

# THE BULWARK

## A SOLDIER IN ACTIVE SERVICE

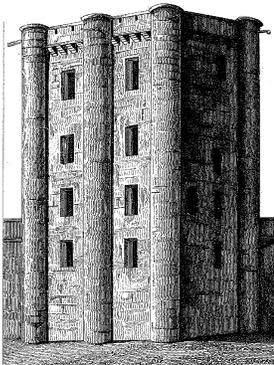
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*“Mark well her bulwarks,  
consider her palaces, that  
you may tell it to the  
generation following”*  
Psalms 48:13

*“Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”* (2Timothy 2:3) Unless one has served in the military, it is difficult to grasp fully the applied dedication involved. Noted British author, C.S. Lewis, who served during World War I, when asked to make a public address dealing with the rigors of servitude spoke openly about the hardships a soldier must face. His words were presented during the Second World War as England was reeling from the opening salvos of Germany. “All that we fear from all kinds of adversity, is collected together in the life of the soldier in active service. Like sickness, it threatens pain and death. Like poverty, it threatens ill lodging, cold, heat, thirst, and hunger. Like slavery, it threatens toil and humiliation, injustice, and arbitrary rule. Like exile, it separates you from all you love.” What a graphic depiction to say the least. Those who serve should first consider the cost.



Paul in his second letter to Timothy, in the second chapter lays out that the child of God is like unto, “a son”, “soldier”, “athlete”, “farmer” then a “workman who does not need to be ashamed”. Each one of these vocations has it challenges and rewards. By the same token each one has a discipline enjoined to it. However the one that seems to resonate, is that of a soldier. By the time this letter is written, Paul is aged; he bears the scars of a life spent in service to Christ. Now he presents to the young man, whom he views as his son, in a spiritual sense (see verse one), *“must endure hardship.”*

Our service to the “King of kings and Lord of lords” (1Timothy 6:15) is one that is voluntary. Yet, it should not be enjoined thinking that there is not a cost to be paid. In Luke the fourteenth chapter, Jesus discusses the need to stand back and determine if the individual is freely willing to pay the cost of discipleship (see verses twenty-five through thirty-three). To in essence *“suffer hardship...as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”*

In the book of Isaiah, chapter six and verse eight the following can be seen. *“Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send. And who will go for Us?” Then I said, Here am I! Send Me.”* That is the attitude one must embrace as a disciple of Christ. A true soldier steps forward, willingly accepting the responsibility, ready to face whatever challenges may be faced.

Service to Christ includes that one have a tenacious mind set. Undeterred, no matter if beset by obstacles like poor health, difficult life situations or challenging circumstances of any nature, one presses ever forward for the cause of Christ. *“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, not any other created things, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 8:38-39). Earlier in the same chapter, Paul wrote, *“But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.”* (v. 37) The ultimate victory is ours, if only... (wbe)