

CALL TO DUTY

VOL. 1, ISSUE 5

THIS ISSUE'S THEME:

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

2 Tim 2:2

When I was in the Army we spent a lot of time, energy, and money to "train the trainers" of our soldiers. Officers had branch specific schools at every stage of their careers to teach them how to plan, source, and conduct training. Non-commissioned officers (NCOs) had schools for their development as trainers as well. Their education was centered on planning, executing, and evaluating training of their soldiers. There were also additional specialty schools to hone training skills. One such school was master gunner school for armor and infantry NCOs. These courses were the best training an NCO could get to prepare them to train M1 Abrams tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicles crews, platoons, and companies. You knew that you could rely on a master gunner to get things done in outstanding fashion.

Not surprisingly, training the trainer is a biblical concept. In 2 Timothy 2:2 (NKJV), Paul tells Timothy "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." In other words, Timothy, train the trainers. Paul even relates it to military experience in verse three by telling Timothy to "endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

Today there are formal institutions that specialize in training the spiritual trainer. Universities such as Freed-Hardeman, Harding, and Faulkner have bible and ministry programs. In addition, some congregations oversee bible/ministry training programs to train spiritual trainers. Among these are the Southeast Institute of Biblical Studies in Knoxville, Tennessee and the Bear Valley Bible Institute in Denver, Colorado.

Some lesser-known, but very effective, programs exist that are specifically oriented on training the spiritual trainers among the military Christian community. These are American Military Evangelizing Nations, Military Outreach, and Military Outreach and Encouragement. This issue of Call to Duty will highlight these efforts to train faithful Christians who in turn can teach, or train, others.

I encourage you to reach out to these programs to help build up the body in your area, wherever it may be.

May God bless you and your service to Him and the nation.

~~ Tony

MILITARY OUTREACH & ENCOURAGEMENT

AMERICAN MILITARY EVANGELIZING NATIONS

American Military Evangelizing Nations (AMEN) is a ministry begun by an Air Force Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) and his wife who understood the challenges of living a faithful Christian life while serving in the military. Don Yelton was stationed at remote base in Greenland where he heard the Gospel and desired to be baptized. Unable to find help from the assigned chaplain and having much difficulty locating like-minded Christians he finally arranged to be baptized on his own. Later when he and his wife Harriet were students at the White's Ferry Road School of Biblical Studies, they developed a vision of a ministry that would enable military Christians to connect with a local church for worship, fellowship and service wherever they were posted anywhere in the world. Since 1976 AMEN has fulfilled that vision through its Locator Service with its network of Key Men and Women, spiritual retreats, humanitarian service, and the camaraderie of those who live for Jesus while defending our nation. The Yeltons retired as directors in February 2016, passing the ministry on to long-time AMEN supporter and retired Air Force chaplain Dennis Saucier.

AMEN

Vison

Building the Love of God in the Heart of the Warrior!

AMEN MISSION

AMEN's mission is to provide for the spiritual growth of the members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families by offering opportunities for Bible study, worship, fellowship, service, and evangelism fulfilling Jesus Christ's call to the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

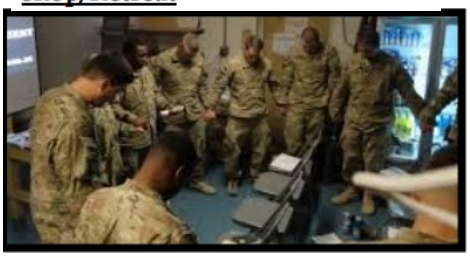
AMEN Services

- Locator Service connects members with a local church Stateside, Overseas and while deployed.
- Spiritual Growth Workshops & Retreats for marriage enrichment, discipleship, communication skills, leadership training, suicide awareness & Biblical topics.
- Advice on working with military chaplains & the military system, how to obtain ecclesiastical endorsement to lead worship on base or aboard naval ships.
- Training for church leaders in ministering to military members, the base community & veterans.

