from the left side of the screen. She uneasily sat down and waved her hand across the screen. A sudden rush of emotion fell over him. What would he say? Should he say hello first? What was she thinking? A hundred thoughts ran through his mind. She had taken his leaving so hard and even though all of the emails and letters that he had received up until now had told of how well she was doing, he had his doubts. She and the First Sergeant had been together almost

everyday since her mother had left them seven years ago. Being away from him had to be killing her, because it was killing him, being away from her.

Surprisingly their conversation went well. She told him about all of the things that had been going on in her life and he told her the “PG” parts of what he had been doing. For fifteen minutes they bantered back and forth with little awkward silence. As the wind picked up outside he knew that he probably didn’t have much time. The picture began to grow more hazy and then suddenly went dark. “Dad, are you still there?” she asked not being able to see the First Sergeant. “Yes I’m still here. I’ll need to let you go, we’re going to get cut off. I want you to know that I love you very much and that I’ll be home as soon as I can.” he said trying to reassure her. Then the audio feed cut off without her being able to reply.

The First Sergeant was broken but at the same time was recharged. The few minutes that he had been blessed with to speak to his daughter was just what he needed in order to be able to press forward. He hoped that it had been as much of a blessing for her...

“And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”
Ephesians 2:22



Daily Reading

Sometimes in war, the little things can get you through. Something as simple as a conversation with a loved one, a letter from home, or a random act of kindness can mean the difference between victory and defeat. In the spiritual warfare that we find ourselves locked in, we must look for and appreciate the “little things” that God allows us to receive to renew our strength daily.

All the the lesson during this week are entitled “_____ of the Warrior”. This lesson could be entitled “Love of the Warrior”. The reason why I chose to entitle it the way that I did, is due to the emotional connection between the First Sergeant and his daughter. When I was in Iraq I well remember the first conversation that I had with my daughter. As I was writing the vignette I was quite moved by the memory of that event. It helped to motivate me to fight for all of the things that I loved and held most dear. Some might be asking why a lesson about warfare might be entitled “Love of the Warrior”. War is not about love is it? Spiritual Warfare is all about love!

Our enemy lives to hate, but as Christians we are called to love! In what is often referred to as the “Greatest Commandment” let’s see what Jesus directs us to do in John 13:34-45, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will

know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” As we mentioned in another lesson, when the Lord speaks it’s not a suggestion. When He speaks it’s a command. The word “command” is even in the passage. The word Love is mentioned between 310 and 551 times in the bible (depending upon translation). We know through the actions that were exhibited by Jesus during His brief 33 years on the Earth, that it is clear He lived a life of love.

This was once said about US Soldiers, “A true Soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.” As a US Soldier, I devoted his life to protecting the people that I loved; and I can assure you that this quote is an absolute true. Ephesians 5:2 tells us that Jesus was this kind of Soldier, “and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” John 15:13 is what I consider to be one of the greatest verses in the bible about Love, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.” And no passage about love could be complete without perhaps the most impactful verse in the whole of God’s Word, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).” I don’t know about any of you but I am in a constant state of awe as to how Jesus can love me.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American essayist, lecturer, philosopher, and poet who led the Transcendentalist Movement of the mid-19th century wrote this about love, “A deep man believes that the evil eye can wither, the heart's blessing can heal, and that love can overcome all odds.” Love can overcome all? Sometimes in the world today it doesn’t seem as though that is the case. How can this possibly be true with thousands of children that do not have homes, abortion at a castastrophic rate, suicide rates on the rise, and millions of people who seemingly have noone to love them?

It is possible because of us! Christian Warriors! The people who are not afraid to exemplify the Love of Jesus to this lost world. I have seen this love in the hands and feet of my sons as they have lifted homeless citizens up in prayer. I have seen it in the courageous actions of my daughter, who has deployed all over the world to take the Gospel to the nations. I witnessed it in the streets of Port-au-Prince, Haiti in 2010, after the devastating earthquake that disrupted the entire country; but, US Army Soldiers restored order and fed the people. I’ve seen it around the world displayed by US Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, who gave their last full measure and laid down their lives at the altar of freedom, to protect the people of the world. The fiercest hated in the world will never be able to overcome love!

And if someone like me who has seen the true hatred, suffering, and evil that infects the world can believe that love can overcome, then anyone can...



