

But He Never Enlisted!

He served in the army but ... "he wasn't a soldier." We believe there is a lesson in the following Associated Press report: "An Army spokesman said Friday that 15 year old Walter Les Martin is not recognized as a soldier—despite two periods of serving in Vietnam, because he did not enlist, was not drafted and did not enter the army through any regular means.

"He was not officially in, did not officially enlist or enter through any normal means," Barrante said. "He was, in fact, not a soldier."

Two periods of service in Vietnam, twice wounded in action; yet no purple hearts, no honorable discharge, no veterans benefits; he did not legally enlist.

This reminds us of a host of men and women whom we have observed serving among the soldiers in the army of the Lord. They serve faithfully and even sacrificially. They reject the sins of the flesh and live a pure life. They attend services regularly, give liberally of their money, and are ready unto every good work. They often study the Scriptures, defend the truth and attack error. Often they are outstanding in their performance as soldiers, except that they never enlisted.

The "Captain of our salvation" knew in advance there would be such individuals. He warned in advance of the fate they may expect: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:22,23). What a pity to spend a lifetime enduring "hardships as a good soldier" only to miss the veteran's benefits because of a failure to enlist.

There was no way that the young man described above could have legally enlisted, he was ineligible. But anyone who is a sinner can enlist in the army of the Lord if he is willing to leave his sins. The conditions are simple: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk.16:16). "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Ac.2:38).

– by Sewell Hall

Should Mom & Dad's Beliefs Keep Me From Changing My Views?

There was once a man who operated a general store. On his counter top he had nailed a yardstick. He measured yard goods, rope, etc. by that yardstick. Eventually, the man died and his son moved back and took over the operation of the little store. One day, an employee of the Dept. of Weights and Measures came by, examined his "yardstick" and pronounced it a full inch less than a yard in length. All those years the gentleman had honestly thought that his measuring stick was accurate, but he was wrong. His honesty did not make him right.

Now the son was faced with a decision. He could refuse to admit his father was wrong and, therefore, be wrong himself - or he could say, "My father honestly thought he was right. I know something my father did not know. If I do not live up to the knowledge I have I will not be as honest as he was." (No doubt, most people would make the second decision.)

Strange as it may seem, many reason differently in religion. Some learn "the way of God more accurately" than their parents. However, they refuse to make any changes because they fear any change from their parents' religion would cast upon the father and mother an unfavorable reflection.

Let us say that a man's God-fearing parents taught him to reverence the Bible. Yet they were misinformed on some vital points. His parents were honest. If they had understood the truth as he does, would they not have obeyed it? If he turns his back on recognized Bible truth, is he as honest as they were?

The apostle Paul was one who had to make this decision. In Galatians 1:11-14, we find Paul's life before Christianity was one of a Jew, which his parents had taught him. He advanced greatly in that religion and was very zealous in teaching what he believed to be the truth. But in Galatians 1:15-17, when Paul was taught that what he believed was wrong, he changed and began to preach the truth.

Paul did not (as many do today) say, "My parents have been Jews all their lives and so have I, and I will die a Jew" or "If that is true, then that means my parents are lost." Just because we

may have been something religiously does not make that religion right, and just because my parents believed a certain way about the Bible does not make it so. Paul was honest and sincere enough to change his life and live right. We need to constantly compare our beliefs with the Bible. Are we as honest as Paul was?

- by Roy Fenner

Our Reaction to the Current Crisis

Few conversations in recent days have failed to include some reference to the Covid-19 pandemic. Little else has been on the minds of the public. News programming is completely devoted to the virus and its impacts on daily life. People are fully alarmed.

Here at Colledgevue we have been forced to consider the ramifications of the current health crisis on our congregational work. Many churches have cancelled all meetings. Others are meeting on a reduced frequency. What should we do?

We cherish the time we spend together in worship and study. We sincerely want to offer our service to God. How can we maintain some degree of interaction with one another when our government is urging that we meet in groups no larger than ten? Obviously, many judgments and a variety of opinions come into play concerning our assemblies and our Bible classes.

Thankfully, the men of the church have patiently and peacefully sought out an approach that, while certainly not ideal, will accommodate our commitment to God (first priority) and our submission to government (an important secondary consideration). Today marks our first efforts to carry out the plan the men have settled upon. We need your patience as we work out the bugs that are sure to arise.

Hopefully, this crisis will pass sooner rather than later. Whatever happens, let us be fully committed and devoted to our God. Our faith is a blessing in such times. Let us rejoice like King David, who wrote *"Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield."* (Psalms 5:11-12)

- by Greg Gwin