

## **Fit For Duty Devotional--Week 1: Enlisting ^**

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**Sunday, September 13, 2009**  
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**2 Peter 1:12-15** *So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.* NIV

Soldiers in the field are constantly being trained over and over again on the basics of their trade. They know that their lives depend on their instant obedience and reflexive reaction to dangerous situations. Christians, too, should recognize the benefit of periodic retraining in the fundamentals on which they depend for their effectiveness in service to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Peter told his readers that he was reminding them of things that they have already heard, studied, understood and in which they are well grounded. They are living by the truth of the Gospel and the teachings of Jesus Christ. But he told them, "I think it is right to refresh your memory..." so that "after my departure you will always be able to remember..." We don't fall in our faith in a sudden catastrophic lapse ... rather, we simply drift away from those core teachings.

**Hebrews 2:1-2** *We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.* NIV

**Prayer:** *Lord, help me to keep your Word fresh in my mind and my heart. Keep me from a spirit of boredom or inattention. Make it new every morning, fresh with excitement and insight. Speak to me by Your Word and fill me with Your Spirit that I may "will and do" for Your good pleasure. Amen.*

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**Monday, September 14, 2009**  
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**2 Peter 3:1-2** *Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.* NIV

When our thought processes get stale and we stop refreshing our minds with the Word of God, the process of Sanctification, by which we continually are commanded to seek to become more like Jesus Christ, falters and grinds to a halt. And friends, when we stop growing, we start dying. A soldier who ceases to be alert on the battlefield is at risk of dying quite literally, shot by a more alert enemy. Satan never ceases stalking us with the hope of catching us off guard that he might devour us. Paul says this in his letter to the Romans:

**Romans 12:2** *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.* NLT

Peter urges his readers to remember the words spoken by the prophets, and the commandments given through the apostles from the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. In those words--in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments -- will be the lessons that will stimulate us to wholesome thinking.

**Prayer:** *Lord please fill me with Your Holy Spirit, and let Him constantly refresh my thinking by the power of the Word that I may always be alert and aware of the schemes of the enemy and be trained in the truths of the faith. Amen.*

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**Tuesday, September 15, 2009**

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**Leviticus 11:45** *I am the Lord who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy. NIV*

To be holy is to be set aside, dedicated to serving the Lord. To seek to become more and more like Christ is to desire holiness. To commit to obedience of what God has taught us in Scripture is to seek holiness. God has a job for each of us to do! No man or woman is unimportant in God's eyes. The plans he has for us were determined before ever time began, and there are eternal rewards for obedience.

**Ephesians 2:10** *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. NIV*

For every front-line soldier in direct contact with the enemy, there are many others who serve "behind the lines" in different ways--in planning, in logistics, in providing food, in caring for the sick and wounded. Napoleon said, "An army marches on its stomach." It would be a foolish soldier who said "We don't need cooks and ammo carriers." He would soon be hungry--and out of ammunition.

**1 Corinthians 12:18-19** *But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. NIV*

**Prayer:** *Lord, show me the work to which You have called me, the unique task for which You have set me aside. And guide me in being obedient as You reveal to me the ways in which I am to be holy in Your service. Amen.*

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**Wednesday, September 16, 2009**

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**Ephesians 4:22-24** *You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. NIV*

Basic military training is by intent a time of stress and hard work. Old "civilian" habits have to be set aside, and new habits must be formed, and formed quickly. Mental attitudes, physical training, and a myriad of facts and details to be memorized and put to work. Short haircuts and identical uniforms for everyone strips away the habit of "individuality" and training focuses on everyone learning to work together as a team. A man or woman becomes a soldier, and ceases to be a civilian.

**Colossians 3:10-11** *Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with his label on it. All the old fashions are now obsolete. TM*

As a Christian we need to learn some new concepts, and put them to work in our lives. We need to become spiritually "Fit for Duty" as we learn to pray and study the Scriptures, and as we learn the need for obedience to the commands of the Commander of the Lord's Army, who is Jesus Christ. Although we don't have ill-tempered drill sergeants yelling at us as we enlist in Christ's army, we nonetheless have an obligation to develop the discipline to be "Christian Soldiers."

**Prayer:** *Lord, help me to have the personal discipline and the integrity to commit to pray and study the word, to learn the truths that will serve as both shield and sword as I face an enemy who is dedicated to my downfall and defeat. Amen.*

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**Thursday, September 17, 2009**

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**2 Timothy 3:16-17** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. NIV*

When they enter basic training, all soldiers are given a "Handbook" that contains useful--and required--information. It identifies insignia of rank, terms and definitions, and the "General Orders" by which every soldier guides his daily life.

1st General Order: *I will guard everything within the limits of my post and quit my post only when properly relieved.*

2nd General Order: *I will obey my special orders and perform all my duties in a military manner.*

3rd General Order: *I will report violations of my special orders, emergencies, and anything not covered in my instructions, to the commander of the relief.*

The Bible is the "Handbook" that God has provided to His people to give us our General Orders and to detail our Special Orders. We are responsible to know the contents of that handbook, to act according to the instructions (orders/commands) contained therein. Studying and learning God's "General Orders" will enable us to live our Christian lives smoothly and without need to periodically be "busted" for disobedience.

**Prayer:** *Lord, may I be a good and obedient Christian soldier, serving to the best of my ability and obedient to the commands which You have given me in "The Handbook." Help me to guard the truth that has been entrusted to me and never to abandon my post. Amen.*

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**Friday, September 18, 2009**

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**James 1:22** *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. NIV*

The Second General Order says, "I will obey my special orders and perform all my duties in a military manner." There is a right way to do things in the military--by the book. And there

is a right way to do things when you're a Christian, too--by the Book. Soldiers do not go through basic and advanced training just to enhance their store of technical information. No! They are trained and trained some more so that they will be able to do the multitude of things that make an army effective. So, too for Christians.

**Colossians 3:17** *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. NIV*

It will take commitment, prayer and Bible study and a lot of application and practice, what we might call "OJT" (on the job training) to get to the point where we are automatically doing the right things for the right reasons. Habits take time to develop, and we need to persevere over time so that the new habits will become ingrained in us.

Scripture gives us a "model" to imitate--Christ Himself. He came to earth as a man, just as we are, but lived a life free from sin. *Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* (John 8:12, NIV)

**Prayer:** *Lord, show me how to always be obedient to the Word, and how to do all things in such a way that you will be glorified and that others will see You in me. Amen.*

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**Saturday, September 19, 2009**  
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**1 Corinthians 11:1** *Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. NIV*

The New Testament puts strong emphasis on following leaders who set a good example. General James Longstreet, cautioned by General Robert E. Lee to be cautious and not put himself into undue risk during the Battle of Gettysburg, replied, "General, you can't lead from behind!" It has always been a principle in the military that commanders must first and foremost be able to inspire and lead their men.

Jesus Christ set the example and leads from the front. He was always to be found where the enemy was the most active, rebuking the demons and healing the physically and soul-sick. We are not called to be "armchair soldiers" but are called to follow the example of Jesus and "get out there among 'em."

**Matthew 11:29** *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. NIV*

**Philippians 3:17** *Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. NIV*

**1 Peter 5:3** *(Be a leader who is) not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. NIV*

**Prayer:** *Lord more than anything I want to be like You. Show me when and where to speak and act in Your service, and let me be an example as well to others in service and in love, to saved and unsaved alike, of what it means to be called a "Christian." Amen.*