Kid Friendly Ideas

1. What are some ways that we can show love to the people of the world?
2. What are some examples of when you have seen people show love?
3. When are some times that you have felt loved?



Day 18: Courage of the Warrior

Thursday, October 17th

“The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933



Today's Challenge: 3 Verse Challenge

Warriors in God's Army will often be placed into situations which require them to face their fears. In today's challenge you must select 3 bible verses, that you can memorize, in order to combat fear. This scripture does not have to be memorized to complete today's challenge; however, it must be identified, and you should work on mastering it as soon as possible. Mastery of these verses should allow you to control your fear in any situation, by diverting your mind from the fear that you feel toward God's protection.

It was just after 1400 hours when the Radio-Telephone Operator (RTO) entered the First Sergeant and Commander's Office. "Sir. First Sergeant. The Desk Sergeant wants you guys to come to the desk. There's a situation." The flushed RTO replied, standing at attention.

The Commander and First Sergeant entered the Military Police Operations Center (MPOC) and slid through the narrow $\frac{3}{4}$ inch, plywood door that separated the desk area from the entryway of the MPOC. The Desk Sergeant was standing behind the Battle Command System (BCS) with a hand mic for the radios in each hand. The Desk Sergeant immediately informed them that they had just received a confirmation that a convoy that was carrying three of their Soldiers, had been caught in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Ambush.

For the next several minutes the men all listened to the radio traffic and viewed unclassified data feeds that were coming into the desk computer. The Commander had gone down to the Operations Cell, to access information through the more secure SECRET computer to gain any classified intelligence that was being put out about the attack. The First Sergeant could tell that the RTO was

noticeably shaken by the news, as one of the Soldiers in the convoy was his roommate in their cramped two-man trailer. He nodded his head to the young Sergeant. The Sergeant signified with the word “Hooah”.

Secretly the First Sergeant was worried as well. This was the third time this week a convoy had been ambushed on that route and the two times before were bad. He began to fear that this time would be just as bad, as he heard the Quick Reaction Force (QRF) announced that they were rolling out through the North Gate. He crossed his arms and slid his fingers slowly across his cotton-ripstop, three color, desert camouflage uniform.

Two of the Soldiers that were out there were senior Soldiers, but one was only 18 years old. Thoughts of planning a Final Salute Ceremony (a military funeral conducted in Iraq by the Soldier’s unit, before the Soldier’s body was returned home) for these three men ran through the First Sergeant’s mind. They all had families. They all had wives and children. The youngest Soldier’s wife had just given birth a month or so before the unit deployed. What would he say to the Soldier’s young wife at his funeral? What would he say to any of their wives? Thoughts of children standing around caskets, hysterically crying, flashed through his mind. Images of grieving parents flooded his thoughts. Then the singular image of a wife being handed a folded American Flag by an officer as he saluted her, as tears ran down her face, dominated his mind. Amid the chaos, the First Sergeant steadied himself and cast his usual, hard stare over the message board, which was full of information flooding in.

A sudden calm came over him, as a piece of information came through the net. Only the rear vehicle had been hit and there were only minor injuries. This was verified a few seconds later when the Commander reentered the desk area and confirmed that their Soldiers had not been in the vehicle that was hit. He nodded to the Commander and then to the Desk Sergeant, with a bit of a silent sigh. Those few minutes were some of the tensest so far in this deployment. The First Sergeant’s fear of losing any of his Soldier’s was made very real and he did not like it. He needed something to assist him during times like those. Something to help him combat fear and uncertainty. He needed something that only God could provide...

“for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” 2 Timothy 1:7 (ESV)



Daily Reading

Fear. It is defined as “an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger” (Merriam-Webster, 2018). It’s a natural response to situations where we feel that we are

“threatened”. It’s an emotion. Fear can be a good thing in cases where Merriam-Webster also defines fear as, “profound reverence and awe especially toward God”. But the kind of fear that we are talking about is the kind that Satan uses against us to paralyze us into inaction.

