

THE CHURCH - THE ARMY OF CHRIST

Matthew 16:18 2 Timothy 2:3

Introduction: What is the Church to be? The loving Bride? The serving Body? The nurturing Family? And now a marching Army.

Matthew 16:18 indicates that the "Gates" are the weakest points of a city and they are there to keep out that/those who are forbidden. Jesus expects His Bride to wear "Combat Boots" and to advance against Satan. So a question: Is the Church advancing or retreating? We sing "Onward Christian Soldiers," and "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus." So, how can we, the Church, be like the army of Christ?

I. WE, THE CHURCH, MUST BE AGGRESSIVE

1. The Civil War cost more lives than all the other wars put together that our country has been involved in (744,342 +/-) to (632,646 +/-) of the other major life taking war.
2. There was the lack of aggressive Generals in the Union Army we are told.
3. Is the Church a body guard for itself or is it to attack the enemy? Is the Church to retreat from the enemy, Satan?
4. How can we, the Church, be aggressive?

II. WE, THE CHURCH, MUST HAVE A PLAN

1. Is Christ's Church to be involved in battle with Satan only locally?
 - Satan is determined to conquer the entire world.
2. Christ's Church must start where it is, BUT move on through outreach and missions.
3. There must be TEAMWORK, the entire Church Family must be involved.
 - The Holy Spirit has equipped each Family member.
 - Sadly there are many A.W.O.L. Family members.
4. What can our Sunday School and other organizations do? Do they have outreach goals or are they content to be body guards?
5. What can we do to become VIGOROUS, VOCAL, and VISUAL?

III. WE, THE CHURCH MUST HAVE DISCIPLINED MEMBERS

1. Are we more interested in gaining members or TRAINING members?
2. "Remember the Alamo" was the motto when 150 Texans were attacked by 5,000 Mexicans for 13 days and withstood that devastating attack.

3. We need to be reminded that the Church is not a spectator, nor admirer, nor entertainer, BUT and Army. The Army of Christ. Soldiers!
4. What holds us back is not Satan's strength but our own internal weakness.
5. What can we do to become dedicated Soldiers?

IV. WE, THE CHURCH, MUST HAVE ADEQUATE RESOURCES

1. *Luke 14:31* - We must match the enemy.
2. Jesus said that we have all we need. We are to ask, to go, to believe, He will be with us all the way.
3. Our strength is not in how many church members (soldiers) we have BUT in the power of of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION:

1. Most Churches are "playing" Church. Are we?
2. Do you REALLY believe what you say you believe?
3. If so, then put your feet, voice, and hands to it...get to work. **YOU ARE A SOLDIER OF CHRIST, NOW ACT LIKE IT!!**