

# *Fight the Good Fight*

Lessons from the Korean War

By

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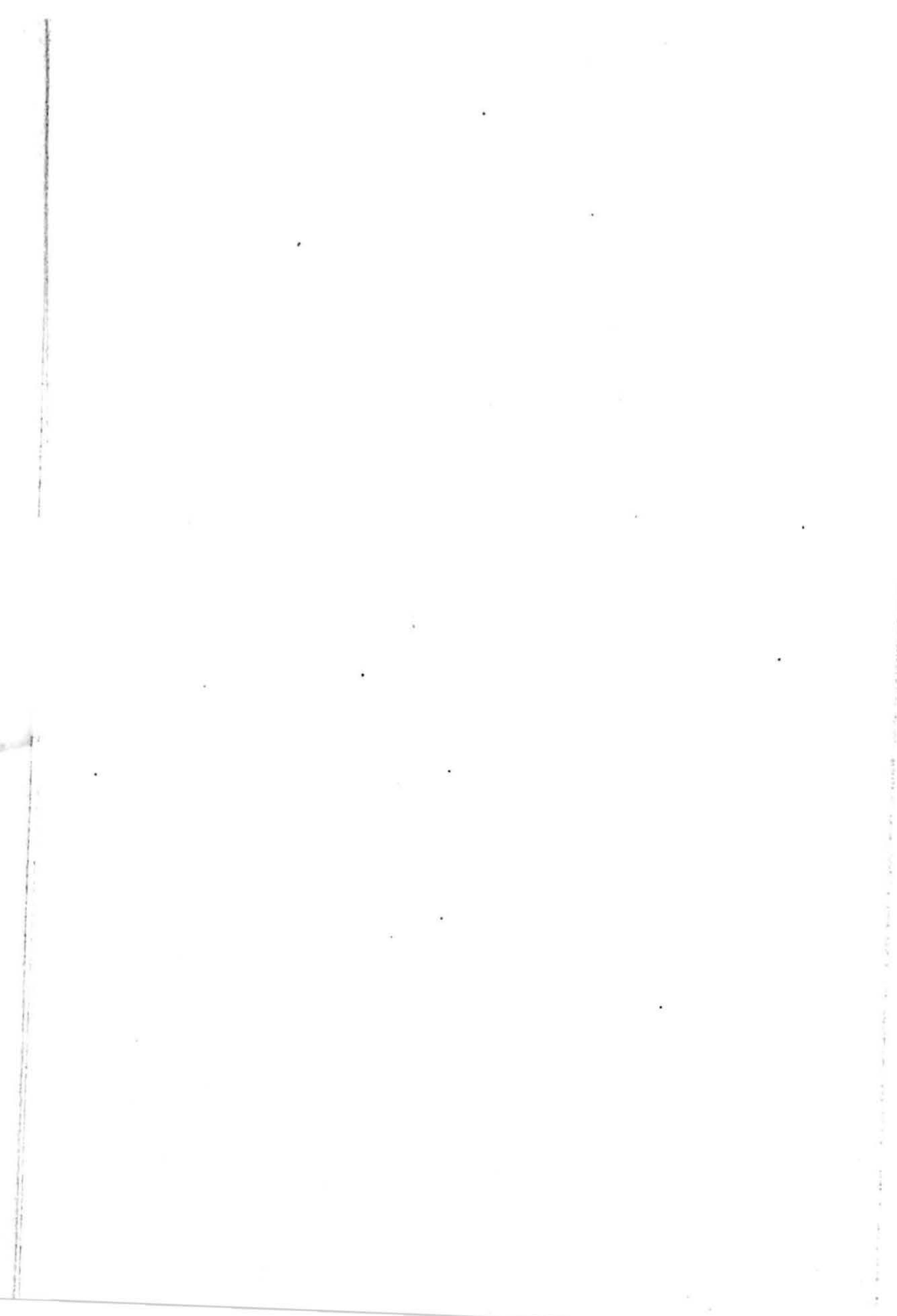
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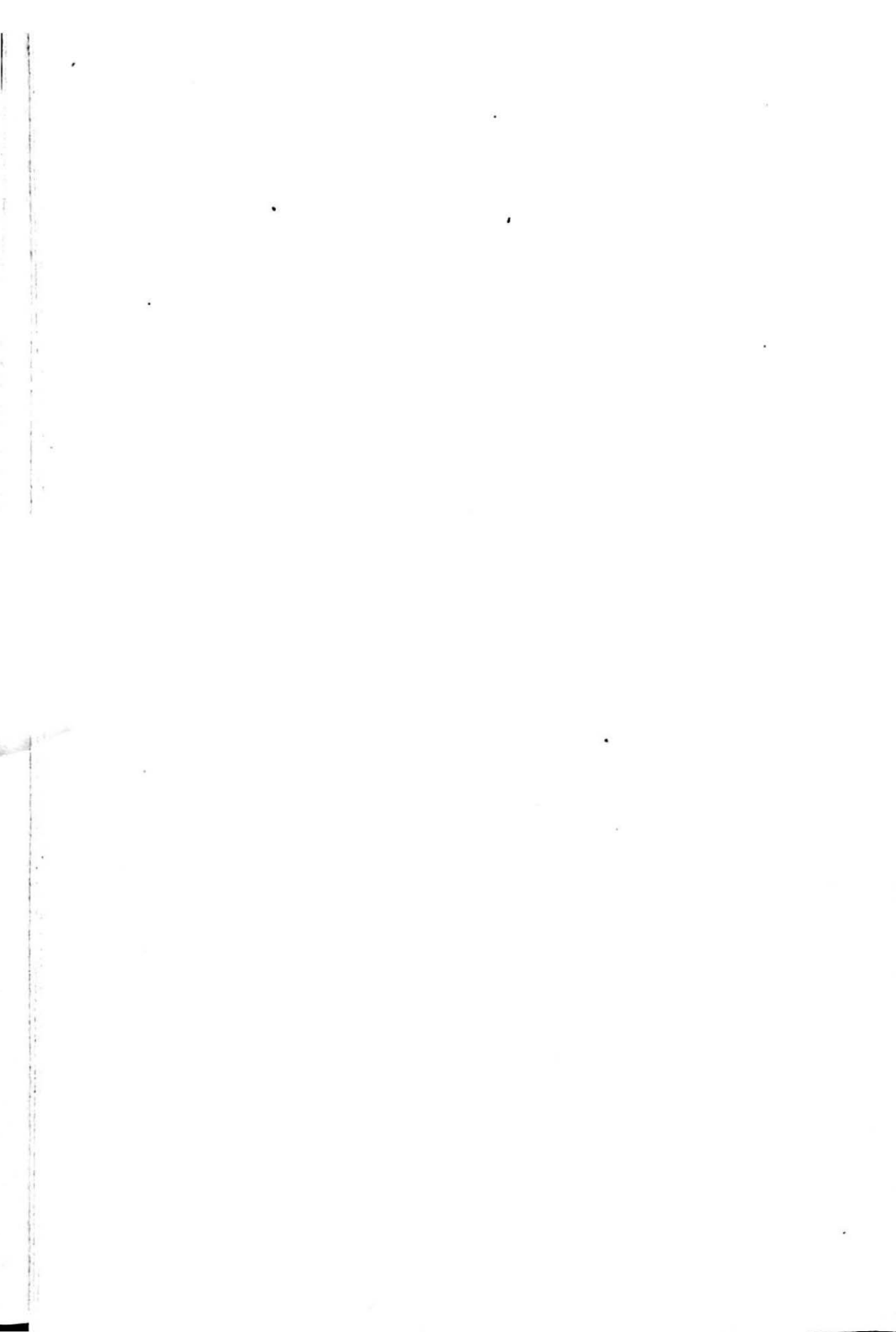
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***To LaVerne***  
**whose love and confidence**  
**brought light**  
**in the darkest hours.**



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## *Preface*

During the writer's time in Korea it never occurred to him that he would write a book about his experiences there. The incidents described in this little volume were recorded in his diary and many of them, together with the spiritual blessings the Lord had given through them, were also shared with his family and with Christian friends in letters.

It was not, however, until after he had returned to civilian life and had been asked on many occasions in churches all over the country to speak on his experiences in Korea that any thought of recording them in book form was entertained. Many friends who testified to having received real blessing and help from his testimony of God's faithfulness as it was recounted in these incidents urged the author to put them into this form so that many more might share that blessing. It was at their insistence that the work was begun.

One thing is very important. It is that every reader should realize that in recounting these personal experiences the author has no desire to call attention to himself, nor to his own accomplishments. Necessarily the account is a very personal one, but in making spiritual applications of the incidents recounted the author would not want to be interpreted as setting himself up as an example.

If this little volume proves of blessing and help to those who read it, that will be ample reward for the effort of writing it, and it will also indicate another reason why the Lord took the author so unexpectedly

from his pastoral work in Wheaton, Illinois, to the bleak, battle-scarred hills of far-off Korea.

He should like to pay tribute to the splendid group of fine Christian soldiers with whom he worked in close fellowship in the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team. Some of them were won to the Lord under his ministry in Korea and Japan. Others were transferred to the regiment after his assignment to it. The way in which they grew in grace and united together in the bonds of Christian love to support the work of their chaplain and to seek to win the unsaved was a constant source of inspiration to him. Not many of them are mentioned by name in this book, but their lives and testimonies meant much to the author. He is especially thankful that the Lord has led several of them to Covenant College where they are continuing as his students in the study of the Word of God.

Pasadena, California  
January, 1956

## CHAPTER ONE

### *The Good Fight of Faith*

*"We do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (II Corinthians 10:3, 4).*

We were at the thirty-eighth parallel, a line on the map which a few years ago was without particular significance to anybody but which because of the force of earth-shaking circumstances had suddenly become, just a few months before, exceedingly important to multitudes of people throughout the whole world. That line was of very special interest and significance to those of us in the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team, for the high command had given to us the assignment of pushing the first wedge back across the parallel, after the Chinese spring offensive of 1951 had largely spent its main force.

It was dawn and the dull light of the coming day was beginning to give some substance to the high hills which completely surrounded us. I was asleep in my sleeping bag on the ground under a tent which my assistant and I had hastily erected in the darkness just a few hours earlier. We had taken little pains to see that the tent was put in place properly. Overcome with weariness, we had been concerned only with the necessity of having some kind of shelter over our heads in the event of rain falling before we had to move. We had been in Korea long enough to

know that provision should always be made for rain!

All through the long, weary hours of the day before we had very slowly inched our way along in our jeep in the convoy of trucks which was just behind and keeping pace with the infantrymen of our regiment as they pushed forward against the Communist enemy, taking ground from him slowly but steadily. Thankful indeed to be riding in a jeep instead of marching over those terribly rough miles as the bulk of the men in our outfit had had to do, we were nevertheless only too glad when an hour or two after midnight the order had come back along the column that we were to turn off of the narrow little Korean road up which we had been traveling at a snail's pace for hours and go into bivouac in a field for the rest of the night. We were to get what sleep we could in the remaining hours of darkness, for we would push on at daybreak.

Suddenly I was awakened from the sleep of exhaustion by the familiar yet somehow terrorizing sound of incoming mortar fire. By the time one has been in the thick of battle for a few days he will pick up with his consciousness the very first whistle of an incoming mortar or artillery shell. He learns to flatten himself out quickly on the earth if he does not have a foxhole handy. By the time the second or third shell hit our area both my assistant and I were out of our sleeping bags, had our boots on and were stumbling around in the semi-darkness seeking a place of greater safety. Orders were shouted at us; we were immediately to strike our own tents, get into our trucks and disperse at top speed. There was no delay in complying with these orders.

What had happened? It did not take us long to

discover. As our infantrymen had proceeded through the valley the day before, in their effort to reach their ultimate objective and get dug in before night-fall, they had not been able to thoroughly flush the hills of all enemy soldiers. One very sizable group of Communists had apparently escaped observation and were well entrenched in bunkers and other fortifications atop the hill which was nearest to and looked down upon our bivouac area. If the enemy soldiers had known that we were moving in under the cover of darkness the night before, they had apparently decided to do nothing about it until daylight. But I am inclined to think that it was quite a surprise to their sentries when, as the dawn broke over the hills, they found that they were looking practically straight down into a sizable camp of American soldiers. This camp was a choice military plum, for there were not only large numbers of men, but there were many vehicles and much valuable equipment in it. It is not to be wondered at that the enemy let loose with all the firepower that he could muster, which fortunately for us was not too much.

The mortar fire was soon followed by the sharp crackle of enemy machine guns. Some of these were well below the crest of the hill. They were answered by our own machine gunners on our perimeter defense line. Then was heard the sharp crack of rifle fire as our outpost men began to discover targets for their guns. A real fight was under way.

It became immediately evident that every resource of our regiment which was available would have to be used to wipe out that enemy strong point. As long as the enemy remained up on that hill, commanding such an excellent view of our main supply line reach-

ing to the men out in front of us, our regiment's whole position was in jeopardy.