It was once said that “Fear is a reaction; courage is a choice”. I have witnessed so many stellar acts of courage throughout my career as a US Army Soldier, that there is no possible way that I could remember them all. I have seen Soldiers display physical courage when standing against armed combatants. I have witnessed acts of moral courage, when faced with an ethical dilemma, where Soldiers chose the hard right over the easy wrong. I have seen people exhibit emotional courage to walk away from bad situations, that the Lord most assuredly did not want them to be in anyway. Whatever the situation or the type of courage, displaying courage in many situations is not easy. Let’s look at some biblical examples of courage:

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, “Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the LORD swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”
Deuteronomy 31:6-8

In this passage we see Moses speaking to “all Israel” (Deuteronomy 31:1) from verses 2 through 6. Then he speaks with Joshua, who would assume leadership over the Israelites, in order to take them into the Promised Lands. Notice the wording in the passage below:

“Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:6-9

Look at the underlined words in the above passage from the book of Joshua. The Lord spoke to Moses and told him to *be strong and courageous*. Then Moses spoke to the people and told them to *be strong and courageous*. Moses said to Joshua, *be strong and courageous*. And again God tells Joshua in verse 6 to *be strong and courageous*. Then in verse 7 the Lord tells him to be *Be strong and very courageous*. Then again in verse 9, *be strong and courageous* and *do not be afraid*. Now as we have already established God does not make suggestions. Don’t you think that if God said, be strong and courageous

five times and to not be afraid twice, in these two verses, we should listen!? But there is also some additional wording that we must see in these passages as well, "...the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6). This is really why we should not fear. If "God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9), what do we have to fear?

"David also said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you..." 1 Chronicles 28:20

Once again we see a great man of courage, King David, speaking to his son Solomon, using the exact same wording that The Lord used with both Moses and Joshua, hundreds of years before.

So how does a Christian Warrior take courage? In the Lord! If we need to take courage then we ask for just that - for the Lord to give us courage. But be warned Christian Warriors, when we ask for something (in Jesus name) we need to remember the old saying, "be careful what you ask for because you might just get it." That's okay though, because we need it. We want it. No one wants to be a coward. We all want to be courageous! Michael Catt, the Senior Pastor at Sherwood Baptist Church and executive producer of the Christian Movies, "Fireproof" and "Courageous", said this of men in the Christian Church, in his book "Courageous Living - Dare to Take a Stand"; "We need to MAN UP! We need to be COURAGEOUS! We need to do it NOW! (Catt, 2011, p. 4). I tell you that courage is not just for men the Christian Church. The Warrior Women of the church must exhibit courage as well. We must all be courageous!

When we all ask for courage in prayer then the Lord will give it to us, through the opportunities to exemplify it. It might be the physical courage that we spoke about above, to take a hill on some distant battlefield. It might be to exhibit moral courage in the face of injustice. No matter what form or fashion (or time) that the Lord brings it to you, you will be given the opportunity to test your metal.

In conclusion, I really like the way that Michael Catt sums up fear in "Courageous Living - Dare to Take a Stand", "Fear will disable a man and an Army. Fear will dismantle a country. Today, for example, we live in a world that is afraid of the consequences of standing up to radical islam. (Catt, 2011, p.35). In Ephesians 6:13-14 we are told, "Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then..." As the Lord gives us the courage to stand, sound off with your three "Courage Verses", then we will be able to hold the ground that has already been taken. Then and only then, will we be able to push forward to take additional ground that we need, to expand the Kingdom in this dark world...



Kid Friendly Ideas

1. What is courage?
2. What is fear?
3. What does it mean to fear God?
4. What are some things that we can do as Christians to help us to fight our fears?
5. How can we help others to be brave when they are afraid?



Day 19: Sacrifice of the Warrior

Friday, October 18th

“Whenever God is going to elevate you, a demon comes to sidetrack you. Don’t let the distraction take you off course, stay focused.” Man Up God’s Way, 2019



Today’s Challenge: Write Out How You Spend Your Time

For this one day, jot down how you spend your time. Add it up and see how much eating, sleeping, working, praying, reading, watching tv, exercising, etc... you have done. Give your schedule to the Lord. Ask Him to lead you in how to best spend your time.

The sun was just coming up over the horizon in Balad, Iraq and it was already hot. The First Sergeant looked on the thermometer that was located at the entry point to the Theater Trucking Lanes, or TTL, as it was referred to. It was already 92 degrees. The unit had been ordered to work the lanes today to search for any contraband material within the trucks. There were reported to be nearly 500 trucks arrayed throughout the lanes, all organized into convoy movement orders, to ship supplies and equipment out all over Iraq. This would be a daunting task that the First Sergeant had been dreading ever since they had been given the mission 48 hours ago.