Marriage Enrichment Retreat



Personal Spiritual Growth Workshop/Retreat



AMEN is a ministry of the Manchester Church of Christ, Manchester, CT
Church Office (860) 646-2903

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PO Box 353
Hebron CT 06248-0353
(860) 501-9813
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MILITARY OUTREACH

MILITARY OUTREACH – Serving Those That Serve Our Country

The Military Outreach Program is a ministry conducted under the oversight of the Elders of the Bear Valley Church of Christ in Denver, CO. This program began in 1980 and was the vision of a US Navy retiree, named Dick Brant, who was a student at the School of Preaching, now Bible Institute, at that time. Brother Brant continues to be the guiding force of this ministry, serving as the Program Director.

The mission of Military Outreach is to provide support, assistance and encouragement to Christians in the US military stationed worldwide. So many congregations where Christians in the military worship, especially overseas, are small, in constant flux because of PCS moves, deployments, duty demands, and most often lack mature and capable individuals to teach Bible classes, preach sermons, etc., on a regular and consistent basis. This is where Military Outreach offers a valuable and much needed resource. At the request of the local congregation, Military Outreach can send a qualified, scripturally sound teacher/preacher to their location – worldwide. The Military Outreach representative will teach classes, preach sermons, conduct seminars, do counseling, etc. All of this is done, once again at the request of the local congregation, and with their particular needs in view and with their input as to the subjects to be presented. The length of time the Military Outreach representative stays is also up to the desires and needs of the congregation being served. The normal length of stay is two or three weeks, but it is also possible for the Military Outreach representative to remain for several months if desired.

The Military Outreach services are provided at no cost to the local congregation. The traveling teacher/preacher raises his own travel funds. It is only asked that, if possible, housing accommodation and transportation be provided during the stay.
In recent years, Military Outreach has sent representatives to serve congregations in England, Italy, Germany and Japan. Of course, Covid has curtailed all travel for the past several years. Now that restrictions have been lifted in most countries, and travel is opening up, we plan to be getting teachers/preachers back on the road serving Christians in the military in early 2023. Military Outreach is also looking at future opportunities to serve Christians in the military in new locations where the US military is opening bases and deploying personnel and resources, e.g., Romania, Poland, Kosovo, et.al.

If you are reading this issue of Call To Duty and you are stationed in a location where the local congregation could use the assistance of Military Outreach, don't hesitate to contact us. We would do our very best to provide the teaching/preaching assistance you seek. We very much look at this ministry as a means of fulling the Apostle Paul's charge; *"And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also"* (2 Tim. 2:2).





Military Outreach is a work of the
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MILITARY OUTREACH– A TESTIMONIAL

MILITARY OUTREACH IN ACTION– John Phillis

I was recruited to work with Military Outreach by the Program Director, brother Dick Brant, in the Spring of 2014. I had been serving as the preacher for the Lord's church in Kaiserslautern Germany for several years and was preparing to return to the US and retire. Dick had other ideas. He felt my almost 30 years in the US Army, along with more than 15 years of fulltime ministry, including the 3-plus years I had worked with the primarily US military congregation in K-town, would be a good fit for Military Outreach. I resisted for a time, but brother Dick can be persistent and persuasive. In January 2016, my wife, Betsy, and I found ourselves in Brandon England – about two hours north of London and near RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall. The congregation of the Lord's church in Brandon had recently lost their preacher and were wanting someone to fill-in and assist. Military Outreach to the rescue! This small but well-established congregation was an eclectic group made up of some American military personnel and their families from the nearby bases, some native Englishmen along with an assortment of individuals of other nationalities.

The arrangement and accommodation there in Brandon was quite good. They have a very old – circa 1811 – but nice church building. Right next-door was a comfortable cottage where my wife and I were able to stay for the time that we were there. In this situation, I was essentially their fulltime preacher for the almost six months - January to June. We were warmly received by the congregation and made to feel very much at home.

To be sure, not all Military Outreach "tours of duty" are alike. By contrast, we went to work with the Lord's church in Aviano Italy in October 2019. There the congregation was much smaller, made up of only US military personnel, civilian employees and their families. The church in Aviano met on the base and so, having retired military ID cards facilitated entry onto the base. We were there for a period of about two weeks during which time I preached on Sundays, then present a special series of Bible classes on weekday evenings. However, as is often the case, it was a busy and turbulent time for the military members there. Several families in the church had both spouses serving on active duty. In a couple of those instances, one of the spouses was deployed. While we were there, another family said goodbye to their husband/father as he deployed. Another family was preparing to PCS. Even under those difficult circumstances – difficult for them – my wife and I were warmly received and provided for. In this case, our accommodation was in a very comfortable hotel in the heart of Aviano.