While intermittent small arms fire continued at long range, our tanks were quickly brought into position in a rough semi-circle around the base of the hill. In what seemed like an amazingly few seconds the skillful gunners that manned the tanks had taken accurate aim and the big guns on top and at the front of the tanks were hurling their heavy charges of steel into the fortifications at the top of the hill. It is an awesome yet thrilling sight to stand directly behind a heavy tank and watch as with each sharp crack of the explosive charge a projectile screams its way to the target with a message of death and destruction. The eye can actually follow the shell. After a few moments of this kind of pounding by the tanks I wondered if there could possibly be any of the enemy left alive in their bunkers, caves and foxholes at the top of the hill. But there were!

In a little while the Air Force and the Marine Air Wing were called in to help. Darting out of the cloud-filled skies, fast jet planes swooped down upon the hilltop. Their first passes were accompanied by sharp bursts from their machine guns. They had been called to our aid by radio, and it seemed that they were taking a look at the situation for themselves to be sure that they knew just what the targets were and just where they were located on the crest of the ridge. They emptied a few machine gun bullets into the enemy positions—just in case. One after another they dived on the hill in this way. There followed a few moments without apparent activity as the planes seemed to regroup in the sky above us. Perhaps they were getting radioed instructions from their com-

mander or from the observer on the ground who was in constant touch with them. Then again they pointed their sharp noses toward the hilltop and came in, this time for the kill. One after another they emptied huge tanks of napalm on the enemy positions. As those tanks of jellied gasoline hurtled to the earth they spread searing flame over the whole crest of the hill and down the sides for hundreds of feet in some places. I found myself thinking with compassion about the enemy soldiers caught in those searing flames. I had seen napalm used in maneuvers. I had even watched it from a distance in earlier days of the fighting in Korea. But I had never been so close before—so close that I could hear the crackle of the flames as they hungrily licked up everything which they touched. Because even this was not enough, however, the planes, a few of them, returned once more and dropped huge “block-buster” bombs on the top of that desolate hill, then veered away and disappeared from view in the clouds or behind more distant hills.

Surely, I thought, there could be nothing living on the top of that hill after such a bombardment from the ground and from the air. But the order was given to the infantry—two companies—to start the ascent to the top, and slowly, painstakingly the already weary men of those two companies began to climb toward the burned-out summit of the hill. It became apparent, even to those of us who were watching from a battalion aid station which had been set up in the valley to receive any who might be wounded, that there was still opposition to be encountered. At least one infantryman from each platoon was wearing a bright panel of orange on his

back to identify himself and the men with him to aircraft overhead. There is always the possibility of the crew of an airplane shooting the wrong men unless the pilot has positive means of identification. Because of these bright panels which were also visible to us at the base of the hill, we could watch the progress of the men as they inched their way to the top, occasionally having to stop and take care of a stubborn sniper. The enemy holdouts were able to wound a few of our men, and these wounded ones were brought back to the aid station by their buddies. Two or three perished in close combat on those steep slopes. It was not an easy hill to take.

Finally, less than two hours after the first platoon of infantry had started up the hill, word was received from one of the men who had carried a radio on his back that the last vestige of enemy resistance had been wiped out and the hill was secure! Our attention could once more be turned to the task of pushing forward with the main force of our frontal attack.

This incident which I have just described and many others which I experienced during the months of my service as a chaplain with the heroic men of the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team in Korea kept very forcibly before me the striking similarity of much that I was seeing there on the field of battle to that which a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ encounters in "the good fight of faith." Again and again the Lord brought to my mind very precious truths from His Word and important spiritual principles to be observed as I saw them illustrated on the battlefield. As our men were putting out such a great effort to capture that hill, I thought of what

was going on before me, and God taught me a lesson.

Here was an enemy stronghold. Sitting where it did, it was a serious threat to our whole position. We could not proceed effectively with our advance into enemy territory until this stronghold came down. It might cost us a tank or two. It might cost us some planes. It might cost us—and it did—the lives of some infantrymen. But it had to come down, cost what it may.

In the lives of believers the archenemy of the souls of men, Satan himself, erects his strongholds. From these he renders the believer impotent, robs him of real victory and makes his life something less than the joyous experience of fruitbearing for the glory of God which it should be. Perhaps the reader will instantly recognize that Satan has some "hold-outs" in his own life. Most of us know our weak spots, but if we have made provision for the flesh and allowed ourselves to live with known sin in our lives, we have permitted the devil to erect a strong point from which he will press his attack against our lives.

The devil's strongholds are not confined to the lives of individual believers. Sometimes they are found in the corporate body, the Church, and must be dealt with there. The important fact for all of us to remember is that the battle against evil cannot go ahead powerfully and successfully unless the devil's strongholds are brought down, no matter where they may be found!

No one realized this more clearly than that great spiritual warrior, the Apostle Paul. It was he who wrote, "We do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the *pulling down of strongholds*"

(II Corinthians 10:3, 4). We must recognize that there is a war on and get busy *neutralizing* the entrenchments of the enemy.

In the dim distant ages of eternity before the worlds were created and before time began when Lucifer, the son of the Morning, one of the highest of created beings, lifted up his heart against the Lord and said, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God . . . I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13, 14), there was set in motion the great conflict of the ages. It is mortal warfare between all that is good and holy on one hand and all that is evil and corrupt on the other. This conflict has raged in full fury from the moment it began until this very hour. Every tension which you feel, every trial that you experience, every crime that you read about, every sorrow that you endure, every war, every injustice, every pain is but a part of this dreadful conflict.

It will continue until Christ Jesus our Lord has "delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

Every person who becomes a Christian changes sides in the great conflict of the ages. When a man accepts Christ as his personal Saviour he leaves the side of sin and darkness. He chooses the side of righteousness and light. Instead of continuing as a child of Satan, he is born again into the household of God. It is at this time that he walks, as it were, right into the recruiting station and goes on active duty as a soldier in the army of the King of Kings. He enlists for battle with the Captain of his salvation!

But alas, how many believers there are who seem unaware of the fact that theirs is a life of contention

against the evil forces of sin and Satan. The least signs of conflict seem to throw them into dismay. Being caught by the enemy in a condition of spiritual dullness, their lives become fertile ground for the erection of his strongholds; he is soon using such believers to further his purposes instead of their bringing him continually into defeat.

If you, dear reader, have enlisted in the age-long struggle on the side of the Lord of life, allow me to ask you a question: How does the battle go with you? So many have fallen by the wayside. The enemy has reduced multitudes of believers to ineffectiveness by erecting strongholds of resistance in their lives. Are you willing to face honestly and openly before God the clear orders of His Word and what your response to them has been?

God taught me a good many things about spiritual warfare while I was on the battlefields of Korea as I watched the spiritual precepts of His Word being illustrated before my eyes. He implanted firmly in my heart the fact that I could never expect spiritual victory if I were willing to let the enemy erect strongholds in my life. The Communist enemy could never have been driven back into the fastness of the higher mountains of North Korea had we left him strongholds on the hills behind our lines in the south. The devil will never be driven back in retreat from our lives nor from those for whom we are spiritually responsible if he retains strongholds from which to sap our spiritual power.

It is my profound hope that in this little volume of personal experiences I shall be able to open up to the reader clearly that which God made so very clear to me in the dust and mud, the disappointment and heart-

ache, the problems and nightmares of a cruel war in a far-away land. If my words cause even a few to search their hearts, to re-examine their motives and to re-evaluate their labors in the light of God's Word, I shall be more than amply rewarded for having recorded the working of God in my own life.

I served my country with a justifiable sense of pride, as I know all true American soldiers have done. But there is a devotion in the heart of every truly born-again believer which is deeper and more all-consuming than that which he feels for his beloved native land. It is that which he feels for the Saviour who gave Himself that sinners might have life. If in the bitter experiences of the Korean War I learned the basic and important principles of spiritual warfare so that I can make them understandable in a new and challenging way to the readers of this volume, I shall be thankful to the Lord for every hardship that crossed my path and for every trial that bore down upon my soul.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ***Be Strong in the Lord***

*"My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might" (Ephesians 6:10).*

It will not be difficult for the reader to imagine the surprise and the shock I received when, in the midst of a busy and happy pastorate at the College Church on the edge of the Wheaton College campus in Wheaton, Illinois, I suddenly received a summons to report for a physical examination preliminary to orders recalling me to active duty in the army. I had foreseen this possibility when the Korean fighting had first broken out and I had gone in to the office of the Fifth Army Chaplain in Chicago to inquire of him as to the probability of my being recalled to active duty. He had assured me that the chances were very slim indeed. In fact, his words had been very reassuring. In substance he had said, "You can just forget about being recalled, Chaplain, unless this situation gets much worse. We are going to take care of this emergency with those chaplains who volunteer to return to active duty and with those who are already on active duty status. You do not need to worry." I realize full well that this good chaplain meant every word he said to me. But unfortunately, as it turned out, he was in no position to fulfill the things which he had promised. This was just another one of the ways in which the Lord made me realize again the great contrast which there is between His

promises, not one of which can fail, for He has the power and the will to fulfill them, and the promises of men which are found so often to fail.

I had served as a chaplain in World War II and had had combat experience with the field artillery in the European theatre of war. I was in France when my first baby girl was born in far off Seattle, Washington. I had known something of the heart-aches and trials of war, not only as I had seen it on the battlefield, but also from the separations and loneliness I had personally endured. It was certainly not from any love of military life as such, nor from any desire to again go through the experiences that I had encountered in war that I had at the time of my discharge from the service after the end of World War II allowed my name to be kept on the list of inactive reservists. I find it difficult to determine just why I did stay in the reserves at all. I had no desire to be actively engaged in a reserve unit. Perhaps it was the realization that if and when another conflict came and America's finest young men were called off to war, I would certainly want to be with them, doing what I could, that made me stay in the reserves. Perhaps it may have been just a feeling of patriotism and a desire to do that little bit for my country. I had been assured that the "inactive" reservists would be the very last to be called in the event of an emergency, that all the "active" reservists and the National Guard would go first! (This was always an excellent topic for bitter jesting on the part of many men in Korea!) But I am sure that the one most significant reason why I retained my status in the reserves was that the sovereign God who guides and guards my life had in His wisdom and grace ordained that I should have

the rich experiences which were my lot in Korea, and He had a job for me to do there!

When first the summons came and I faced the necessity of leaving my family, my friends and the work that I loved and in which the Lord had so wonderfully blessed me, a feeling of resentment rose within me. This was not fair. Had I not done my duty for the country in the last war? Weren't there others who had not already sacrificed years with their families who could step in and meet this present need? So ran my thoughts. But then the Holy Spirit Himself began to speak sharply and plainly to me. I had preached to young people that when they turned their lives over to the Lord He made no errors in what He did with them. His ways were perfect and even though they should be called upon to face difficult things which were not of their own choosing, He would, according to His own promise, work everything "together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). Had I preached to others something I was not willing to believe firmly for myself? Rebuked in heart and spirit, I confessed my sin and weakness to the Lord and promised Him that I would willingly go wherever He led me.

The physical examination was a "pushover." Doctors have tried in vain many times to find anything wrong with the healthy body that the Lord gave me. In a few days I found myself holding several copies of lengthy orders recalling me to extended active duty and assigning me to Camp Carson, Colorado. Again I returned to the friendly Colonel who was Fifth Army Chaplain to ask him if I would be sent overseas soon. I was concerned for my family. We would need to move out of the parsonage in Wheaton,

and if I was to be out of the country for an extended period, I wanted to make sure that they were well provided for until my return. Perhaps I would need to buy a home in Wheaton. Yet I desired to have my dear ones with me as long as possible.

Again the chaplain was most reassuring. "No, Chaplain," he said to me, "you don't need to worry about going overseas very soon. You are just recalled for twenty-one months of active duty, and you will probably have all of that right here in the States. I think you can safely count on a year at least before you'll be ordered overseas, and you probably will not go over even then. I would by all means suggest that you make plans to take your family with you."

Reporting in to Camp Carson on December 1, 1950, I began immediately to look for a satisfactory home for my wife, our two daughters and the baby son who had arrived in August. Thanks to the assistance of a kind Christian friend, I was able to send word to my wife before Christmas that a lovely little house had been located and that she should make arrangements to have the furniture picked up and come out to Colorado just as quickly as possible. The day before the moving van was to have pulled up in front of our home to load our household goods for the trip west, I received a telegram from the War Department telling me I was to report, after a short furlough, to Camp Stoneman, California, for shipment to the Far East!

In spite of the former victory, the same spiritual conflict ensued which had followed my recall to active duty. Why should this happen to me? Was it fair when there were a number of chaplains in that same camp who had never spent a day in combat duty?

But again the Lord gained a real victory in my life. I recognized and confessed my complaints as sin. I realized clearly that His hand was guiding. I gained a deep conviction that He had some special niche for me to fill, and that He would grant me all the strength I needed for the experiences that lay ahead.