As the day drug on the temperature steadily began to increase. The First Sergeant walked up and down the long lanes checking on his Soldiers that were dressed in their “full battle rattle”. This was about 80 pounds of body armour, helmets, equipment and weapons. He made sure, as they swept through the decrepit trucks that they were pounding water to stay hydrated. With the additional forces that he had to send to Baghdad four days ago, the unit was already down by 8 Soldiers, and was struggling to accomplish the mission. He tried to keep their spirits as high as possible as the temperature soared.

He walked by a truck and saw Wilson and Waters, unloading stacks of porographic magazines onto the collection wagon, which was nearly full of alcohol, magazines, bootlegged DVDs and CDs, unauthorized electronic devices, and every other type of contraband item. They had found no weapons



or explosives as yet so the First Sergeant was encouraged by that. His driver and Gunner looked rough, as sweat poured down their faces. "First Sergeant. Oh, First Sergeant." he heard a feminine voice call out from behind him. He squinted his eyes behind his darkly tinted Wiley X Sunglasses and turned around.

In front of him stood two, female Third Country Nationals, both from France. He had to coordinate a convoy movement with them a couple months ago and he had tried to avoid them since that time. They were twin sisters and the Lord had blessed them with great beauty. They had clearly both taken a liking to him even though he had expressed several times that he was married in their conversation. He held his left hand slightly up as he neared them and moved his wedding ring around, where they could plainly see it. "First Sergeant, you look so hot. Maybe you want to come back and get some tea with us?" one of the ladies spoke in broken English, with a heavy French accent. "I'll be just fine ladies. I need to stay out here with my Soldiers." The First Sergeant replied, trying to break away from them quickly. As tempting as the offer was; to go to their trailer where the air conditioning was on full blast, cold tea, and the company of two beautiful women, the First Sergeant fought the urge to do the wrong thing. As he walked away, he could feel their eyes creeping up his back side. He heard them snicker to each other. He looked over to Wilson and Waters who just stood watching the exchange. Wilson smiled and giggled a bit as she brought a bottle of water to her lips.

Toward late afternoon, the heat was taking a toll on the American Soldiers. It had been nearly a sustained 130 degrees throughout the afternoon and the thermometer was pushing above the 130s. On one of his trips to the front of the lanes, the First Sergeant looked at the thermometer and it displayed a whopping 147 degrees. It was no wonder that the sun scorched Earth under his feet felt like it was burning through the soles of his boots. His skin was severely sunburned, even though he had applied sunscreen. His lips were badly chapped, even though he had applied lip balm. He had little to no energy left, even though he had gotten six hours of sleep the night prior. He arched his back in pain under the strain of the 80 pounds of equipment that clung tightly around his torso. Looking down the truck lanes as far as the eye could see, trucks were still rolling in. Convoys had been coming in and pulling out all day, and they still had approximately 100 trucks to search.

He knew that this would be the most difficult part. The end. They were all exhausted. He could see it in the faces of his Soldiers. He would have to make sure that they were all still doing their due diligence and searching every truck. So the First Sergeant continued to walk up and down the lanes. His feet and knees were aching so badly that he was now limping a bit. He knew that he had to keep them in the fight. He had to keep them pushing and as the end of the lanes neared, they were increasingly getting slower. The wear and tear of the 17 hour day, was eroding the units combat readiness.

The First Sergeant stood at the last truck, helping Wilson and Waters sort through the trash and belongings of the driver. Upon completing this search, the mission in the truck lanes was finally over. It could not have come soon enough for the First Sergeant either. They had already been up for over 20

hours and survived Balad's highest recorded temperature, ever. The Soldiers had definitely earned the praise of their leaders and maybe more importantly a well deserved rest. But tomorrow was another day. Another day of doing their duty. Another day in the heat. Another day of intense stress. Another day that they could die in any of a hundred ways. The First Sergeant knew that they were hot, tired, hungry, and irritable, but he also knew this of his Soldiers; they would do their duty no matter what. He was proud of them all...

"Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." Mark 8:34



Daily Reading

Sacrifice. In many circles within the Christian Church, this word is looked upon as a word with negative connotations. In 1 Samuel 15:22 we see where this negative attitude regarding sacrifice could come from, "But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams." In Hosea 6:6 we see almost the same wording used hundreds of years later, "For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings."

In Merriam-Webster's definition of the word Sacrifice, we must look past the noun to the verb form of this word to understand why sacrifice is important in a warrior's life. The word as a verb is described, "1) to offer as a sacrifice; and 2) to suffer loss of, give up, renounce, injure, or destroy especially for an ideal, belief, or end". I especially like the last part of the second definition "especially for an ideal, belief, or end". The point here is that sacrifice to a warrior is an action not just merely a thing. Sacrifice for an ideal or belief, in our case for God, is our ultimate goal of sacrifice.

Soldiers do not look at sacrifice the same way that others do. We view sacrifice as a way of life. When it comes to being a Christian Soldier, sacrifice comes in the form of doing what it says in Luke 9:24, "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it." or put another way, "For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord's freed person; similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ's slave" (1 Corinthians 7:22). What we as Christian Warriors must sacrifice are sometimes referred to as the "put offs" found in Colossians 3:5-9:

“5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8 But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices.”

The thing that we MUST sacrifice is SIN! those pleasures that tempt us to take the easy wrong over the hard right. We must discipline ourselves, being strengthening from the Lord, to live a life of sacrifice. Galatians 5:17 details why we must sacrifice the desires of the flesh, “For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.” When we are true warriors we MUST want what the Spirit wants. Just as the First Sergeant did in today’s vignette, we must control our impulses. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life will lead us to our end, if we do not sacrifice the sins that will lead us down that path...



Kid Friendly Ideas

1. What is sacrifice?
2. Why is sacrifice important in our lives?
3. Why does sacrifice need to be accomplished through action?
4. What kind of things in our lives should we be sacrificing to ensure that our walk with God is not hindered?



Day 20: Duty of the Warrior

Saturday, October 19th

“You should do your duty in all things. You can never do more, you should never wish to do less.”

Robert E. Lee, Commanding General, CSA



Today's Challenge: Share One Motivational Quote from this Challenge

‘Why are we stopped?’ the First Sergeant asked himself as the convoy had come to a halt right in the middle of one of the busiest market places in central Baghdad. They had already been delayed by a possible roadside bomb that turned out to be nothing more than a teddy bear propped up against a guard rail. Now this. When he had heard the traffic come through the radio that the convoy needed to stop, he wondered what could be so important for them to make a second unscheduled halt. He gazed around at the buildings rooftops to the right side of the vehicle carefully watching for trouble. Then he looked up through the gunner hatch in the top of the vehicle. The Soldiers who sat behind the machine gun was exposed and vulnerable.

The Radio was silent but he could see Soldiers outside of the vehicles, inside the marketplace. One of the Soldiers took a brown package from one of the vendors and passed him a white envelope. ‘What the’ - tink, tink, tink! The First Sergeant’s thoughts were interrupted by the sound of rifle bullets ricocheting off of his vehicle’s roof. The Gunner ducked down inside of the cupala shroud (large pieces of metal, designed to give the gunner minimal protection from incoming fire), narrowly avoiding the fragments of one of the disintegrating bullets. To the rear of the convoy an explosion went off, plummeting dust, dirt, trash, feces and other debris into the air.

The convoy was being ambushed. The First Sergeant looked to the front of the convoy to see the Soldiers that were outside of the vehicles scurrying toward their vehicles for cover. Then he looked up through the Gunners Hatch seeing his gunner firing toward the nearby rooftops on the driver side of the vehicle. The Driver leaned over toward the First Sergeant just seconds before an explosion rocked the drivers side of the vehicle. The insurgents that were positioned on rooftops, just a few meters away from their vehicle had dropped a grenade right outside of the vehicle. The First Sergeant heard a loud cry come from above where the Gunner stood. The steady stream of hot, brass, shell casings that was

falling through the top of the vehicle had now stopped. The Gunner had been wounded by a piece of the grenade shrapnel. There were screams coming from outside the vehicle as well, where some of the people along the street had been hit. The back seaters pulled the gunner down through the hatch and the First Sergeant popped up through it trying to awkwardly pull his M4 through the hatch.

