

A Ministry of the Athens Universal Life Church
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Welcome! I am Doctor David Thorne with this week's message.
Today is the Sunday before Veteran's Day and our sermon is titled, "The Soldier’s Creed: Faithfulness Under Fire".

Today's scripture lesson comes from Second Timothy Chapter 2 verses 3 and 4, where it says "Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ
Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him."
May the Lord add His Blessing on the reading of His Word.

Good morning, church. Today, we pause as a nation and as a congregation to honor those who have worn the uniform of our armed forces.
Veterans Day is a sacred observance...a time to reflect on the courage, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment of the men and women who have
defended our freedoms. We see them among us today. Grandfathers, grandmothers, fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters.
Some carry visible scars; many carry invisible ones.
But as we honor them, we must also ask: What does the Bible say about the soldier? And what can the Church learn from the veteran’s
experience? Scripture does not shy away from military imagery. In fact, the Apostle Paul frequently uses the life of a soldier to illustrate
the Christian life. He tells young Timothy to "share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."
Today, I want to draw a parallel between the veteran’s experience and our spiritual walk. We are reminded that the same qualities that make
a good soldier...sacrifice, vigilance, and a sense of duty...are precisely what God calls us to embody in our spiritual lives.
Let us look at three lessons the veteran teaches the Church.

The first mark of a veteran is sacrifice. Our men and women in uniform have laid down their comforts, their time, and sometimes their very
lives for the sake of others. They have missed birthdays, anniversaries, and quiet nights at home. They have left families to stand in
foreign lands.
This is the very heart of the Gospel. Jesus said in John fifteen thirteen, "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his
life for his friends." The veteran understands this verse not as a theoretical concept, but as a lived reality.
As Christians, we are called to a life of sacrificial service. We are not called to be comfortable; we are called to be faithful.
The veteran's willingness to give up personal preferences for the greater good is a powerful rebuke to a culture that prizes
self-gratification. The Bible tells us to "count others more significant than yourselves", as we see in Philippians two three.
The veteran models this. We are challenged to ask: Are we willing to sacrifice our time, our resources, and our comfort for the sake of
the Kingdom? Are we willing to serve others, even when it costs us something?

The second lesson is vigilance. A soldier on active duty is always watching. They stand guard, alert to the movements of the enemy,
ready to protect those behind them. They know that complacency can cost lives.
Paul tells Timothy that a soldier avoids getting "entangled in civilian pursuits." The soldier's focus is singular.
In First Peter five eight, we are commanded, "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion,
seeking someone to devour."
The veteran knows that freedom is not free, and it is not maintained by complacency. In the same way, the Christian must remain vigilant.
We are in a spiritual battle. The enemy is not flesh and blood, but principalities and powers, as seen in Ephesians six twelve.
We must guard our hearts, guard our minds, and guard our families. The veteran's discipline of watchfulness is a picture of the spiritual
alertness we need to maintain. We cannot afford to sleep on the job. We must be watching and praying, standing firm in the faith,
knowing that our fellow brothers and sisters are depending on us to be strong.

The third lesson is duty. The veteran understands what it means to be called. When duty called, they answered.
They did not ask what was in it for them; they asked what was needed. They put on the uniform, not because they agreed with every political
decision, but because they loved their country and their neighbor.
In Luke nine sixty two, Jesus says, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."
We, too, have been enlisted in a great cause. We have been called to the battlefield of faith, to serve the King of Kings.
We are not called to a life of ease, but to a life of service with eternal consequences.
The veteran knows that the mission comes first. As the Church, our mission is the Great Commission: to go and make disciples.

We must not grow weary in doing good, as we see in Galatians six nine. We must not desert our post. The veteran's commitment to duty
challenges us to be faithful to our calling, even when it is difficult, even when the battle rages, and even when the world does not
appreciate our service.

So, what does this mean for us today? It means that we, as the Church, need to be the best "soldiers" we can be.
But it also means that we owe a debt of gratitude to our veterans. They have been the wall between us and chaos.
How do we apply this today?
1. Honor: We honor veterans not just with applause or a discount, but with our prayers, our care, and our respect.
If you see a veteran, thank them for their service. But beyond that, pray for those who are serving now and for those who have returned,
especially those battling the invisible wounds of war.
2. Listen: Hear their stories. Many veterans carry burdens that need to be shared. The Church should be a safe place for them to heal.
3. Serve: The veteran's example should provoke us to step up and serve, in our homes, in our communities, and in our church.
4. Multiply: Let us remember that, just as our veterans have preserved our physical freedoms, we are called to fight for the spiritual
freedom of those around us. We are called to enlist others in the Lord's army.

If you are here today and you are a veteran, we honor you, and thank you for your service. But perhaps you are here today carrying the
scars of war, physical, emotional, or spiritual. Maybe you are feeling like you have been on the front lines too long, and you are weary.
Jesus is calling you to rest. He is the Great Physician who can heal the wounds of the soul.
If you are here today and you do not yet know the salvation that comes through Jesus Christ, you are a soldier without a commander,
a ship without a harbor. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is the greatest act of love in history. He fought the battle of sin and death
and won. He is calling you to enlist in His Kingdom today.
I invite you to come forward. Whether you need to lay down burdens you've been carrying for decades, or you need to surrender your life
to Christ for the first time, this altar is open. You can come and say, "Lord, here I am, send me."

Please bow your heads with me as we pray.

Heavenly Father,
We thank You for the freedom we enjoy today, and we thank You for the men and women who have secured that freedom through their service
and sacrifice. We remember those who gave their last full measure of devotion. We pray for their families. We ask that You comfort the
wounded, both in body and in spirit.
Lord, we ask that You help us to be vigilant soldiers in Your Kingdom. Help us to be sacrificial in our love, watchful in our prayers,

and faithful to our duty. Give us the courage to fight the good fight of faith. We ask this in the name of our Commander and Chief,
Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.
And all of God’s people said, Amen.

As I close today's message, I just want to remind you what Veteran's Day really means. It's not free meals at your favorite restaurant.
To many veterans, this is an insult. Wether they are combat veterans or peace time veterans, they have all put on the uniform, took an
oath to protect our countries citizens and to protect our Country itself. To all veterans out there today, Myself and the AULC Ministries
want to thank you for your service! We have three veterans in our ministry. We thank them as well for their service!

Go out this week and be a blessing and be blessed. For the more you are a blessing, the more you will be blessed.

Thank you for watching and listening and we will see you all next week.

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