Those last few days with my loved ones rushed by, and before I could hardly realize it, I was on board a U. S. Navy transport sailing out through the Golden Gate. There was a strange mixture of sentiments crowding my heart that day. There was loneliness and there was heartache. But I would not be honest if I did not admit to a certain exhilaration in the anticipation of that which, although it was unknown to me at the time, I knew the Lord had ordered for me.

The days aboard ship were days of great spiritual blessing. Having little responsibility because there were a number of chaplains on board and we shared the services which were held, I spent many, many hours in a lonely spot high on the ship near one of the large funnels where I found I would never be disturbed. There was no distraction there, nothing to look at except the endless vista of the sea. I sat for hours with my Bible and enjoyed deep, sweet communion with the Lord. For the first time in my life, during those days I had all the time that I felt I really wanted for prayer. The Lord talked to me from the pages of His Word, and I talked with Him as my heart rose in prayer for the loved ones left behind, for the dear friends who were laboring for Him all over the world, and for the ministry which lay ahead of me. What a time of soul refreshing

and strengthening it was! The Lord knew what was ahead and He knew I needed that heartsearching, uplifting time with Him.

Two prayers particularly occupied my times alone with the Lord during all of those days. One was for the Lord's definite leading as to the outfit with which I should serve. Nothing can be worse for a Christian than to be out of the Lord's will. A believer may have everything that money can buy, and be doing just what he thinks he most wants to do and be utterly miserable if he is not where his Lord wants him to be. On the other hand, he may be sitting in the mud of a Korean rice paddy without any comforts or conveniences, far from those who are dear to him on earth and his heart will be singing a glad song if he is conscious of the fact that he is in the Lord's will, where the Lord wants him to be. I did not want to miss God's perfect, directive will.

My second most earnest prayer was that the Lord would give me an assistant who would be a real Christian and a definite asset in my work. I had urged my wife to join me specially in this prayer. A chaplain's enlisted man assistant can make him or break him with the other enlisted men. If he has a good, clear, consistent testimony for the Lord, his help is invaluable. If his life is not consistent as he lives before the other men, he can tear down the best efforts of the chaplain. I asked the Lord to give me the young man of His own choosing.

After eleven days aboard ship, in which I had the joy of winning eleven fellows to the Lord, we arrived in the harbor of Yokohama, Japan. It was a dreary, rainy day, and most of us felt keen disappointment at the drabness of everything that we saw through

the drizzling rain. But we were given very little time to see Japan. We were hurriedly processed at nearby Camp Drake and in less than two days were on our way by rail to Sasebo on the island of Kyushu where we took ship again for Korea.

It was only an overnight trip to Korea. Early in the morning we steamed into the harbor of Pusan. With what curiosity we looked upon Korean shores! What did this land hold for us? How long would we be there? A thousand questions ran through our minds as we watched the great barren hills surrounding the city of Pusan draw nearer and nearer.

If time and space would permit I could record many things of interest to the reader concerning the amazing country of Korea, but this is not intended to be a record of travel or a journal of adventure. It is not even a description of conditions in Korea. It is an account of experiences which have had deep spiritual significance, and for that reason much which might be of interest to many must be eliminated.

We were kept overnight in crude quarters in Pusan and the next day were loaded on a train for a long, uncomfortable ride to Taegu, which was at that time the headquarters of the Eighth U. S. Army in Korea, (EUSAK), and the hub of the whole war effort. None of us had ever been on such a train before. It was impossible to be comfortable. We were glad indeed, after what seemed interminable hours on board, punctuated by frequent stops at tiny Korean villages, to hear the orders to get our gear on our backs for we were nearing Taegu and were about ready to detrain. We stepped off that train in Taegu in the middle of the night, and the sudden realization took hold of us that we were in a war zone!

There were no lights to be seen anywhere. I hadn't been in a total blackout since the days of World War II in Europe. But here was the inky darkness of the blackout, and blackout meant war! How quickly we had stepped from the bustling streets of America to the drab, dreary battlefield which was Korea.

With the efficiency that is characteristic of the United States Army in such operations, we were immediately loaded into trucks and taken to the Eighth Army Headquarters compound. There we were assigned quarters with quite comfortable bunks (at least compared to the train we had been riding on all day and half the night!) and told that we should get some sleep and we would be given further instructions and orders in the morning.

Eight of us chaplains had traveled together in a small party all the way from Camp Stoneman, California. We had shared the same huge stateroom on the ship across the Pacific. We had naturally had an opportunity to get well acquainted on our journey; all of us were wondering just where we would be going when our party was broken up. According to orders we received, we gathered in the office of the Eighth Army Chaplain immediately after breakfast the next morning. Chaplain Tobey, a Baptist who was a full Colonel in the Regular Army, had the position of Eighth Army Chaplain. He gave us a few words of warm greeting, as he had the night before when he had met us at the railroad station upon arrival. He explained how difficult had been his job in recent months because of the very serious shortage of chaplains. Some had been killed in the early days of the fighting, a few had been taken prisoner by the Communists, others had been wounded and evacuated.

Altogether there were many units without proper chaplain coverage. We were the very first group of chaplain replacements that had arrived since the outbreak of the fighting. The few others that had come had arrived as single replacements.

Chaplain Tobey explained that because of the acute shortage he had many units to which he could have sent each one of us. His had been a difficult task in trying to determine where the need was the greatest and to which organization each chaplain should be sent.

“But I have done the best I could, men, and I have your assignments ready for you,” he explained. “I know that you are anxious to get on your way to your own organizations, and I am anxious to have you go, for the sake of the men to whom you are to minister. I will give you your assignments at once, then arrange to have your orders cut and perhaps you can get on your way to your own outfits by tomorrow. However, before I give any of you an assignment I have one post that I want to fill, if possible. We have a paratroop regiment here in Korea and they need a chaplain. As you know all paratroopers are volunteers, so I cannot assign one of you to that regiment unless you volunteer for the job. Is there anyone here who would be willing to volunteer for the airborne?”

There was a moment of silence!

I said nothing. I had had an opportunity to go into the airborne when I was in Chaplain's School at Harvard University during World War II, and I had flatly turned it down then. I was even less interested in being a paratrooper now than I had been then. I was several years older, my bones were that

much more brittle and to be honest, there just wasn't anything about jumping out of airplanes that appealed to me. There are some young men who get a thrill out of taking chances. They are thrilled even though they may be frightened. But I have never been the "daredevil" type. I have always been conservative—in theology as well as in my manner of life. I kept very quiet. Indeed, there was nothing I *wished* to say.

In a few minutes one of the other chaplains who was on the end of the semicircle in which we were sitting in the office said, "Tell us what would be involved, Chaplain. I was in the Air Force during the last war. The Air Force and the Airborne sound something alike. Perhaps I would take that job."

"First of all," said Chaplain Tobey, "tell me what is your denomination?"

"I am a Roman Catholic," was the reply.

"I am sorry, Chaplain, but that eliminates you. We already have a Catholic chaplain in that regiment. We need a Protestant."

This statement narrowed down the selection considerably. Of the eight chaplains, five were Roman Catholics. We three Protestants looked at one another.

"Count me out," said Chaplain Niermann, a Missouri Synod Lutheran, "I am past fifty years of age, and too old to be jumping out of airplanes!"

"I'm afraid you'll have to count me out, too," said Chaplain Larry Staples, a congenial Methodist with whom I had formed a fine friendship. "I have just recently recovered from an abdominal operation, and I do not believe that I am in physical condition for anything like that."

It doesn't take a brilliant mathematician to know how many were left. All eyes were on me!

I started to say, "Count me out, too. I am not interested in jumping out of airplanes." But I didn't. As I started to speak, I was restrained. I am sure it was the work of the Holy Spirit. I thought, "All the way over here I have been praying earnestly that the Lord would lead me to just the outfit where He wants me to work. Suppose this is it!" I must confess the prospect actually frightened me. But I knew that I dared not put myself outside the Lord's will. To be going into the front lines of battle was bad enough, but to be going out of the Lord's will was something for which I had no desire. I believe, however, that I was the most surprised one in the group when I heard myself saying, "Chaplain, if you will give me a little time to pray about it, I might take that assignment."

I shall never forget the look I got from the chaplain. I am not sure but what he felt he had found some kind of a queer specimen.

"How long will it take?" he asked me.

"I believe I could let you know definitely in the morning, if that would not be too long to wait," I replied.

"Oh, no, I can give you twenty-four hours," was his immediate answer. "Go ahead and take your time and find out. Let me know as soon as you do."

I knew the Lord had promised in so many places in His Word that He would give me the guidance that I needed in any situation of my life. "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left" (Isaiah 30:21). "I will in-

struct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psalm 32:8). These were not idle words, but the promises of the God of all the universe and made for me because I was His own. More than this, I knew that the Lord had full knowledge of my time schedule and if it was necessary for me to have guidance in a hurry, He was perfectly able to give it to me in a hurry. Had there been thirty days in which I could make my decision, I could have reckoned that the Lord would probably test me most of those thirty days to see whether I really believed He would guide me or not. But since I had only twenty-four hours, I felt confident that He would give me clear and unmistakable guidance in that time.

So I was cast upon the Lord! And that is a wonderful situation in which to be. One does not care about the opinions of others. They do not matter. He doesn't seek the advice of friends, for actually advice counts for nothing. When one is cast in such a way upon the Lord, he wants only to know what the Lord's will is. That is all that matters. It was all that mattered to me now.

I took my Bible and went into the chapel, not because I feel it is possible to get any closer to the Lord in a church or chapel than in other places, but because that was the only place I knew on that bustling army compound where I could find quiet and be alone. Everywhere else there were groups of men, even in our barracks quarters. Sitting down in one of the pews, I put my Bible on my knee. I had gone to get it from my duffel bag before coming to the chapel. I was not thumbing through it; it was closed. I was expecting to read it and to meditate in it after

I had prayed. The scripture says, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105), and it is my firm conviction that if we want to know where our pathway is to lead and where our feet are to walk, the best place to look is into that Book which God has called the Light and the Lamp. I am not suggesting for a minute that one should ever just open the book, put his finger on a verse and expect to get guidance that way, but I have learned from personal experience that through the careful and prayerful reading of the Word, God makes His way more clear to me than in any other way. It is only reasonable to expect that it should be so, in the light of what the verse I have quoted above and many others tell us.

Shutting everything else out of my mind, I began to pray. I poured out my heart to the Lord. I confessed frankly that there were two things which troubled me greatly, and I must know what His will for me was. First, I confessed that I was afraid of jumping out of an airplane. Every paratrooper I've talked to since admits frankly that he's afraid of it, too. I seriously question whether a man could jump out of a plane hundreds of feet from the ground and be without a certain amount of fear. Many times one does things which he would confess to doing with fear. The Lord knew that I was frightened at the idea of it.

Then I told the Lord of my great concern for my wife and my three precious children back home. My wife certainly knew that I had had no training as a paratrooper. If she heard that I had gone into an airborne unit in a combat zone I was afraid she might think I had been unnecessarily inconsiderate of her

welfare and that of my children. It was bad enough for her that I was going into the front lines. I did not know how she would feel if she heard that I was going that way.

I was laying these thoughts before the Lord when suddenly, as I prayed, He stopped me, and He began to speak to me. It was not with an audible voice. I do not claim to have heard anything. But it was a voice—as real as any voice has ever been in my consciousness. I know it was His voice, for the words were His Word. I could not think for a moment just where the verses were found. I had no remembrance of ever having consciously memorized them, but this is what He began to say to me:

*“Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.”*

Quick as a flash, as those words from the ninety-first Psalm struck my consciousness, I realized that the Lord had given me a direct answer to *both* of my problems. “There shall no evil befall thee.” That took care of me, jumping out of airplanes in Korea! “Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.” That took care of LaVerne and the children in far-off Wheaton, Illinois. My dwelling was thousands of miles across the sea, but my God was there, too. I knew that I had had my answer. God had given me the leading for which I had asked.

However, because He is the one who delights to do the “exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think,” He continued speaking to me with the very next verse:

*"For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone!"*

Let me ask the reader a question. Could you think of a more wonderful promise anywhere in God's Word for a paratrooper? I am sure you could not. That promise is better than any parachute that was ever made! I know those verses have a primary application to another situation, but they were God's personal and precious promise to me that day, and I shall never escape from the thrill which they gave me as I realized how completely God had met my need and answered my humble petition. I could actually look forward to being a paratrooper with eagerness, for I knew without question that the Lord wanted me in the airborne!

I returned to Chaplain Tobey, informed him, to his apparent delight, that I would be happy to take the assignment to the airborne regiment, and then went to write my wife a letter to explain the situation to her. My orders were to be cut the following day, but the Catholic Chaplain of the 187th Regimental Combat Team was notified by telephone that there was a new Protestant chaplain for the regiment waiting at Eighth Army Headquarters. He sent word that he would come for me the next day.

It was not a long trip to the bivouac area of the 187th. The Combat team was in camp in a large apple orchard just at the edge of what was then the largest airbase in operation in Korea, just a few miles east of the city of Taegu. When Chaplain Dunne, the Catholic priest, and his assistant came for me, I was received with the warmest cordiality.