So, these are just two examples of my Military Outreach experiences. They were different in location, in the conditions and the circumstances. But they were alike in that I was able to work in the Lord's kingdom, to encourage, to build up and to strengthen Christians serving in the US military and, in this way, fulfill Paul's charge in 2 Timothy 2:2.



Church of Christ and Minister's Cottage at Brandon, Suffolk, England.





John Phillis is retired from the Army and is the program coordinator for Military Outreach.

MILITARY OUTREACH– A TESTIMONIAL

In support of Military Outreach - Clif Hinds

In 2016, John Phillis discussed going to Brandon, Suffolk, UK to work with the Brandon Church. Brandon is a congregation of about 50 members, when everyone shows up. It is almost a 50/50 mix of U.S. Military + families and British Citizens and residents working in the UK. Brandon is a small village in close proximity to Lakenheath and Mildenhall Air Bases.

I have gone to Brandon each year spending from three to four months each year except for 2020 due to Covid 19. My duties there were simple in that I provided the services of a minister and an evangelist. I did not push myself on any person or family, but I was always available to the members of the congregation.

During my period at Brandon, we baptized somewhere around 10 people. I was not alone in teaching all of these, but I was instrumental in the teaching. I also trained other members how to study the word and how to teach others.

I still provide biblical teaching to members from the Brandon Congregation. Some of them are involved in personal Bible studies with friends and neighbors. When they come across a question or scripture where they need help – they contact me. My teaching is from the Bible – the source of all my knowledge concerning God and Jesus, the Christ.

They had no youth group, so I opened that door while I was there and served as the leader of the youth. We had Bible Study and went on outings – hikes along the Little Ouse River, tour of Ely Cathedral, Cookouts and movie nights.

I provided a degree of counseling. I did not counsel in areas where I lacked qualification. I do not possess a counseling degree, but life has had it's moments. I am acquainted with grief and sorrow and I can provide help to those suffering from loss.

One of our young British ladies wanted to get married. The actual marriage in England occurs with the government clerk certifying the Marriage License. However, Rebecca wanted a "Church Wedding" where she could invite family, friends and her Christian brothers and sisters. She and her fiancé leased a venue for the wedding and asked that I perform the service.

I also wanted to do some form of evangelism in the town, but I did not know what was legally and socially accepted. However, the church building has a small courtyard in front of the building. I moved some lawn chairs a table in the courtyard. I placed some bibles and reading material on the table with some British 'biscuits' and a pot of tea. I proceeded to say good morning / good evening to everyone that walked down the sidewalk. Occasionally one would stop to talk. We did not increase attendance because of this, but we did have a couple of baptisms resulting from the contact. Also, people in Brandon became acquainted with me. Most of the people who passed on the street had never noticed that it was a church setting there, but after I started talking with them, locals would recognize me downtown and elsewhere as "The preacher from the little church on the corner." Perhaps not much, but something.

I function better in an environment where I have time to become part of the church family – not just a guest. That does not mean that I am unavailable for short term teaching sessions. I am open to teaching any Bible subject.

I will go where I am needed.







Clif Hinds is a faithful servant of the Lord who grew up in the cotton fields of northeast Arkansas. He is a graduate of Arkansas State University and a veteran of the US Army and the United States Marine Corps. He served as a munitions specialist for the Department of the Army for over 30 years. His total federal service was 39 years.