He spun around and saw a middle eastern man on the ground to the rear driver's side of the vehicle holding a rifle. The muzzle of the rifle was pointed right at him. The First Sergeant fought to bring his rifle level with the man, but before he could do so, he saw the man depress the trigger of the AK47. The First Sergeant stopped for a fraction of a second as he heard a "clur chunk". The rifle had misfired. Not giving the man a second to correct the malfunctioning weapon, the First Sergeant leveled his rifle and did what had to be done.

He fell through the Gunner's Hatch, banging his helmet against the rear of the cupala, as the convoy began to move out at a high rate of speed down the narrow Baghdad Streets, in order to clear the marketplace. Assuming his position back in the vehicle commander's seat, he reported across the radio that his vehicle was moving. He looked back to see one of the Soldiers assume the duties of the Gunner. The former Gunner had only received a minor wound from the shrapnel of the grenade and sat with another Soldier applying a bandage to his left arm.

After they arrived at the Combat Surgical Hospital (CASH), they off loaded their wounded and evaluated the damage to their vehicles. The First Sergeant however, began to investigate why they had made an unscheduled stop in the marketplace. He discovered that the Convoy Commander had arranged to buy alcohol from a Local National (Iraqi Citizen) that day. Alcohol of any kind was contraband for US Soldiers, but the Convoy Commander was known to have a drinking problem. It was now up to the First Sergeant whether or not to report the reason why the incident, that could have led to the death of US Soldiers, had happened, or not...

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9 (NKJV)



Daily Reading

Duty. It is defined as 1) "obligatory tasks, conduct, service, or functions that arise from one's position (as in life or in a group) and 2) a moral or legal obligation"(merriam-webster, 2019). Duty is often times in American Society looked upon as a "dirty" word. Something that we are required to do. Duty can be "obligatory" as the definition suggests. However, duty can also be something that drives us

because we *want* to do it. Just as we spoke about sacrifice yesterday and how we should want to sacrifice the sinful passions that govern the lost, so we must want to do our duty.

I am often struck by the daily quote used by General Lee. I was first exposed to that quote in 1998, at Ft Lee, Virginia, when I was attending the US Army Basic Non-Commissioned Officer Course (the Army's mid level management leadership development course). In this course we had a class over the Army Value of Duty. In the vignette it talked about how General Lee had instilled this quote into his sons. It is a quote that probably both of my sons could nearly quote word for word.

Duty can be equated to obedience. If we think of duty in this way as obedience to God, then the word seems a bit more palatable to some people. To most Soldiers, just as with sacrifice, see duty as just a way of life. Let me try to fit duty into a biblical context that everyone reading this should be able to relate to, and see if this changes the paradigm of how most of us view this word :

“16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”” Matthew 28:16-20

Wow!! If that's not the picture for the word “Duty” for a Christian Warrior then I don't know what is. It is our duty to spread the Gospel. Christians often say that “I just don't know what God wants me to do.” I feel like telling them (I usually don't say it this way though), have you ever heard of the Great Commission? THIS IS OUR MISSION! This is what God wants us to do! Our Duty as Christian Warriors is to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,…” People sometimes forget (or maybe just leave out) that last part of the order though, “and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Even though it is not our duty to “SAVE” people it is our duty to bring them to the one who does save - Jesus Christ!!

Now you may think, ‘is that all we have to do? Because there are a lot of commandments in the bible, Seitz!!’ Rarely in life are we pigeonholed into doing just one thing. In the case of a Christian Warriors duty, this is no exception. So to answer the question, it is not the only thing that we have to do. We have to continue to grow in our relationship with the Lord, we have to build up other brothers and sisters, we have to discipline our children, we have to put our faith into action. The list goes on and on, but here's the thing, fulfilling the “Great Commission”, at least in this Christian Warrior's mind is our first and foremost duty. The greatest duty that we will ever perform in this caporeal life is to lead someone to Salvation in Christ! If we do this then we have done our duty as Christian Warriors.

So in today's vignette, the First Sergeant had an ethical dilemma that faced him down just as assuredly as Goliath faced down David. Do you think the First Sergeant displayed the Courage of the Warrior? Did he use the Sacrifice of the Warrior, to do what should be done and avoid the sin of lying? What did the Spirit of the Warrior tell him to do? Did the First Sergeant have the Will of the Warrior to report the incident? The First Sergeant did report the incident! He reported all of the ugly truth that surrounded the incident. The First Sergeant did his duty, just as we as Christian Warriors must do our duty, in all things...