My gear was loaded into his jeep, and we started off over what turned out to be six or seven miles of the roughest road upon which I had ever ridden. Most of the credit for the terrible condition of the road could be given to the continual stream of heavy army vehicles which churned the dust of the road into billowy masses of clouds that choked and nearly smothered not only the poor Koreans who were forced for lack of better transportation to walk along its sides but also all the occupants of any of the army trucks. This was my initiation into jeep travel in Korea. It was a proper initiation, for although I traveled for hundreds of miles by jeep in all parts of South Korea and in some parts of North Korea in the months that followed, I never found a rougher stretch of road nor one more continually covered by a pall of dust.

We crossed a large bridge over a shallow river where I could see scores of Korean women beating the family clothes against flat stones as they did their laundry in this primitive way. Just beyond the bridge we turned into the camp area of the organization which was to be from that time until I returned to the States my own outfit. The apple orchard in which the tents were set up was surrounded by a high barbed wire. There was a sentry on the gate, which was closed after we had been identified and passed through. Our driver followed a narrow lane between two rows of tents, and when he had reached the approximate middle of the camp area, he stopped in front of a large squad-size tent.

"Well, Chaplain, this is home," said the friendly Catholic Chaplain Dunne, Regimental Chaplain for the 187th, as he and his assistant helped pull out my

duffel bag and other belongings and led the way into the tent. I discovered immediately that the tent was occupied, not only by the chaplain's section, but also by the Red Cross representative, his assistant and a Korean interpreter. In anticipation of my arrival one corner of the tent had been cleared of the possessions of others, an army cot had been set up and on this cot my sleeping bag was soon deposited and unrolled.

"Here is your own private washstand," said Chaplain Dunne, pointing to a steel helmet which had been ingeniously set upside down on a homemade wood stand.

I was introduced to all of the men in the tent. I was to get to know them very well in the coming days. They seemed so friendly and hospitable that I thought to myself, "The airborne is for me! I've never before experienced such a warm reception in any army unit." But then, before many minutes had passed, I discovered at least part of the secret behind the cordial reception.

"Sit down, Rayburn," said Chaplain Dunne, when, after five or ten minutes of arranging my things I looked like I was quite well settled. "I have some information which will be of interest to you. I suppose you noticed the sentries on the gate when you came into camp. That means, as you may already know, that we are on the alert. You got in here, but you can't get out. We have a combat jump behind the enemy lines day after tomorrow."

My eyes must have displayed my amazement. I know that I gulped.

"But I couldn't go along on a combat jump. I don't know a thing about parachuting. Chaplain Tobey assured me at Eighth Army Headquarters that I

would be given several weeks of training and several practice jumps before I'd be required to make a combat jump."

"Oh, I know, Chaplain, but there's really nothing to this jumping," was the reply. "I'll show you all you need to know about it tomorrow, and then you can come along and go with us. You'll really be 'in' with the men if you do."

"Well, I don't know. It sounds a little bit too soon for me." But even as I said that I was reminded that the Lord had known all about this jump when He had given me His precious promises, and perhaps it was for this very mission that he had brought me to this unit, so I added, "But I'll think about it and perhaps I'll go."

"You could, of course, come up on the land tail, but no paratrooper ever wants to do that," was the contribution of the chaplain's assistant. I was to learn that the land tail consisted of all the vehicles of the airborne unit which were not dropped with the troops in combat and which were driven up to the unit after the tanks had broken through the enemy lines and established contact on the ground.

A few moments later we stepped outside of the tent and were standing absorbed in conversation about jumping. It was all new to me, and if I was even considering going along on a combat jump so soon, I wanted to learn everything I could about jumping. I discovered that it was a topic of endless conversation in any airborne unit. It was never necessary to more than begin a chat with one of the men before we were talking about jumping. I could easily find out each man's reaction to various phases of that exciting occupation. Suddenly Chaplain

Dunne stopped me and pointed to an enlisted man a few yards away who was walking toward us.

"Do you see that young fellow coming toward us?" he asked. "That's a chap who would like to be your assistant. You don't have to take him if you don't want him, for he is a rifleman and we can always send him back to a line company. But he has been working in the chaplain's section for a time and has had a little experience with another chaplain. He would like to work for you. Try him out a few days and see how you like him."

By this time the young man was very near, walking straight toward us, so the chaplain could say no more. He simply introduced us.

"Chaplain Rayburn, this is Corporal Cliff Brewton. Cliff, I want you to meet our new chaplain, Chaplain Rayburn."

"Hello, Cliff," I said extending my hand to him after receiving a snappy salute. The young corporal took my hand and gave me a good firm handshake as he spoke a word of cordial greeting and looked straight into my eyes with a bright, broad smile on his fine face. I was so immediately impressed with him that I said, even before I let go of his hand, "You look to me, Cliff, as though you might know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour."

"Yes, sir, I do!" He answered with alacrity, tightening his grip on my hand. With real earnestness he continued, "I met the Lord just last summer when I was stationed at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and He's real and precious to me."

I cannot fail to mention here, in order that the reader may appreciate the significance of this experience, that during the next few weeks in combat and

in bivouac when we were resting between combat assignments I made a concerted effort to locate Christian men in that regiment. I wanted to set up a program of Bible study and also get acquainted with the men so we could get together for fellowship which would strengthen them. Although I had large attendance at services and interviewed a great many men personally, I could not find one other young fellow who was a born-again Christian and had a real testimony to that effect. The Lord had the only one in roughly five thousand men standing there with his hand outstretched asking to be my assistant. Would you call that a coincidence? Surely that would be an inadequate explanation. I believe with all my heart that such things happen because we have a God who delights to answer prayer. If we will be specific in our requests and believe Him when we pray, He will be very specific when He answers and will give us that which is for our good and for His own glory. How sad it is that so many of us pray without actually expecting God to do that which we ask Him to do.

It would be quite impossible to tell you what the life of Cliff Brewton meant to me and to many of the men in that regimental combat team during the next few weeks and months. There was never any question in my mind about his continuing as my assistant. What a splendid, attractive, consistent Christian testimony he lived. I could in no way describe the effect it had on other men. I was continually hearing some GI make a statement like this: "Whatever Cliff Brewton has, it's the real thing! He practices what he preaches." "The thing I like about Cliff," a young soldier said to me one day, "is that he not only talks

about Jesus Christ, but he lives Jesus Christ every day.”

An unbelieving, profane Red Cross worker who was assigned to our unit was visiting with me one day, and he began to talk on the subject of our enlisted men assistants. “Say, Chaplain,” he said, “whatever it is that you’re dishing out over there at your chapel services, if it is what makes Cliff Brewton the kind of a fellow he is, I need to come over and get a good liberal dose of it myself. That kid gets under my skin. He has the most attractive personality I believe I have ever seen in a soldier.”

What a testimony for a young man who had been a Christian only a year! This one young man proved unmistakably that a real life of victory in Christ can be lived even in the army. Of course, I could tell you of many more fine Christian fellows that either joined our unit in following weeks or were won to the Lord in our meetings and in personal work. The Lord began to bless in a wonderful way. My first convert was a fine young lad by the name of Russell who had first heard me preach the Gospel on the troop transport coming to Japan. I could tell you of Ernie Tyler, Bob Scott, Curt Loewen, Bill Macaulay, Frank Brittain, Axel Hershberger and several scores of fine lads who really lived striking testimonies before their fellow soldiers in that airborne unit, but I must return to the story of the approaching jump.

The day following my arrival I was to have received some instructions from Chaplain Dunne, but he found himself entirely too busy with other duties around the regimental area, and the day passed without a single word of instruction from him. Cliff did

all he could do to encourage me and gave me the only real instruction that I had, carefully showing me only the most important things such as the proper body position for leaving the plane and the parachute landing form. I was fully convinced that the Lord wanted me to make this jump and I was doing all I could to be well prepared for it. Some time had to be spent in preparing and packing the gear which we were to take along on the jump and getting all the rest, which was most of what we had, loaded on trucks which would come on the land tail, after the tanks had broken through the enemy lines and a link-up had been made.

At three o'clock on what happened to be Good Friday morning, we started the short march over to the air base where scores of huge planes were lined up already heavily loaded with equipment and waiting to be loaded with paratroopers. These planes had been flying in from American bases in Japan all during the day before and with great interest we had watched them land. Cliff and I had been assigned to jump with "I" Company, and it turned out that we were to be in the fifth plane over the drop zone. As we marched up to the side of the big C-119, or "Flying Boxcar" as they are commonly called, in which we were to ride, each of us was given a large bag containing two parachutes. I pulled mine out of the case and stood looking at them. Of course, it was night and there was very little light, but all I could see was a mass of straps and buckles. I am sure that if it had been up to me to get into those parachutes I would be standing over there yet, trying to decide just how it was done.

But my faithful friend, Cliff, came to my rescue and soon I was getting into my chutes. The first or

main chute goes on the jumper's back. He puts his arms through straps which make this chute go on something like a jacket. Then straps on the bottom of the chute are brought down between his legs, and then fastened with the other straps on a quick-release centered on his chest. They are pulled very tight, so tight, in fact, that it is impossible after the first chute is on, ever to stand fully upright again.

The second chute is in front on the chest and it is fastened by a wide band which goes around the chest and is pulled very tight, collapsing the lungs somewhat, I always thought! Then equipment is hung on the straps below the second or reserve parachute. Each man carries a bed roll wrapped in a waterproof tarpaulin called a "poncho" to keep him dry in case of rain, a small kit bag with toilet articles, food for a day and a half, a few changes of sox, and other necessary items. On his right side each soldier carried his weapon, a carbine or an M-1 rifle. I had only a 45 pistol hanging on my belt. I shall speak of the reason for this later. Most of the soldiers carried other items of heavy equipment, perhaps parts of a mortar, or a field radio. As I looked at the loads with which many of them were weighted down, I wondered how they could ever expect to get safely to the ground. I discovered that many were trained to drop their heavy load just a few feet above the ground in order to protect themselves from injury upon landing.

Although my load consisted only of my bed-roll, small kit bag and the very necessary items of personal equipment, I felt heavily weighted down and most uncomfortable. Because the straps of my parachutes were drawn so tightly, I couldn't stand up straight. I couldn't sit down, for there was nothing to sit

on but the ground, and I thought it might be most difficult to get up if I ever got into a sitting position on the ground. I couldn't lie down, for I had far too much on my back and in front as well! I walked around as best I could until they opened the plane and told us to get inside and sit down. Under other conditions the bucket-type seats of that great plane might have seemed uncomfortable. On that particular morning I was grateful indeed to be seated in one of them.

There were forty-four men in our Flying Boxcar, not counting the crew of the plane. Twenty-two men were sitting on each side with their backs against the side of the plane. In between on what I learned was called a monorail were huge cases of equipment which were to be dropped through a trap door in the bottom of the center of the plane as the parachutists went out the two rear doors. Each plane was loaded to its capacity. Some had jeeps, some had giant howitzers, others had rations or other supplies. It was a most spectacular sight to see a jeep or a howitzer dropping from the sky, let down by a huge white parachute. I recall being somewhat awed by that sight later that morning. Our own particular plane was loaded with huge canisters full of ammunition. It was comforting to think of that, in case we didn't succeed in getting off the runway properly!

I was seated as the twenty-first man on the left side of the plane. The only man behind me was a regular army First Sergeant by the name of Streaby. He was First Sergeant of "I" Company, the company that I had been assigned to jump with and he was a veteran jumper. In fact, as I got into the plane he was trying to recall whether this was to be his ninety-ninth jump

or whether it would be number one hundred! Somewhere he had lost track of one jump. It was no problem for me to count my jumps.

"I think they must have put me next to you to be sure that I get out of here all right, Sergeant Streaby," I said to him.

"Oh, you'll get out O. K., Chaplain," was his reply, and I could see that he wasn't particularly concerned at having a novice in front of him.

After what seemed a very long wait the grey light of dawn turned to the brighter light of the early morning and the many giant planes began to warm up their motors in preparation for the take-off. It was a time of tension in every plane. Thoughts instinctively went to loved ones across the sea. I am sure there was a considerable amount of praying going on in those planes, although little of it was the enlightened prayer of true faith.

Ours was among the very first of the planes to take off that morning. I shall never forget the loud sigh of relief that came from Sergeant Streaby as soon as we were airborne. I turned to him with a questioning look.

"I dread the take-off more than the jump, Chaplain," he said.

"That seems strange to me, Sergeant," I said. "Why?"

"Once I'm out that door I have a lot to say about what happens, and I can control my chute and pick my landing spot, but if those motors fail to lift this tremendously heavy load off the ground, there is nothing that I can do about it."

"Perhaps you have something there," I said, "but the way I feel about it this morning, there is little

I could do in either situation."