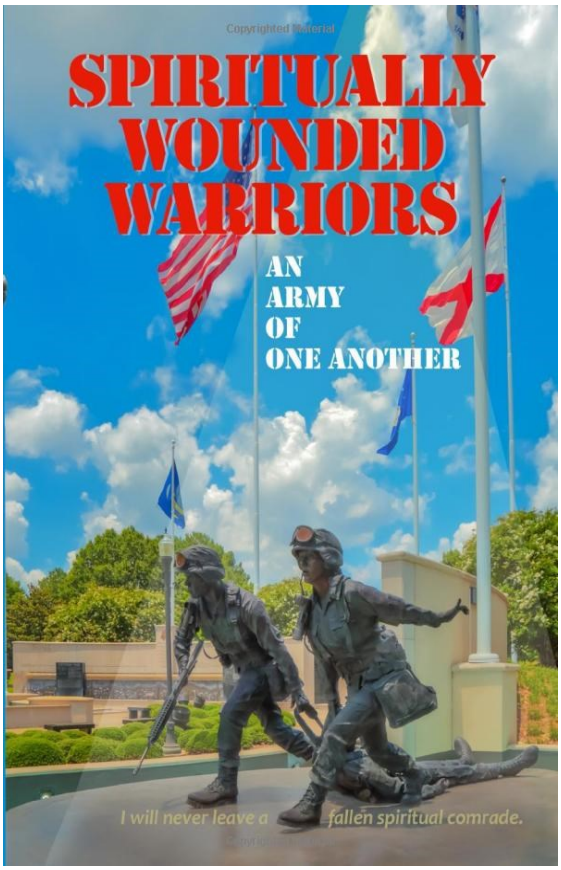
Military OutReach & Encouragement

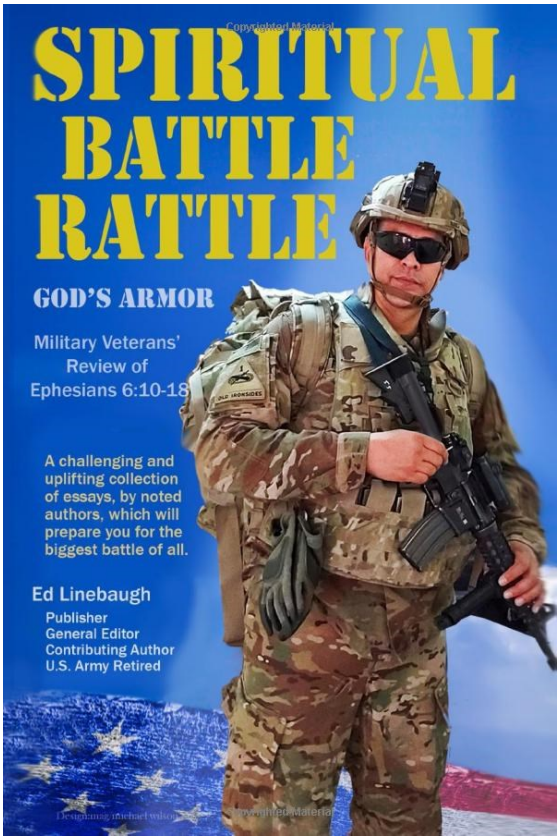
Military OutReach and Encouragement (M.O.R.E.), formerly a card-writing and prayer ministry during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, has transitioned to a publishing ministry under the banner, "**S.E.A.L. (Spiritual Education And Leadership) Training**."

Two distinct publishing efforts to help "Encourage and Strengthen" our military personnel and their families are as follows:

1. "**Call To Duty**" (formerly the "Military Messenger") is a quarterly e-newsletter (hard-copy upon request), now under the capable editorship of Tony Turner, LTC, U.S. Army Retired, and,

2. "**Spiritual Warrior**" series of books: (a) ***Spiritual Battle Rattle: God's Armor, Military Veterans' Review of Ephesians 6:10-18***. (b) ***Spiritually Wounded Warriors: An Army of One Another***. Both books are currently available on Amazon or through InLine Publishers, LLC ("InLine With God's Word"), InLinePublishers@writeme.com. (c) The third installment in this series (currently in the early stages) is ***Spiritually Strong Sisters: Stories of Faith and Fellowship in the Military***. Future plans include raising godly military families, military church leadership overseas, and others, as well as a ***Digital Devotional for God's Warriors: Stay Spiritually Strong***."





MORE is under the oversight of the elders at the Farley Church of Christ in Huntsville ,AL. Ed Linebaugh is the director.

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God's Plan for Spiritual Education

Every educator or instructor recognizes that the learning process is *two*-way and involves both teacher and student. Without either, learning will not occur, and the status quo will remain unchanged (i.e., "the state in which anything is already"). Unlike flawed, human-produced curricula, God's eternal plan for our spiritual education is perfect, relevant throughout the ages, and requires no change (except on our part).