Kid Friendly Ideas

1. What does the word duty mean to you?
2. Why is it important for us to do our duty?
3. What is a Christian's most important duty?
4. How do Duty and Sacrifice differ from one another? How could they be the same?



Day 21: Legacy of the Warrior

Sunday, October 20th

“What we do in life echoes in eternity!” Decimus Meridius Maximus, *Gladiator*, 2000



Today's Challenge: Watch a Christian-Themed Movie Challenge

In today's challenge you get a bit of a breather. You are tasked to watch a Christian-themed movie. This challenge, however; does not come without focus. While watching the film, answer the following questions: What is/are the specific sin(s)/struggle(s) that the main character(s) faced? How did they overcome this/these (i.e., prayer, brothers and sisters coming alongside them, miraculous events taking place, all of these, other actions)? How was God Glorified during the movie? How did this movie parallel events/struggles that you have faced in your life? How did the movie make you feel? At the end of the movie discuss the questions with your family or friends (if you watched it with anyone), and share with other members of the challenge by posting to social media, text or emailing, the questions with your answers for the specific movie you watched.

The First Sergeant was exhausted. After the long day and the fiasco with the convoy in the marketplace, he was ready to write this day off. He wondered if his way through the company office and looked toward his desk seeing a white, letter sized envelope. He picked the envelope up and squinted to read the writing in the dimly lit room. His eyes widened and he chuckled under his breath. He smiled and nodded his head, realizing who the letter was from.

He hurried back to his trailer and wrapped his body armor around the cross shaped stand, that had been constructed from 4 x 4s. He placed his dirty helmet a top of the cross and sat his weapons near him on his desk. He sighed taking off his well-worn desert boots, that still carried the intense smell

of the debris from the Baghdad street. He sat back and unbuttoned his sweat stained jacket. His eyelids were so heavy that he could hardly keep them open.

He wanted to read this letter though. This gave him a sudden surge of energy. He picked up the envelope and inserted the Kabar combat knife that he carried attached to his body armor, under the seal of the envelope. Its razor-sharp blade made quick work of the envelope with one easy stroke. It fell to the floor and he opened the letter.

The young First Sergeant, who had felt so cut off from the rest of the world after the day's terrible events, now felt reconnected. The letter was from his paternal grandfather. He and his grandfather had been close growing up. He had spent a good amount of time at his Grandfather's home on Lake Monroe during his summer breaks. In many ways his Grandfather had been more influential in his life than his own father. To receive a letter from him, especially at a time like this, was nothing short of a miracle.

The First Sergeant read through his grandfather's sloppy, cursive writing and was amused at one of the first sentences, "I think this might be the first letter I've written since 1945". His Grandfather and his Great Uncle had both been drafted to serve in World War II. His Grandfather had been in the Army Air Corp and was sent to the Pacific to work on B17 Bombers. His Great Uncle on the other hand, was drafted into the US Army Infantry and was sent to Europe. In a battle, after the Normandy Invasion, he had been killed. The family had never talked about Uncle Jeremy, his service, or how he had been killed, so the First Sergeant was at a loss for much of this part of the Families history.

As he read further, hanging onto every word that his Grandfather had written, he began to fill in the blanks on this part of his family's legacy. His grandfather talked about the pride that he had felt in knowing that he and his brother had been sent to serve. He spoke about Uncle Jeremy and how he had been killed. His grandfather spoke of how he had resented the Army at that point and could not wait to be discharged which happened quickly after Jeremy had been killed.

Then in the rarest show of emotion, his Grandfather addressed the First Sergeant and his service. The First Sergeant always knew of his Grandfather's disdain for the Army, but he never really knew about how his Grandfather viewed the fact that he had volunteered to be in the Army. He didn't know how his Grandfather felt about him going to Iraq. "I never really liked the fact that you joined the Army, but I want you to know that I have always been proud of the man that you became. I just hope that I'm still around when you get back." The First Sergeant cleared his throat, blinking hard to fight back his emotions. It was incredible how the Lord had used some simple semantics to turn the First Sergeant's defeated attitude around 180 degrees. He was now more determined than ever to get back home to see his Grandfather and carry on the legacy of his family...