We were now high in the air and gaining altitude steadily. I began to look around me in the plane. The men were not talking and laughing as GI's usually do when they are in a crowd. Each one was sitting quietly in his seat, gazing into space, seeing only what his mind pictured for him. I began to observe closely the expressions on their faces. I noticed that man after man wore an expression of absolute agony. Great drops of perspiration stood out on their brows. It was not because the temperature was warm either, for it was a chilly winter day and we were high in the air. I began to think. "These men," I said to myself, "know what is ahead of them." Everyone of them had made many jumps before, and each one except myself had been in a combat jump in North Korea just a few weeks before. I had heard a few tales the previous day of terrible things that had happened on that particular jump and in the hours that followed it.

"If the fellows that know what to expect look like that, how should I look?" I thought.

It was just then that a feeling of sheer panic seized me. I began to shake and tremble with fear. I confess I felt utterly dismayed; it seemed that I just couldn't go ahead with that jump into space. But I did the only thing that a Christian needs to do and should do in a situation like that. I dropped my head over my reserve parachute and began to pray.

"Dear Lord," I cried, "the only reason in the world that I am up here in this plane this morning riding along to this jump is because Thou didst make it very clear to me day before yesterday that Thou didst want me here. But I came along to represent Thee to these

men. I'll never be any recommendation for Thee, if they see that I'm shaking with fear. But I can't help myself. Thou wilt have to do something for me. Dear Lord, please give me a testimony with these men and quiet my fears."

Suddenly again, as I prayed, the Lord stopped me and for the second time that week He spoke to me in words unmistakable and clear. This time it was just one comforting statement from the most familiar of Psalms: "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me!" What a promise! Could anything be better?

The Lord was telling me that He was with me, and was going to be with me. As I thought about what He had said, I realized that if my Saviour were sitting physically on my right where Cliff sat or upon my left where Sergeant Streaby was sitting and He whispered in my ear that He was going to jump out of that plane with me I would have no fear whatsoever. Yet that was just exactly what He was telling me. His personal, abiding Presence was that real. I remembered also that He had promised that the angels would be there to bear me up in their hands. The Lord and the angels! That was wonderful company. Certainly I needed no one else. As the full realization of the Lord's promise swept over me, such peace flooded my soul as I have never experienced under any other circumstances. I doubt if I shall ever have quite such an experience again. My head was bowed in prayer over my front parachute. As the sweet peace of God took possession of me I fell sound asleep! We had two hours to fly to the drop zone. The next thing I knew, Cliff was poking me in the ribs.

"Chaplain Rayburn, you'd better get awake now,"

he said, "for it is about time for us to be getting out of here."

I had slept almost the entire two hours!

"You must have been terribly tired out to have slept like that," the reader will think.

My answer is simply that physical weariness had nothing to do with my sleeping that morning. It is unthinkable to me that I should go to sleep in a plane out of which I was going to have to jump in a few minutes. But the Lord had answered my prayer. For days, yes, many days after that, fellows in the regiment would approach me and say something like this, "Chaplain, we heard from some of the men in your plane that you were sound asleep all the way to the drop zone at Munsan. Wasn't that your first jump? How in the world could you sleep all the way?"

What an opportunity for testimony! I had a chance to tell them about a Saviour whose presence is so real, and whose promises are so sure that He can give perfect peace in the worst kind of circumstances. I can think of nothing much worse than the prospect of having to jump out of a plane for the first time right into the middle of a battlefield. I doubt if the reader can either. The jumpers to whom I witnessed had had personal experience enough to know that it was not natural to be perfectly at peace under such circumstances. They listened attentively to what I told them about the Saviour. I had asked the Lord for a testimony with the men, and He graciously gave it to me. Oh, the power of God! How important it is that we stand in His strength and not in our own.

I was hardly awake when the red light came on in

the end of the plane, indicating that we had just four minutes remaining before we were to jump. The doors in the bottom of the plane through which the equipment was to fall opened wide just beneath me. I could look straight down on the Korean landscape below. The plane had lost altitude and the pilot was slowing it down as much as possible. The jump-master in the tail end of the plane shouted his order: "Stand up and hook up!" This command meant that we were to get to our feet, turn and face the rear doors, take the static lines from the parachutes on our backs and hook them to the cable which ran the length of the plane just above our left shoulders. As we moved to the door we would slide the hook along with our hands. Then as we let go and leaped through the door and out of the plane this cord would pull each man's first parachute from its pack. When one hundred pounds of pressure was exerted on it the string tied to the apex of the chute would break, setting the trooper free in the air.

When all were hooked up, the next order was shouted. "Sound off for the equipment check!"

Sergeant Streaby behind me slapped my thigh and shouted, "Number one, O.K."

Each man was to check the equipment of the man in front of him to see that all parts of his equipment were properly adjusted and it was safe for him to jump. Poor Cliff, ahead of me, could have been headed for disaster for all I knew. I didn't know how his equipment was supposed to look. But he looked all right to me. I slapped him on the thigh.

"Number two, O.K."

"Number three, O.K."

And so it went on down the line and in a few sec-

onds the last man had "sounded off." A few tense seconds followed.

"Are you going?" cried the jumpmaster.

"Ye-a-h!" roared everyone in the plane. Each man shouted mostly to encourage himself.

The red light changed to green and I saw the jumpmaster leap from the door. I had been instructed in the proper way to shuffle to the rear door so as not to get my feet tangled with anyone else, but I was ill prepared for the speed with which that huge plane was emptied. I found myself whisked to the rear. I had a sensation of racing to try to keep up with Cliff who was just ahead of me. There was no pause at the door. I was out!

The next sensation I had was that of a violent jerk, called by the paratroopers the "opening shock," and indeed it was a shock. It is caused, of course, by the sudden opening of the parachute. A trooper is traveling between eighty and one hundred miles an hour when he jumps, perhaps even faster at times. As his body leaves the door the propeller blast whips the chute open and he stops. It is a most sudden stop. One feels for a moment as though every bone in his body has been broken. I had been told to check my canopy immediately to see that there were no split panels and no other apparent difficulties, but the opening shock had pulled by helmet far down over my eyes and I simply couldn't raise my head far enough to see the canopy of my parachute from under that helmet.

What a glorious sensation one experiences in realizing that his parachute is open! One major peril is over. He has the exhilarating feeling of being suspended in mid-air, of floating like a feather, but this

lasts for only a few brief seconds, for it becomes quickly apparent that he is nearing the ground. It is actually only twenty-five seconds from the time one leaves the plane until he is on the ground, so he doesn't have time to write his last will and testament on the way down! I recalled Cliff's instructions to prepare for the landing at once. I was to put my feet together and bend my knees just slightly, so that I would not land stiff-legged and perhaps break some leg bones. This I did without delay. Looking below me I could see what looked like a river running through the drop zone; I felt sure I was going into the water. I wondered if it could be very deep. No one had given me any instructions about what to do if I landed in the water!

But the Lord was good to me. A little breeze carried me to the bank of what was only a small creek, and I landed on the soft slope of this bank. I could not have found a more ideal place. I had been told to take a complete fall in a kind of somersault in order to take up the full shock of the landing, but I came in so easily that I didn't need to make a somersault at all. I just went down on my knees and stopped there. I am sure, however, that the Lord's hand was even in the way I fell, for in that position I was reminded that the very first thing I should do was to lift my eyes to heaven and say, "Thank Thee, Lord. Thou hast kept Thy promise. I haven't so much as dashed my foot against a stone. Accept my humble thanks, and help me now to accomplish what Thou hast brought me here to do."

What happened in the next few moments is recorded in a later chapter. Suffice it to say here that the next few days were days of fierce fighting. With

comparatively little difficulty we secured the drop zone which was just east of the village of Munsan, later made world famous as the location of the United Nations Truce Delegation carrying on its conferences in the nearby meeting place of Panmunjom, but then only an obscure Korean town among many similar ones. The tanks broke through and established the vital ground link with us late in the evening of that same Good Friday on which we jumped. I spent most of my time that day in the battalion aid stations and regimental collecting area giving what comfort and help I could to the wounded. There were happily not too many the first day.

When we were ordered to start east the next evening about nightfall through a narrow valley on what was hardly more than a trail, the story changed abruptly. We were starting out to cut off a large segment of enemy soldiers and to make a connection with the Third Division which was fighting its way northward to the east of us a number of miles. All through that long weary night the men of our three battalions marched over very rough terrain. It was soon discovered that what we were calling a road had never been built with any idea of large army vehicles traveling it. Many detours and bypasses had to be made in order even to get through. All the bridges were too small for us to use, so fords had to be improvised hastily in the darkness. This was not always easy in a narrow valley. Our tanks finally had to give up and go back. There was simply no way they could get through some of the narrow defiles along that route. Perhaps their leaving us shortly before dawn was one reason why we began to run into stiff resistance as the light of Easter Sunday began to break

upon us. There had been intermittent gun fire but no real opposition throughout the night. However, as our advance battalion crossed a ridge and began to work its way through a wide valley, the enemy opened up with heavy fire, mortars, machine guns and small arms. They had us surrounded on three sides and consequently had excellent observation of all of our movements. We were in for heavy fighting; we could see there were serious difficulties ahead for us.

About two thousand yards short of our ultimate objective for that day, we were forced to stop in a little burned-out village where the second and third battalions set up their aid stations together. All during the remaining hours of that Easter day the medics kept bringing in the wounded and dying. Because of continual rain and a very low ceiling we had no air support at all, and the helicopters that had evacuated the most seriously wounded from the drop zone near Munsan couldn't get in to pick up any of our wounded men.

A chaplain's position on the battlefield is not moving in the front line of attack where he could help and minister to only a few at best, but in the aid stations where those who need him most are brought as quickly as possible after they are wounded. As I stood over those wounded and sometimes dying men in the aid stations that day, how thankful to God I was that He had brought me to that field of battle, even though He had used such an unexpected and unusual method of bringing me there, for I knew that I had the message that those men needed worse than anything in the world. I thanked God again and again throughout that day that I could give those men such a simple yet wonderful message and tell them of a

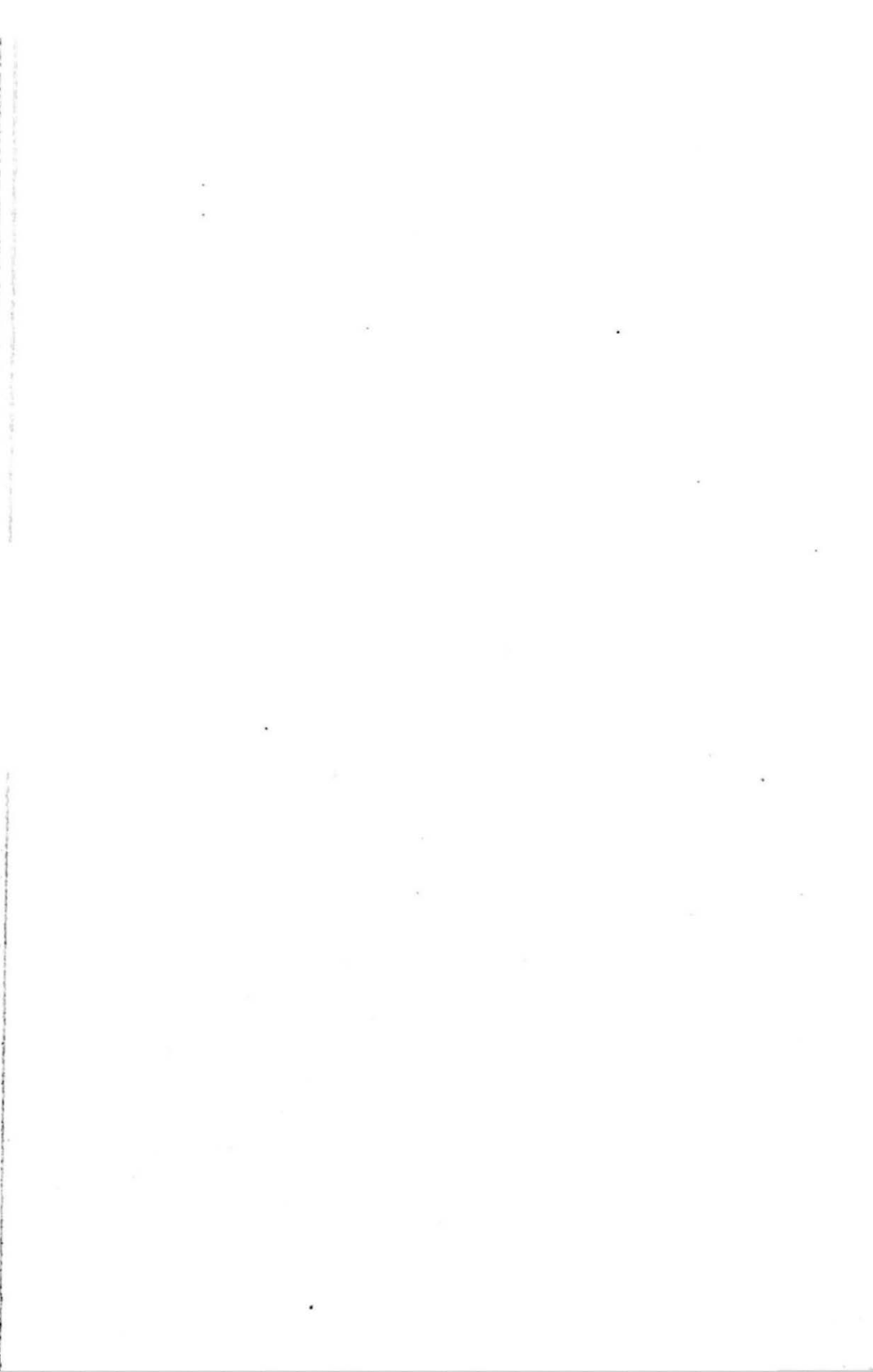
Saviour who had come into this world and died in order that the death they were facing there on that battlefield would not be death, but rather would be the entrance into more abundant life. When a man's life blood is running out on a battlefield, he is only interested in something which is going to be good after this life is over.