In the New Testament (NT), the original Greek word for teacher is *didaskalos*, and is used to describe "one who teaches concerning the things of God, and the duties of man … a master" (Thayer). The following are three related Greek words for *teacher* in the NT:

Teacher of good things (*kalo*didaskalos): "teaching that which is good, a teacher of goodness " (cf. Titus 2:3).

Teacher of the law (*nomo*didaskalos): "a teacher and interpreter of the law: among the Jews; of those who among Christians went about as champions and interpreters of the Mosaic law" (cf. Luke 5:17; Acts 5:34; 1 Timothy 1:7).

False teachers (*pseudo*didaskalos *): "a false teacher" (cf. 2 Peter 2:1). "Pseudo" then is fake, pretend, bogus, artificial, counterfeit.

As the Master Teacher from God, Jesus Christ came to earth to "impart spiritual things pertaining to God**."** Concluding His "sermon on the mount" in Matthew, "**the crowds were amazed at His teaching, for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes**" (7:28-29). John records Jesus saying, "**I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me**" (8:28).

"**And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as *pastors*** [*poimen*] **and *teachers,* for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ**" (Ephesians 4:11-12).

To help us better understand God's plan for our spiritual education, we observed several keywords above, including the Greek word *didaskalos*, as "one who teaches concerning the things of God, and the duties of man … a master." Working in reverse, let's now look at the word "pastor" and its biblical usage.

The word *poimen* means " (1) a herdsman, especially a shepherd, in the parable [i.e., the good shepherd], he to whose care and control others have committed themselves, and whose precepts they follow; (2) metaphorically, the presiding officer, manager, director, of any assembly: so, of Christ the Head of the church of the overseers of the Christian assemblies [and] of kings and princes." Furthermore, "the tasks of a Near Eastern shepherd were: (a) to watch for enemies trying to attack the sheep, (b) to defend the sheep from attackers, (c) to heal the wounded and sick sheep, (d) to find and save lost or trapped sheep, and (e) to love them, sharing their lives and so earning their trust" (Thayer).

Within the Bible, *poimen* (translated as "pastor" in Ephesians 4:11) is never used to indicate the work of one single person (i.e., an "evangelist" or minister). More accurately, *poimen* is always plural and identifies the work of an elder as a "shepherd," as seen in Acts 20:28, "**Be on guard for yourselves** [in context, "elders," verse 17] **and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd** [*poimaino*, the verb form of *poimen*] **the church of God which He purchased with His own blood**."

Thus, the Greek words "shepherd" in Acts and "pastors" in Ephesians are from the same root and denote the primary work of elders, "to feed, to tend a flock, keep sheep; to rule, govern … to furnish pasture for food, to nourish … to supply the requisites for the soul's need" (Thayer).

How do elders/shepherds/pastors (or congregations without biblically qualified elders) accomplish this spiritual feeding and leading? Either teaching the Word of God themselves (per 1 Timothy 3:3, elders must be "able to teach") or via other faithful Christians who serve as Bible class teachers.

Much more could be said about God's eternal plan for spiritual education! If we are following the example of our Master Teacher, we will strive to teach only "good things" (truth) and adhere to "God's law" while rejecting that which is *pseudo* or *false*. Become active in your spiritual feeding by faithfully attending (or teaching) a Bible class at your local congregation and supporting your didaskalos, teacher, and *poimen* or elders. In the End, you will be glad you did!

