

# The Strategic Nature of Valor

*Why I believe Valor is such a key part of what God is doing on the earth.*

David Preston

**The Military is a God-ordained institution.** Just like the family and the church, the military (government) was established by God to be a blessing to all people. Just because some leaders use the military for their own selfish motives does not mean the military is a bad thing. We do not think families are bad just because we witness a terrible father. A terrible father, church leader, or government leader can do much harm, but that is not what God intended.

In Genesis 9:1-7, Noah had just stepped off the ark when God gave him instructions. God repeated what He had told Adam and Eve, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.” He then told Noah what to do if man kills man. “From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.”

God gave Noah the responsibility to govern himself. He also gave the guiding principle for governing a group of people. He told Noah that, “God made man in his own image.” Noah was not far removed genealogically from Adam and Eve. According to the genealogy in Genesis, Adam and Eve’s grandson was alive in the days of Noah. No doubt Noah heard oral accounts of creation and the purpose of God for mankind: that they were made in His image. Noah knew what it meant to govern people according to God’s purposes for them as images of God. He also knew how valuable God’s creation was to Him.

Paul writes to the Roman believers about the purpose of the government. In Romans 13:1-4, Paul says, “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer. “

Paul is telling the Christians of the day that the government that they think is oppressing them is actually a provision of God for their good. It does not mean that everything the government does is God-honoring or beneficial, but it is there because God put it there to provide peace and safety.

God’s glory can be revealed in a military that carries out its duties as God intended. They are to be stewards of God’s people, protecting them from evil and establishing peace and safety for all to enjoy. Valor is an important ministry to help military men and women fulfill their God-given calling to be His servants.

**The Military provides a culture of deep discipleship.** Military men and women start in ROTC, the Academies, or in boot camp as followers. They submit to those over them and are trained to live lives of excellence. They then become leaders and train those who come behind them. There is a culture of submission, trust, training, and leadership. This deep discipleship develops men and women of great faith. They have faith in their leaders, peers, and subordinates. They must; the mission depends on it.

In Luke chapter 7, Jesus encounters a military man who sent elders to ask Jesus to heal his servant. The Soldier tells Jesus that He does not even need to come to his home, He only needs to say the words and his servant will be healed. Jesus marvels at his faith and says in verse 9, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." When you take a closer look at the story, it explains why the soldier had such faith. It was because he was trained in a culture of trust, and he placed that trust in one who he knew had all authority, even the authority to command action in the physical realm by just His words. The Soldier said in verses 6-8, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

Valor is a ministry that teaches men and women who are in a culture of trust and training to place their faith in the One who has all authority. In fact, God is the authority behind the justice they execute. Imagine a generation of military leaders who place this deep faith in Christ and allow Him to train them through His Word and Spirit.

**The military culture is a close relational network where the gospel can spread rapidly.**

Military men and women operate in units that take care of one another. They are all relationally connected at a base, and they continue that relational network, expanding it over a career of service. When the gospel affects the life of a military man or woman, it can spread rapidly as he or she come in relational contact with so many others.

In Philippians, Paul writes from prison. He is surrounded by soldiers who are guarding him. He says in chapter 1, verses 12 and 13, "I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ."

Valor has the privilege of making Christ known to cadets, who in turn can share it throughout their units. Our goal is to have 10% of all newly-commissioned officers involved in Valor while they are cadets. Imagine the impact of the gospel on the military if 1 out of 10 officers can network the love of Christ.

**The military influences the world.** Throughout history, God has used the military to protect and advance the gospel, often times when the church has ceased to do so. Paul's life demonstrates this historical observation. When the religious ruler sought to kill Paul, it was the Roman military that provided him safety and protection. Of course his imprisonment led to his ultimate death, but that was all in God's timing and will. While in prison he was able, as we have seen, to share the gospel with the whole Imperial Guard. As Rome was expanding its reign, it awarded new governorships of towns to retired Imperial Guardsmen as a reward for their service. So as the Roman Empire expanded, so did the gospel. On a side note, God also through the Roman Empire established a common language for all people so they would be prepared to read the Scriptures in their own languages. Rome also paved roads so the gospel could travel quickly. God is very strategic, and He often uses military men and women to carry the gospel to new places.

Cadets and midshipmen are being trained to serve in a God-ordained institution, they have the capacity for deep faith and discipleship, they live in a community where the gospel can spread rapidly, and they can be used by God to spread the gospel to all nations. I believe if we reach cadets and midshipmen today on our college campuses, they will reach the military tomorrow, and the world the day after that. Let's equip these men and women to be used by God for global influence.