The Associated Press, in a news release which was run in many newspapers in the States, told of my jumping for the first time in combat: "Chaplain Rayburn jumped with his regiment in order to hold Easter services for the troops behind the enemy lines." There were no Easter services in our outfit that day, but I hope and believe that someday when I reach the glory land I shall meet some men who entered into that place of blessed rest from the muddy battlefield that Easter Sunday. If men found the reality of the living Christ in saving faith, certainly that is as wonderful as anything that could happen in any beautiful Easter service under the most auspicious of circumstances.

I have not told you of this experience that you might find it interesting and full of suspense, but in order that you might see as I saw clearly those days how absolutely vital it is for every Christian to avail himself of God's strength, to take God's Word, to stand upon it and to be obedient unto it. I would never have been in the places where I was greatly needed during those days had I not believed with all my heart that what the Lord wanted was far more important than any desire I had, that God's Word was true and that I could trust His promises implicitly. I have already confessed to you that my own heart was full of fears. I do not consider myself a

brave man. Those friends of mine who know me best were the most amazed to hear that I had become a paratrooper. They knew that I am not made of the stuff commonly associated with reckless paratroopers. But God had ordained that I should be among those men for a witness. He gave me His own Word to make known His will; all I did was to believe that Word. It was His strength in which I was strong, not my own. The faith He gave me was indeed the shield from all the fears and alarms, all the perils and evils of those dreadful hours.

Our God loves to be trusted! Have you put Him to the test in your own life? Do you know what it means to stand in His strength alone? Are you willing to face honestly the question of God's will about any matter in your life and then abide strictly in Him? His strength is sufficient. Without it a Christian soldier is sure to fail in the hard-fought battle against all the dreadful spiritual adversaries which confront us in the world today. But with God's strength he is fully prepared to meet the adversary and defeat him. He is prepared for the temptations and trials of the evil one, whether they arise within his own soul, or whether they come down upon him from without. The world does not need more Christians nearly as much as it needs stronger ones.



## CHAPTER THREE

### *The Soldier's Weapons*

*"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal . . ." (II Corinthians 10:4). "Put on the whole armour of God . . ." (Ephesians 6:11).*

I shall never forget the feeling of absolute helplessness which overtook me on the drop zone near Munsan on the Good Friday morning that I made my first parachute jump. Already I have described that jump, and have told you of the remarkable way in which the Lord protected me and brought me safely to a landing on the bank of a little creek. The First Sergeant who jumped with me went right into the water behind me. I shouted out to him that it simply didn't pay to be experienced in parachuting! Before either of us could get out of his parachute, however, we began to hear bullets whizzing past our heads. We had been in the fifth plane over the drop zone that morning so were among the very first few men to land on the ground.

A few enemy soldiers had been surprised and somewhat terrorized by our suddenly pouring out of the skies upon them and had taken refuge under a bridge across the creek into which the Sergeant had fallen and on the banks of which I had landed. By the time we were on the ground they were in sufficient control of themselves to open fire on us from beneath the bridge where they had scrambled for some sort of shelter. They were too frightened to be very accu-

rate as they opened fire, but when the first bullets went whistling past my head I fell flat on the ground and the Sergeant, considering that another wetting was not to be avoided at such a time as this, dropped himself on his stomach in the shallow water. I grabbed quickly, and almost instinctively, for the 45 calibre pistol which was hanging on my belt on my right side. It was when I took it from its holster and had it firmly grasped in my right hand that a sickening realization overwhelmed me. I held in my hand a weapon that I knew hardly anything about! It was almost utterly useless to me, for I had had no training nor practice in the handling of it at all.

Chaplains in the U. S. Army do not carry weapons in combat. During World War II in Europe we were strictly forbidden to have them on our persons. This had never presented any problem to me, for I had never had any desire to carry one. I felt that I was in the army to minister to the spiritual needs of American soldiers, not to participate in the fighting as such. When I arrived in the Far East, however, at one of the supply points through which we had passed I was issued a pistol.

"I'm a chaplain," I said to the officer who was issuing the equipment, "and we don't wear firearms of any kind. I don't need this."

"Chaplain," he replied, "these Communists don't know anything about the Geneva Convention, and even if they did, it wouldn't make any difference to them. We've had enough chaplains killed and taken prisoner to know that they are not abiding by the rules of warfare. That little cross shining on your helmet makes a very nice bright object at which to aim from a little distance. You'd better take this

weapon as a matter of self defense.”

I had somewhat reluctantly taken the pistol, and although I had removed it from its holster, examined it carefully, and loaded it with a clip of cartridges before the take-off for the drop zone, I had never fired it. The fact of the matter is I had never fired a pistol of any kind. I had, of course, had a little target practice with a rifle and had even learned quite a bit about the bazooka, because of a special interest in that rather remarkable weapon, but I had never been particularly interested in pistol shooting.

One who knows anything about a 45 pistol knows that it is a very inaccurate weapon, except in the hands of an expert. It is most difficult to hit what one is shooting at with such a weapon unless he is at very close range, or has had a great deal of practice and developed real skill. I had had neither. In the situation in which I found myself that morning I am sure that with that pistol I would have had difficulty in hitting a barn had it been only fifty feet from me! As I looked at the pistol there in my hands I realized that it would do me no good at that time. What a dreadful thing it is to be on a battlefield in a struggle with an enemy who is trying to kill you and to have a weapon you do not know how to use effectively!

I thank God that my friend, Sergeant Streaby, had an M-1 rifle with him that he did know how to use. He made short work of the soldiers who were shooting at us, and soon he had left me and was leading his company, which he had assembled about him, in an attack on a strategic hill at the northeastern corner of the drop zone. I didn't see him again for several days.

The Lord wrote that experience indelibly upon my

memory. I thought of it many times in the following days. I acquainted myself with my pistol at the first opportunity, but I also pondered the spiritual lesson which the Holy Spirit had made very real to me.

Alas, there are entirely too many Christians today who are in the mortal struggle that is going on between Satan with his forces and our Lord Jesus Christ with His forces who have been reduced to ineffectiveness because they do not know the weapons of their warfare, and as a result they are depending upon others to impart spiritual strength to them and to ward off the attacks of the enemy as well. Or perhaps if they are not consciously depending upon others to fight for them, they are making an effort to fight the devil with the wrong weapons.

The Holy Spirit has told us, through the pen of the Apostle Paul, that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (II Corinthians 10:4), yet there seem to be many who are trying to carry on their warfare against Satanic power with fleshly weapons. How easy it is to put emphasis upon that which is, when analyzed, purely of the flesh. Today one sees much of this, even among those who have a clear understanding of the Gospel and preach it in its simplicity. There is an emphasis upon that which appeals only to the flesh in many of the attempts made to secure big crowds, in the energy expended to extol the merits of a particular speaker, and in the effort made to present a record of accomplishments more unusual than that of anyone else.

The devil laughs at our fleshly efforts. He doesn't care how we publicize ourselves; he doesn't quaver when he hears our blare of trumpets and the loud proclamations of our attainments. He trembles only

when he sees devout Christians take up their spiritual weapons and engage him in combat because they believe God's Word is true and that all of His promises are to be taken at face value and His commandments are to be obeyed.

How we need to remember constantly that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). It is for this reason that we have been warned to "put on the whole armour of God," for our own armour, our own resources against the powerful prince of this world, would avail nothing.

Have you ever stopped to consider what the Christian warrior's armour is and whether or not you are wearing it—the whole armour? Have you pondered each piece and searched your own heart and soul as to whether that piece was firmly fixed in your life and used daily in overcoming the world, the flesh, and the devil? Have you cast aside confidence in the flesh and realized that you would get nowhere by trying within yourself to live in victory over the sins of this life, or are you struggling on in a vain attempt to "do the best you can" against impossible odds?

There is victory for you, my friend, no matter how bitter may have been the defeats of the past. The victory begins with the realization that the flesh of man is just as undependable after he becomes a Christian as it was before he was saved. No man can count on his flesh for anything except a longing after sin. Then in a proper and faithful use of the spiritual weapons that God has supplied through His Son Jesus

Christ and through the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit, the victory is realized. These weapons are yours for the taking. They will do you no good unless they are used.

The pistol in my hand on the drop zone at Munsan was of no value to me. No more will the weapons of your spiritual warfare be of value to you unless, by His grace, you learn what they are, take them, use them, become proficient in the use of them and never allow yourself to be found without them.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *The Belt of Truth*

*"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth . . . and take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God"*  
(Ephesians 6:14, 17).

Little did I realize, before I became a soldier myself, just what an important item of equipment is a soldier's belt. I do not mean, of course, the belt with which he keeps the trousers of his uniform suspended around his waist, but rather the web belt that he wears on the outside of his uniform, and from which most of his equipment is hung. A combat soldier actually carries suspended from that belt almost everything that is necessary for the proper discharge of his function as a soldier.

On one hip there is the canteen and cup which are so essential. The water in the canteen will keep him going when he would have to stop because of thirst and exhaustion without it. It will moisten the lips of a badly injured comrade whom he seeks to help back to a place of safety where he can have medical aid. The cup which fits around the canteen has a hundred uses. I have seen men drinking out of it, cooking in it, using it as a dishpan for washing other vessels or as a wash tub for the laundering of sox or underclothing. I have seen men also try to make it serve as their own bathtub as they tried to manage ablutions under great difficulties.

On the other hip the infantry man carries his first

aid packet. In this small box are the most essential items of first aid which have on many occasions saved the lives of men on the battlefields of the world. Very often have I seen soldiers carried into the aid stations, their wounds already dressed by a faithful companion, with the use of his first aid packet. Rarely does one arrive without this preliminary first aid treatment.

Also on the right hip all of the airborne officers and many of the enlisted men, especially the "non-coms," carried 45 pistols suspended from their belts. Across the front of the same belts there would be hanging hand grenades and the clips of cartridges for pistol and rifle. With all this equipment suspended from his belt the soldier can fight on; without it he becomes ineffective and must quickly get back to a supply point where he can secure these essentials for combat.

I am sure that the Lord had in mind this essential part of the warrior's equipment when he wrote, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." I do not know the exact uses of the girdle in ancient warfare, but I feel sure they must have been similar to those which the soldier's belt has today. The very first item of equipment which is mentioned in the listing of the various parts of the Christian warrior's armour by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6 is the girdle or belt of truth.

It does not take a highly trained student of the Word to know that the reference here is to the Word of God, which is indeed the belt of truth for the believer. "Thy Word is truth," we read, and the One who is Himself Truth Incarnate and who said of Himself, "I am the Truth," is revealed to us by

the Spirit of God in the written Word. This Word then is one of our most important weapons in bringing the enemy into defeat. Let us see just how this is accomplished.

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians warning them of the necessity of warring after the spirit and not after the flesh, he reminded them that their weapons were "not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." He then proceeded to show what form at least some of these strongholds would take. He said, "casting down imaginations," or as the better translation of the Revised Version has it, "overthrowing reasonings," and we would add here "of the flesh," for this is certainly what the Apostle was talking about, "and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Here we see clearly that fleshly reasoning begets fleshly pride. The result of giving in to fleshly reasoning is a spirit of disobedience to the revealed will of God. Are you conscious, believing friend, even as you read this, of the necessity of dealing with fleshly reasonings in your own life? Are you aware of the fact that spiritual warfare is necessary in order to cast these reasonings down? Have you stopped to consider the fact that your flesh is no more dependable since you became a Christian than it was before you received Christ as your Saviour? How little recognition there is on the part of Christians today of the fact that the devil will seek to erect strongholds of fleshly reasoning within them, and these must be dealt with sharply and unremittingly, lest the enemy gain the advantage.