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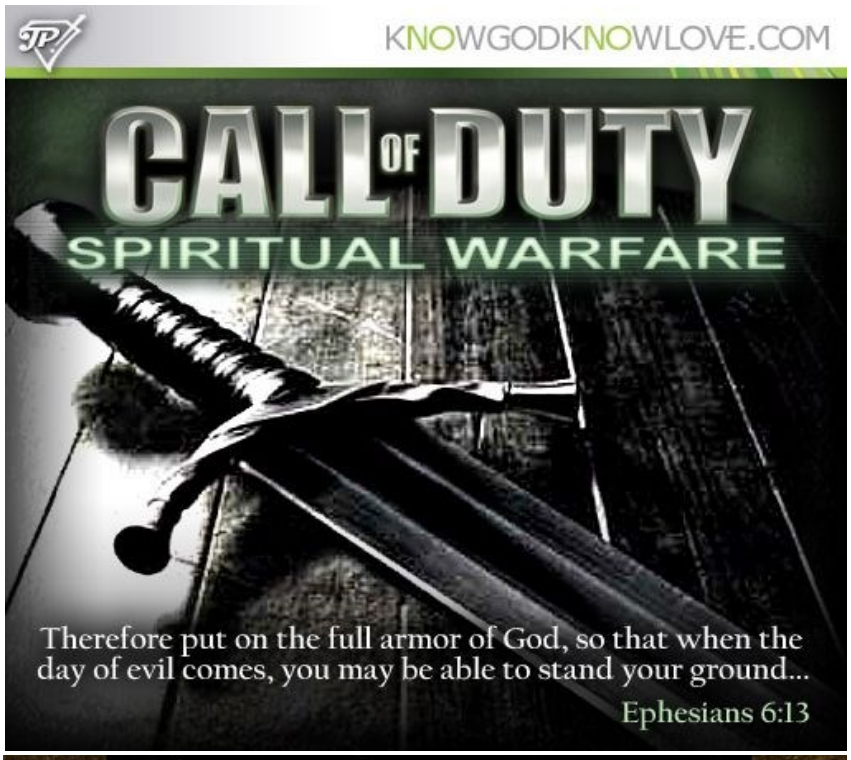
Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1965

AS YOU WERE…

"… three words spoken quickly by non-commissioned and commissioned officers who choose to drop rank and get to business, is meant to put troops 'at ease.'"



Pray
Through
Stressful
Difficulties
(James 1:2-8)









COUNSELOR'S CORNER

The theme for this issue is 2 Tim 2:2. If you've not seen it elsewhere in this issue, then take a moment to read it. Paul is using a time-tested method of getting the word out. In the military we would call it train the trainer. Someone who has the experience and knowledge may not be able to get around to everyone that needs it, so, it is passed on to others and they are encouraged to reach out to the folks they interact with. Jesus used it by selecting 12 guys to carry on His message after He left. And, we use it today.

So, I'd like to use that technique and talk for a bit about an issue that we need to consider and should all be aware of, so that we can help others with it as well. It's been rough for a lot of us over the past several years and we're just not sure what "getting back to normal" really looks like. Challenges abound all around us and we see the effects of it in our relationships in and outside of the church.

This issue can be difficult to talk or even think about among people of faith, because we often think we should be immune to it somehow – suicide. And, often, accompanying that issue is another seemingly difficult one to relate to – depression.

One mental health source has this to say:

Between 2000-2018, suicide mortality rates rose by 35 percent in the United States. After reaching a peak of 14.5 deaths per 100,000 people—the highest rate in 50 years—suicide rates dropped by 2.1 percent in 2019. But researchers caution that this decline does not tell the full story of suicide mortality in the US.[1]

Although they are useful, it's easy to get lost in numbers and statistics. It only really hits home when we or those we love are impacted by this. It changes things in a big way. It's not the goal of this article to discuss what God has said, or not said about taking one's life as there are others more qualified to have that discussion with. This article's intent is to elevate our awareness of when others in our life might be struggling in this area or even help to recognize it in ourselves.

First, some of the most common warning signs:

- Mood or behavior changes, particularly if depressive and anxious feelings become more noticeable or serious, or they isolate themselves. This can be either a sad mood, a feeling of disconnection, or social withdrawal. They may be quieter or not enjoy things the way they used to. Adolescents who normally love to engage in sports or play video games may stop doing that. If you get the sense that they are no longer enjoying what they used to, that is an extremely important warning sign.
- Statements that convey a sense of hopelessness, helplessness, or worthlessness can be a signpost that the individual may be becoming depressed. They may make a direct or indirect comment about suicide or may use euphemisms, like "I can't take this anymore," "I'm at the end of my rope," "I want to throw in the towel," or "Not sure how much longer I can go on."
- Starting to take alcohol or use illicit drugs or even severe changes in weight may indicate depression which can often be a precursor to suicidal tendencies.
- Signs of intense agitation, anxiety, or feelings of tremendous inner pain. This is an extraordinarily important warning sign of suicide because it may suggest that they are going to act soon.