“Surely the righteous will never be shaken; they will be remembered forever.” Psalm 112:6



Daily Reading

In the daily spiritual battle that we find ourselves in, we must pass down to future generations, who Christ is and the importance of accepting Him. Just as it was important for the First Sergeant to realize the legacy of his Warrior Family, so it is for us to ensure that those future generations know the legacy that has been given to all Warriors that trust Christ as their Lord and Savior.

I take a fair amount (I think that it is a healthy amount) of pride in knowing my family history. My mother keeps a fairly detailed record of our family history in an online program that tracks this history. I have thousands of pictures on my computer of people, places and things who/where my family have interacted with, traveled to, or done. These are not to brag about past accomplishments, but to simply have a record of where we have been, for the next generation. It is my hope that when I am called home to be with the Father, that my daughter and sons will maintain our family lineage.

But what I hope for even more than that, is that they will continue to tell their children and their grandchildren about Jesus! Now I guess that I've done some pretty important things in my life. I've made a difference. I've tried to live the life that Christ wants me to live. I stumble. I fall. I get back up and stay in the fight. I'm sure that my many accomplishments will be long remembered in the pages of my family history. It is my sincere hope above all else though, that even if I am forgotten by everyone, that they would remember what the Lord instilled into them about Jesus, through me. Even if they don't remember that I was the one who the Lord used to bring them to Him, that's not important. The important thing, the true Legacy of the Warrior, is found when our children make the decision to follow Christ! What greater legacy could we have?

There are many views about secular made television series and movies that have Christian tones or themes. Rarely are any of these ever made truly, biblically accurate. For this example; however, I will use the 2013 History Channel's miniseries "The Bible". In Episode 6, entitled "Hope", Jesus and the Apostle Peter (who has not become a Disciple yet) are in Peter's boat. This scene is based loosely from the scripture found in John 21. In the depiction, Jesus has Willed it that Peter is able to catch so many fish, that his boat is nearly capsized. As Peter falls down to the deck of the boat exhausted from landing fish, he asks, "How did this happen. What did You do?" Jesus, with a great look of humility, tells Peter, "I'm giving you the chance to change your life...Peter, come with me. Give up catching fish and I will make you a fisher of men (based from Matthew 4:19)." Peter looks at Jesus with

a look of total dumbfoundedness and asks, “What are we going to do?” Jesus looks away and says in a calm, yet authoritative tone, “Change the World.” The character playing Jesus stands upright, as the powerful soundtrack plays in the background, and Jesus looks out over the water with a commanding gaze (History Channel, “The Bible”, 2013). Jesus knew about and was committed to leaving the Legacy of the Warrior.

Did Jesus do it? Did he leave a Warrior’s Legacy. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, The Best-selling Non-Fiction Book in the world is the Bible. Even though they admit that exact figures cannot be confirmed their internet page estimates that 5,000,000,000 (yeah, that’s not a typo. That is 5 billion) Bibles have been sold (Guinness World Records, 2018)!!!! Worldatlas.com reported in their 2019 article, “How Many Christians Are In the World?” that “There are an estimated 2.2 billion Christians in the world, which makes Christianity the largest religion on the planet” (Worldatlas.com, 2019). The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, in 2010, determined that 32% of the world's population were considered Christians. Learreligions.com reported that, “In the not evangelized world, there are 20,500 full-time Christian workers and 10,200 foreign missionaries. In the evangelized non-Christian world, there are 1.31 million full-time Christian workers. In the Christian world, there are 306,000 foreign missionaries to other Christian lands. Also, 4.19 million full-time Christian workers (95%) work within the Christian world.” In a 2014 article featured in Christiantoday.com, based on data collected from Voices of the Martyrs USA, it shows that, “the number of Christians martyred since the time of Jesus is at 70 million.” 70 million people (these are only the ones that are recorded in some fashion folks!) have given their very lives to advance the Gospel (the legacy) that Jesus left us!! I’ll leave those figures here and let you answer the two questions above...



Kid Friendly Ideas

1. What does the word legacy mean to you?
2. Is it important to know where we came from? Why?
3. What are some things that you would want people to remember about you after you go to Heaven?
4. In your opinion, what is the greatest difference that you have made?