It is not at all difficult for us to recognize the faulty reasoning of the flesh in an unsaved man. We deal with an unbeliever about his soul and when we press upon him the necessity of salvation, his reply often runs something like this, "Well, now, I'll tell you what I think. I believe that if a man does the best he can he will be all right." We instantly recognize this for what it is, the faulty, sinful reasoning of the flesh, and we remember that God has said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2:14), and we expect nothing better from the unbeliever. We know that he cannot understand the infinite righteousness of a God who cannot and will not look upon sin. We realize that fleshly reasoning will never lead him to a comprehension of the necessity of a just God pouring out wrath upon sin and the constraining love of a gracious and merciful God causing Him to be willing to bear that wrath Himself in the person of His only begotten Son. We know that we must pray that the Holy Spirit will make clear to him, as He alone can do, the glorious message of the Gospel and his own need of a personal Saviour.

Yet, many who readily discern the mind of the flesh in the life of an unsaved man do not realize that that same flesh will produce the same faulty reasoning in their own selves even after they are saved if they allow themselves to walk according to the flesh and to war after the flesh. Somehow the adversary convinces many believers that now, because they are Christians, they can make up their own minds about that which is right and good. They can safely

follow the leadings and promptings of their own flesh. But this is the path of certain defeat.

How often we see Christians starting to work for the Lord in the enthusiasm of fleshly effort. When that effort runs into difficulties, a cry is made to Him, "Lord, come and help us!" Yet, our Saviour will not bless the efforts of our flesh. He would say to us, "Why have you started this work? Why have you undertaken this effort? My Spirit did not direct you to do this; you undertook it by and of yourself."

It is not in our works of service and devotion alone, however, that we follow the reasonings of the flesh, but also in our attempt to find victory in our Christian lives. "Having begun in the Spirit," so many, many Christians are striving to be "made perfect by the flesh" (Galatians 3:3). While they thus war after the flesh, the devil builds strong points of resistance in their lives. Especially does he succeed in building a sense of pride in personal accomplishment. This pride is indeed a "high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God."

The only safeguard against the efforts of Satan in this regard is a continual warfare in the Spirit by means of an effective use of the weapons which God has placed at our disposal. I particularly like the Phillips translation of the last part of II Corinthians 10:5. "We even fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Jesus Christ." As you read these words, are you conscious of that fight in your own life, the fight for the capturing of each of your thoughts and subjecting it to the absolute authority of your living Saviour? Have you determined, by God's grace, to subject even your thought processes to the refining light of God's judgment,

refusing to even think a thought until it is subjected to the scrutiny of the mind of the Master? "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). This involves real warfare against the strongholds of fleshly reasoning.

What then is the particular weapon for this aspect of the struggle? The only way in which any man can effectively fight fleshly reasonings is with the truth, the Word of God. The heart and the mind which is continually saturated with the Word of God is the only one which is properly equipped for spiritual warfare. The mind and the heart so filled with God's Word will be able readily to subject each thought to the careful scrutiny of spiritual discernment. There will be an unwillingness to countenance aught that is in any way contrary to the Word. Not alone the "letter" of the Word, but the spirit of the Word will dominate and permeate the thoughts of such a mind.

But, alas, the willful ignorance of the Word of God that one finds in the world today. Multitudes of Christians know little or nothing about the Word, yet it is first on the list of weapons which they must bear and use continually in spiritual conflict with the forces of darkness.

You have never heard, nor have I, a woman who giggled superficially over her lack of knowledge of mathematics, saying, "You know, I just don't know anything about mathematics. I know that I should, but I just don't. I just never seemed to have time to learn. When I go to the grocery store to buy a few things I know that I could be cheated, for I don't even know how to add up my grocery bill!" Such a statement as that would shock us indeed. Yet I have had mature women who have been church members

for many years come to me and say, "You know, Pastor, I just don't know much about the Bible. I know that I should, but I seem never to have had time to learn. I'm ashamed of myself, but whenever I'm asked a question about the Bible, I always have to come to my pastor to find out the answer." Is it any wonder that there is so little effectiveness in warding off the onslaughts of the Prince of this World when there is such ignorance, such willful ignorance of the Word of God, a primary weapon in the fight of faith? Such ignorance is bound to result in defeated, barren lives.

We have spoken thus far of the Word of God as the belt of truth which surrounds the believer. This is the defensive aspect of the weapon which is the Bible. It is this use of the Word which protects the believer from the reasonings of the flesh and from the efforts of Satan against his mind and heart. But there is also an offensive use of the Word of God, and this should be mentioned here also, for it is listed in the armour of the Christian warrior. Paul calls it the Sword of the Spirit.

No war was ever won by a side which fought defensively only. There were times in the early stages of the Korean conflict when our forces were almost pushed into the sea. They had to fight desperately just to defend themselves from the mighty onslaughts of the waves of Chinese Communists. If that defensive stage had not ended successfully for our troops the war would have been over long ago. But when their defenses around the Pusan perimeter held, it made possible an advance into enemy territory again. It was when our great army began rolling on its offensive that real victory began to be within its

grasp. So, every Christian warrior must realize that it is not enough that he be protected from the offensive of the world, the flesh and the devil, but he must actually go on the offensive himself with the great weapon which is the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. There is enemy territory to be taken in this world today. Many places yet remain where the prince of this world is still in complete control. There has never been a witness to the saving power of the blood of Christ; no word of the Bible has ever been translated into the language of the people. The sharp sword of the Word of God which is quick and powerful, yes, and sharper than any two-edged sword has never been raised in battle against the forces of darkness.

Even in this great land of ours, where the Gospel has been preached and known from the beginning of the nation, there are still multitudes who sit in darkness under the power of the devil. Although they could turn on their radios any day of the week and hear a clear and accurate message proclaiming the way of life and salvation, they prefer to remain in sin and to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Christians must assault the minds of the unsaved, where Satan reigns, with the clear, pure Word of God.

Surely the situation at home and abroad should challenge Christian young people in these days as nothing else does.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### *The Shield of Faith*

*"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6: 16).*

Just three weeks to the day from my first jump in Korea I was told that I was to make a second jump, and this time it was to be at night! I had had no time to take any of the promised jump training, for we had been in the thick of the fighting, and when we had been pulled out of the lines for a brief rest our first responsibility had been to get our equipment in shape so that we would be ready when committed in another combat assignment. Consequently, I knew nothing more about parachuting than I did when I went out the door of the plane on the first jump, except that I had parachuted safely once, and I felt that I had some idea at least of what would happen on a jump.

I certainly had no desire to make my second jump at night. As a matter of fact I could honestly say that I had no real desire to make a second jump at all! By virtue of my having jumped the first time in combat I had qualified as a parachutist and had received my wings from General Bowen, commanding general of the Combat Team, so, as far as the army was concerned, I had the same qualification as the men who had taken the strenuous course at the parachutist's school in Ft. Benning, Georgia. I would

have been willing to have settled for having this qualification. But if I was going to do more jumping, I certainly hoped it could be in the daylight. I could hardly imagine plunging out of a plane in the darkness.

Again, however, realizing that the only thing which really mattered was the Lord's will, I took my problem to Him in prayer. Falling on my knees in my tent, I began to lay my anxiety before Him. I knew that I could get out of jumping this time if I actually took advantage of one or two opportunities that presented themselves. Parachutists must jump once every three months to maintain their jump status, but it had not been a month since my first jump, so I felt sure that I could have made arrangements not to have jumped at this time. A chaplain's wishes are normally respected by his commanding officer, and I felt confident that since the jump to be made was not a combat operation but a training mission, I could get removed from the manifest if I could give a plausible reason for my removal to the S-3, the training officer in charge of the whole operation. But as I prayed to the Lord, actually hoping, I am sure, that He would indicate in some way that it was not His will for me to make this jump, He again stopped me in the midst of my prayer and began to speak to me, slowly, clearly as He had before, from a passage of scripture in which I had had no meditation for weeks, as far as I could remember. This is what I heard Him say, as I knelt before Him in my tent:

*"The darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."*

What a direct answer! There certainly could be

no doubt in my mind that God was directing me to make that jump. It was His Word. The reader will recognize it as the 12th verse of Psalm 139. I had but to believe it. God was reaffirming His promises to me. He was telling me that the safety and well-being which He had promised me before were just as much to be counted on for this occasion. He had led me to my airborne assignment, and He would take care of me at all times. Although the first mission was in the daylight and this was to be at night, it mattered not at all for darkness and light were both alike to Him. If I really believed His Words I knew that I would have no concern for my well-being and safety. I had heard a good many strange tales about night jumping. I have decided that an airborne unit is a good place to hear almost any kind of hair-raising story! I felt sure that my night jump would be as much without incident, as far as the jump itself was concerned, as the first one had been.

I was not, however, entirely right in this assumption. The Lord had something else He wanted to show me for His own glory. I was to learn that in keeping His promises God does not always follow the pattern we expect. Just after dark we loaded into the planes. This time I was to jump from a C-46. Most of the men who were jumping in my plane had made night jumps before. Several of them had made many. As we waited for take-off time, they entertained one another with their tales of night jumps and, of course, I listened with avid interest. It was well-known to all of those men that I was not an experienced jumper. Nevertheless, it always seemed that the men were especially thankful to have me along with them in the plane. A chaplain is a

very welcome companion on such a hazardous mission. No doubt many regarded his presence as a sort of charm or fetish. It was, however, gratifying to have the men happy for my presence. At other times in my army experience I have noticed restraint and even a slight tinge of resentment over a chaplain's presence when I have walked into a group of soldiers. They have acted as though they felt my presence might be a damper upon their fun. I was thankful to feel very, very welcome in that plane that night.

The flight to the drop zone was not a long one this time. We were not more than a half hour in the air before we heard the slowing down of the motors of the plane which indicated that we were nearing the drop zone. The red light flashed on; at the order from the jumpmaster we stood up and hooked up. I was only the fourth man from the door this time, so almost as soon as the red light changed to green I cast myself through the door and out into the inky darkness. I remember thinking that it didn't actually seem so frightening at night, for one could not see the ground below him and had no sense of the great distance he had to fall. Although I had no time to stand and make comparisons, in thinking of it since I have decided that it was actually easier to plunge out of the door of the plane in the dark than it was in the daylight.

My first sensation after leaving the plane was, of course, the "opening shock." I was grateful each time I jumped for that terrific jerk, even though it was anything but a pleasant experience at the moment, for it meant that my chute was open. But there was a surprise awaiting me.

As I had gone out the door on the right side of the

plane, a young soldier had jumped from the left side. He was fourth in line on his side of the plane, the same place I occupied on my side. Because I was considerably heavier than he, I evidently fell faster, and when our parachutes opened, I was quite a distance below him. One swings like a pendulum in a parachute when it first opens and when this lad began to swing he came right into the lines of my parachute up very near to the canopy and to his dismay got himself so tangled up in the taut cords that he could not get disengaged.

I could feel that someone had collided with my parachute, but try as I would I could not see him. He was directly behind me overhead, and my steel helmet was fastened so tight on my head that I could not get it back far enough to see about one quarter of my parachute canopy. Against the night sky I could have seen him had he been at any other side of my parachute. Being unable to see him, however, I could only guess what was happening. I thought to myself, "I'm sure there is something that I should do to help that fellow up there, but I haven't the slightest idea what it is." Some time later I found out from the young soldier himself just what had taken place.

. As he struggled to free himself from the cords of my parachute, something happened which almost invariably happens when two parachutes come close together, one above the other. The bottom parachute, which was mine, robbed the top parachute of its air. It collapsed and hung uselessly around his feet. He could not pull his reserve parachute, for it would have undoubtedly tangled in the same cords in which he seemed fastened. If it had opened properly it would have come open under the canopy of my parachute

and further difficulties would most surely have been encountered. The young soldier, as it later developed, was making only his fourth jump. He realized, however, that it would be foolhardy to pull the rip cord on his reserve parachute and that the best thing for him to do was to hang on tightly to the cords of my parachute and come down with me. Nothing else would have been safe we learned from more experienced men after we reached the ground.

Having the weight of a man hanging on one side of my canopy, however, changed the angle of my descent and when I saw, as one can dimly see even on a dark night, that I was almost to the ground I realized that I was going to hit in a very awkward position. Although my feet touched the ground first, my body was at such an angle that my feet and knees could not take up any of the shock of the landing. I sat down where sitting is best! One hits the ground normally going about fifteen miles an hour. With two men on my parachute we may have been falling faster.

The medical officer told me later that if I had hit with that force on a normally hard piece of ground at the base of my spine I would have undoubtedly either been killed or very seriously crippled for the rest of my life. But the Lord had given me a promise, and He had prepared a nice soft furrow of damp rice paddy for my landing. I just went squ-u-ish, right into it. The medics who were on the field, having jumped in the first plane, had been able to see against the night sky how we had tangled and when they saw our landing they came rushing toward us. I was picking myself up from the ground when two of them came hurrying up to me with a stretcher. They insisted that I get on. I told them I was quite

all right and needed no help. One of them insisted that having fallen as I did I should let them carry me to the aid station so that the doctor could check me over to make certain that I was perfectly fit. I refused their offer, for I could tell that I was none the worse for my hard fall. I still had not dashed my foot, nor any other part of my anatomy, against a stone. The darkness was the same as the day. The Lord had kept His promise.