What can we do if we see any, some or all of these symptoms in someone? While the Bible is not a psychology book, per se' it certainly can give us a way forward because the One who made us, certainly knows us, our thoughts and our struggles -- O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar (Ps 139:1-2 ESV).

- Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak . . . (James 1:19, ESV); If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame (Proverbs 18:13, ESV). It should be obvious – listen, then listen some more. Be present in the moment and resist offering "quick" or "easy" solutions—usually if there were a quick and easy solution, this person would likely have already thought of it.
- What is desired in a man is steadfast love, and a poor man is better than a liar (Prov 19:22); Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor (Rom 12:10). In other words, express caring and interest. This can be done nonverbally and verbally, but try to provide validation and acknowledgment of their current situation without making a judgment about it. Show that you see they are extremely depressed or despondent, and ask if they can tell you more about it.
- Be comfortable with silence. It conveys an interest, that you're willing to forgo your own needs in the moment for the sake of helping them. It's not easy to do, but so important. (Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Phil 2:3).

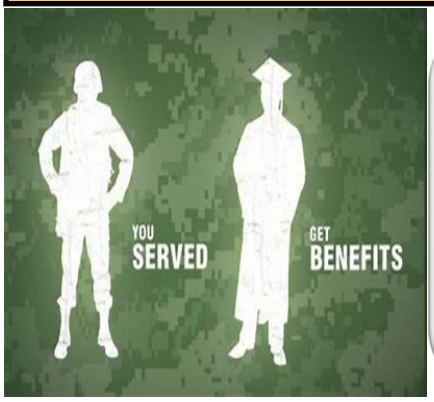
It's OK to simply ask: "Are you feeling suicidal?" It's not going to put the idea in their head if it wasn't there before. Some may say they don't have suicidal thoughts because it may be too painful to admit or it's embarrassing because of the stigma that is still associated with mental illnesses and suicide. Another way is to ease into the moment by using questions that are less charged, like "Are you feeling overwhelmed?," or "Are you feeling at the end of your rope?" This helps the person to feel a little bit more normal, showing that it's understandable to feel this way given the situation. And lastly, getting someone professional help is essential.

It can be daunting to talk with someone that you believe may be thinking along these lines. This person may have lost hope and is starting to see no other way out. You reaching out, showing empathy, compassion and care may be the first time in a long time the person has experienced those. Never underestimate the power of God released in those three words.

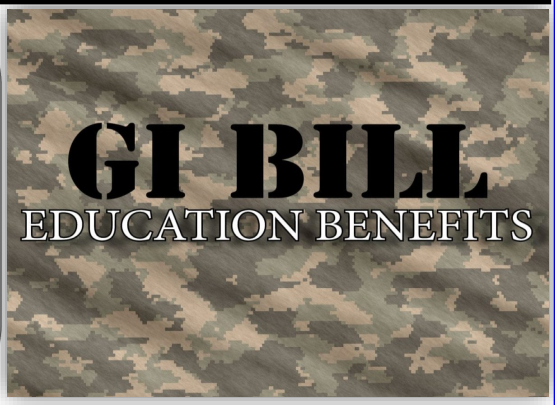
Go and teach.

Darren Crowden *retired from the U.S Air Force and works for the Defense Logistics Agency at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. He has a Masters Degree in Mental Health Counseling from Amridge University, and uses his education and vast experience to minister within, and outside, the church. Darren has previously served as an elder of the Lord's church in Pennsylvania for many years. He and his wife, Jennifer, are active members of the Chase Park Church of Christ in Huntsville, Alabama. You can reach Darren at* ***cnerrad@yahoo.com***

TRAIN FOR MINISTRY!







We Train Preachers

Since 1965, Bear Valley has worked to accomplish the commission of 2 Timothy 2:2 - entrusting the pattern of sound teaching in the gospel to faithful men who will then in turn be equipped to teach others. While the scope of our work has expanded, we have never lost sight of that fundamental mission.

