

## A Soldier with a Mission

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When Timothy first joined the army, he was so excited. He knew he was fighting an important war. Above all, his heart thrilled at the thought of serving underneath his captain—the one who had saved his life and enlisted him in his army.

His enthusiasm bubbled over into everything he did and to everyone he met. Whatever task he was assigned—whether big or small—Timothy had attacked with joy and enthusiasm. He might not see how, but he knew the drills and tasks before him were all part of an important war. Otherwise, the captain wouldn't have assigned them. And he knew that after the war ended, the captain would take them all to live in the new kingdom together. When other soldiers annoyed him, Timothy let their words fall off his shoulders. His enemy would like nothing more than to get them to waste their energies in anger at each other!

You could say Timothy was a soldier with a mission. He knew why he was there, whom he was serving, and where he was going. And he let that knowledge put a joy and delight into everything he did.

But as the weeks went by, Timothy gradually lost sight of the big picture. He, like so many of his fellow soldiers, got caught up in just making it from day to day. He still did his drills and tasks, but he did them as a man checking a box. He began allowing other soldiers' comments irritate him. Worse still, he began being critical of others. Timothy was no longer a soldier with a mission.

One day, Timothy bumped into another soldier named Zach. Zach was struggling with a lack of joy and asked Timothy for advice. Timothy tried to help, but his words sounded hollow to himself. Where was his own joy?

His conversation with Zach caused Timothy to remember the big picture—to remember why he'd enlisted in the first place. He remembered what the captain had done and promised to do for them. He began praising in his heart again instead of complaining. Slowly but surely, he remembered why he was there, whom he was serving, and where he was going. And as he did, his zeal and joy returned. There was no need to just make it through the day. Once again, he was a soldier with a mission.

*"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:14*  
*"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*  
*Hebrews 12:2*