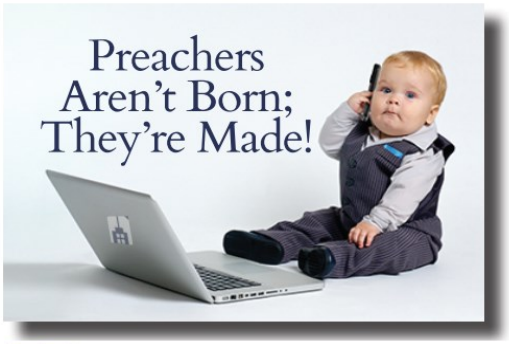
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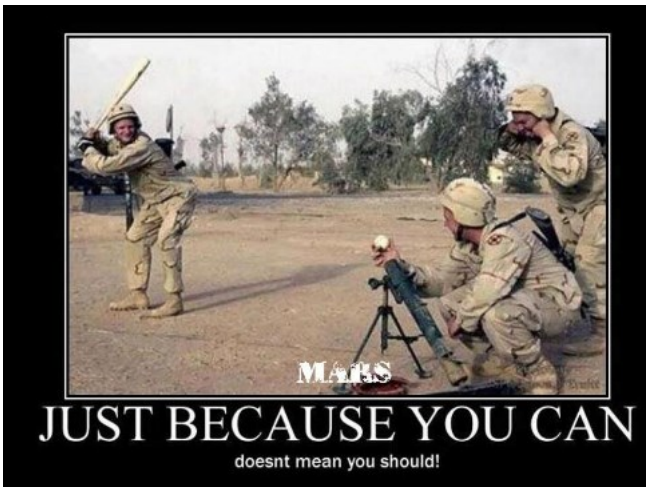
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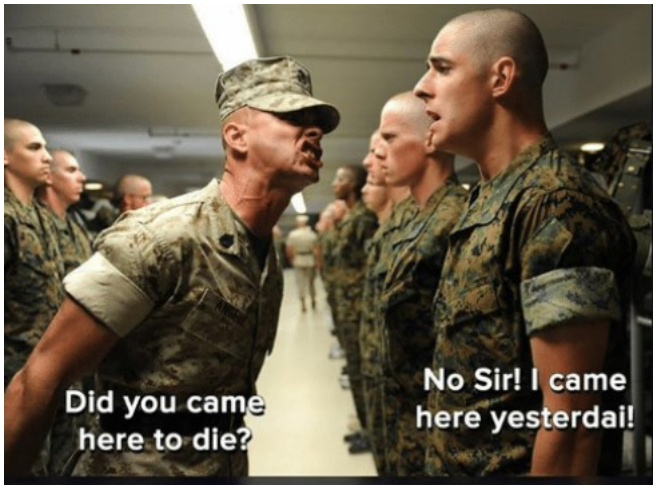
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"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Romans 10:14

THE LIGHTER SIDE











GOD'S ARMY STRONG!

"The Christian Soldier's Creed
(adapted from "The Soldier's Creed")

I am a CHRISTIAN Soldier.
I am a SPIRITUAL Warrior and a member of GOD'S team.
I serve the people of every nation and live the LORD'S values.
I will always place GOD'S mission first.
I will never accept defeat.
I will never quit.
I will never leave a fallen BROTHER or SISTER.
I am disciplined, SPIRITUALLY and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my SPIRITUAL tasks and drills.
I always maintain my SPIRITUAL weapons, my SPIRITUAL equipment and my SOUL.
I am knowledgeable and I am proficient in the SCRIPTURES.
I stand ready to deploy, engage, and LOVE the enemies of GOD in close combat.
I am a guardian of SPIRITUAL freedom and the LORD'S way of life.
I am a CHRISTIAN Soldier.



GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN FOR YOU

HEAR ***the word of God***: Romans 10:9-14; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Revelation 2:7; 22:18-19
BELIEVE ***in Jesus as Savior of world***: John 3:16; 14:6; 14:23
REPENT ***of your sins***: Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; Revelation 2:5, 16, 21,22; 3:3, 19
CONFESS ***Jesus before others***: Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:8-11
BE IMMERSED ***into Christ for forgiveness of your sins***: Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-47; 22:16; Romans 6:3-11; 1 Peter 3:18-22

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AFFIX STAMP

CALL TO DUTY

(BASE 2 BASE, HEART 2 HEART)

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House to House
Heart to Heart

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