The corporal who had ridden down with me landed feet first in a perfectly normal way. He picked himself up and came running over to me. When he was close enough to recognize me, he blurted out, "Well, if I'd known whom I was riding down with I wouldn't have been half so scared!" As we trudged off the drop zone, walking close together, for each had to carry his own parachute and we had been unable to disentangle them in the darkness, I thought about what he had said. I had laughed when he uttered that statement in his surprise, but the Lord taught me a lesson from it. We who belong to the Lord have a very great responsibility toward those who are round about us, whether they are believers or unbelievers.

It is ours to claim God's promises. Those about us should benefit continually from that which the Lord does for us. It is our faith which lays hold of the blessings which God willingly showers upon us, but the blessings when they come are not limited to us alone. How sad that so often we fail to receive what the Lord is eager to give. Yes, and we fail to bring blessing to others as well.

In Moses' day the Lord said, "If *my people*, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked

ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." It is not the ungodly and the sinners who bear the responsibility for the revival blessings which we so much need in our land today. It is to His own people that God calls. If they will but believe His Word and be obedient unto His call, the whole populace will feel the might of the moving of His Spirit.

Let us particularly note that the scripture says, "*Above all* taking the shield of faith . . ." This would seem to indicate that more important than any other consideration in the walk and warfare of the Christian is the matter of believing God, taking Him strictly at His Word. This is entirely consistent with the scriptural statement, "The just shall live by faith," which is the basic principle underlying much of the doctrine of the New Testament as well as the Old. In the book of Hebrews, which many have considered to be a commentary on this statement, the high point of practical life teaching is reached in the 11th chapter where the lives of the great men and women of the old dispensation were analyzed by the Holy Spirit and it is clearly manifest that each one reached his place of success and honor because he was willing to recognize the absolute primacy of the Word of God and to walk in humble faith in that Word. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). It is nonsense to talk about faith in God if one ignores His Word.

Alas, how few Christians there seem to be who are willing honestly and conscientiously to face their personal responsibilities with regard to the clear promises of the Book of Books. "Of course, we believe the Bible," one hears on every side, but it is

easy to say "of course" and to go right on living without those things which the Bible promises the true believer, all the time failing to realize that it is lack of faith which keeps one from those priceless values. Many Christians have become so familiar with the exhortations and promises of God's Word with respect to certain of their "besetting sins" that, having failed to really believe that what God says is true, they have long since given up any idea of really knowing victory in certain departments of their lives.

Let us take for example the simple matter of worry. The believer is expressly forbidden in the scriptures to worry. The commandment of God is: "In nothing be anxious" (Philippians 4:6). Yet few Christians honestly recognize their worrying for what it is, sin. Most believers have perhaps languidly wished that they might be able to so completely trust the Lord that they would stop worrying. They have never, however, seriously and honestly faced the question of whether they were willing to walk in the path of faith and trust God for the fulfillment of His promises concerning a life without worry. With a shrug of the shoulder they say, "I know I shouldn't worry, but I just can't seem to help it." In the matter of worry this is making provision for the flesh. How reluctant they would be to show such a tolerant attitude toward some other sins!

God's promises are specific with regard to the matter of worry. "In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6, 7). If we have taken the shield of faith

we will face daily, and oftener than that if need be, our privilege and responsibility to live a life without worry.

I have given but one example of what it means to take the shield of faith. Many, many more could be added. It is not just in trying circumstances on a battlefield or in a foreign land that the Lord wants to prove Himself and His promises to His own. Each believer must know daily, hourly, yes, moment by moment, the sustaining power of these promises as well as the sustaining presence of the Person who gave them if he is to know victory in the constant warfare with the powers of darkness. "Above all"—yes, "Above *all*, taking the shield of faith."

## CHAPTER SIX

### *Praying Always*

*“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ephesians 6:18).*

We were on the central front, having been in combat in a number of widely scattered areas on the long fighting line which stretched across the Korean peninsula. In the particular positions which we occupied at the time when the incident which I shall describe occurred, we had remained more or less stationary for some time. Cliff and I happened to be taking our turn to be with the 674th Field Artillery Battalion which was the artillery unit of the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team. It was customary for the Catholic Chaplain and the other Protestant Chaplain, when there was one, to alternate with me in spending a few days or weeks at a time in each of the three infantry battalions and the one field artillery battalion which composed the combat team. The Regimental Chaplain usually stayed at Regimental Headquarters. I had been Regimental Chaplain for a few weeks following our jump at Munsan, for on the second or third day after that jump, Chaplain Dunne, the Catholic priest who as Regimental Chaplain had welcomed me to the organization, had been very seriously wounded when an ambulance on which he was riding hit a land mine. He had been evacuated to Japan and then to the States. His replacement was a Catholic

priest, Chaplain Tom Koch, a genial and friendly individual who always extended me helpful co-operation and who became a real friend in spite of the wide divergence in our faith. Chaplain Koch, however, did not come to us for several weeks, and during the interval I was senior and therefore Regimental Chaplain. When Tom Koch arrived I was glad for an opportunity to go and spend some time with the artillerymen. I served with the field artillery in World War II in Europe and have always had a special interest in the men of that branch. When a chaplain is eating and sleeping right with a group of men, he is more apt to gain their confidence and to be able to help them than if he sees them only on occasional or even frequent visits to their unit. I always felt especially at home with the 674th Battalion, perhaps because of the cordial welcome which was always extended by the commanding officer, Lt. Col. Tom Lambert, himself a Roman Catholic.

The Lord had been blessing us among the artillerymen. Cliff had proved a faithful and indefatigable personal worker and had several times brought to me some young fellow with whom he had been dealing. We had long talks with each of these men. We found that many of them, although reared in the church, were utterly ignorant of the simple way of salvation. In the front lines of battle they were ready to face the question of eternity very seriously. Our hearts were filled with joy as a number of them opened their hearts and received the Lord. Some who had not made decisions for Christ were under deep conviction.

One evening, just about dusk, word was received that all officers were to come to the battalion CP (Command Post) for a briefing. Upon arrival

there we were told that we had received orders to move out under cover of darkness for a special mission against the enemy. Our positions were to be turned over to the ROKs (Republic of Korea Army). The entire regimental combat team was to make a surprise attack against the enemy in a sector several miles removed from our present position. We were told that in a certain valley across one of the large tributaries of the Han River there was believed to be a full division of Communist troops. Although we were only a regiment we were counting on the superiority of our weapons and firepower, our extreme mobility plus the element of surprise, to make it possible for our regiment to overwhelm an entire division. The area and plan of attack were carefully pointed out on the map, and we learned that it would be necessary for us to ford the large river which we would have to cross, for all bridges had been completely destroyed.

We had not left the briefing tent when it began to rain; it rained heavily throughout the entire night. Since we were to pull out of our bivouac area at three o'clock in the morning, before we went to bed for what sleep we could get during the hours remaining, we packed our jeep and trailer with all of our equipment except our beds and the tent which was our shelter. It was not an agreeable experience to get that tent down, rolled up and packed away in our trailer when we were aroused in the darkness at about 2:30 A. M. The rain continued heavily. A thoughtful cook in one of the batteries had prepared a large vat of coffee. How good it tasted! After a welcome cup of hot coffee we got into the jeep and took our place in the convoy as it started down the road exactly

on schedule at three o'clock in the morning.

As we wound along on that narrow, slippery trail which could hardly be called a road, I said to my assistant who was driving the jeep, "Cliff, how does this mission sound to you?"

"I don't like it, Chaplain," was his reply. "It sounds very dangerous to me."

"I don't like it either, Cliff," I said, "and I believe we ought to stop and pray about it."

Very conveniently our convoy stopped just at that time while certain elements of one of the infantry regiments emptied into the road ahead of us. So right there in our jeep we prayed. The Lord had given us a great burden for the souls of many of the men in our regiment. We knew that a number of them were under conviction, and we longed to be able to deal further with them personally and to preach the Gospel to them again so that they might find Him who is life. We did not want to see them killed in combat before they had accepted Christ. If the war was going to cost any of their lives, we did not want it to be until we had been able to lead them to the Lord. We earnestly asked God to protect our regiment, to keep us from getting into a situation which would bring high casualties, much suffering, and even death.

It was most interesting and spiritually illuminating to me to receive just exactly a week later several letters which were written on that day and the day after by friends in the States. Each one told me that the Lord had burdened him to pray especially for me at that time. One dear friend with whom I had spent many hours in rich prayer fellowship during the months before my recall to active duty wrote me these words: "I have been especially burdened today to pray

for your safety and for the safety of your entire regiment." During all my time overseas no one else wrote of praying for my whole regiment's protection. Another good friend told me, after I had reached home, that she had been kept awake all night at this time praying for me and whenever she would begin to pray for others the Lord would bring her back to me, so that she prayed almost all night just for me, my safety and welfare.

Did it matter? Let me finish my story and the reader can judge for himself.

The early dim light of dawn was streaking across the sky from behind the Korean hills when the first elements of our convoy arrived at the ford through which we were to cross the river and enter enemy territory for a surprise attack. An advance detail had marked out the trail from the road to the ford and had also placed some markers in the river to show the narrow stretch where the water was shallow enough and the bottom firm enough for our heavily loaded trucks to pass through.

We were far enough back in the convoy to miss seeing the entrance of the first trucks into the water. By the time we reached the high place on the road which commanded a view of the ford and from which the trucks left the road and wallowed through the mud down the wide bank of the river to the edge of the water, it was evident that something had gone wrong. The river ford seemed full of trucks, but most of them stalled. Back and forth in the water were moving two large wrecker trucks trying to dislodge those larger trucks which, having stopped in the water, were blocking the way of the convoy.

The heavy rain of the night was responsible for all

the difficulty. The investigation of our reconnaissance section the day before had established the fact that this ford was sufficiently shallow that our regimental convoy could get through without any difficulty. But because of the continual heavy rain throughout the night, the water was nearly a foot deeper than it had been the previous day. It was this extra water which was drowning out the motors of most of the trucks.

Orders were being shouted to drivers by officers whose responsibility it was to get the vehicles through the ford. It was absolutely imperative that the whole convoy get across to the other side. Our important mission against the enemy depended upon it. When a truck seemed hopelessly stalled a way around it was attempted. Smaller trucks were hooked to larger ones by heavy chains at the edge of the water. The motors of the larger trucks were higher out of the water and thus less apt to be stopped.

As we arrived at the water's edge, our jeep was fastened behind a truckload of infantrymen who shouted out with laughter that they would be sure to get through with the chaplain in tow. To our amazement, as we were pulled out into the deep water, our engine hardly even sputtered but kept running smoothly. The water began flowing over the sides of the jeep and it was necessary for me to stand up on the seat and then on the side of the jeep itself to keep from having my feet soaked in the cold muddy water. In order to keep the motor running, poor Cliff found it necessary to get thoroughly wet.

When we were only about fifty yards from the far shore of the river, the truck which was pulling us got stalled behind another big truck, the motor of which would not turn over. These larger vehicles had to

stay within the narrow boundaries marked off for the ford crossing. It was feared that their great weight would cause them to sink into the river bed if they drove off to the rocky bottom of the ford itself. Apparently Koreans had used this particular crossing for many generations and had perhaps carried in rock to give it a firm bottom.

Cliff suggested that, since our motor was still running briskly, we should free ourselves from the truck and attempt to get around the line. It seemed to me that we had little to lose from making the try so I called to the infantrymen in the truck ahead to unhook the chain that held us to it. There were a few anxious moments as we started around the other vehicles in the swirling waters, but the little jeep struggled valiantly and in a very short time we were pulling up on the slippery bank of the far side of the river, our motor never having even sputtered.

Actually only a few trucks had come through ahead of us. Some, heavily loaded with fighting men, had gone right through the waters and had pushed on down the road into enemy territory, but most of the trucks still floundered or stood still in the rushing river.

"We will only help congest the river bank if we stay here," I said to Cliff. "Let's go on down the road. I've studied this area on the map and I feel sure that I know where we are going. We should soon come upon some of our men ahead of us. We will at least discover a command post and we can stop there."

Leaving the ford behind, we started on down the muddy road. There was evidence in the ruts of the road that several of our vehicles had preceded us along

the way, but not one could we see. When we had covered nearly two miles and had still seen none of our own troops ahead of us nor had any come up from behind, I began to grow just a bit uneasy. We were in enemy territory. A lone chaplain and his assistant would be easy prey for an enemy patrol or even for a sniper.

"I believe we'd better stop here," I said. "We will wait until some of our men come along. In the meantime we can have some breakfast."

The rain and the ford had left us wet and cold. We had had no food, only a cup of coffee in the darkness of the early morning. I did not have to argue with Cliff to get his consent to stop for something to eat.

Just as we were looking for a convenient place to stop by the road and open our cans of C-rations, I noticed a large railway bridge which we were approaching. Two spans of the bridge had been knocked out by bombs or artillery fire. One span was still standing intact. Under this span could be seen a group of Korean men gathered around a blazing fire. They were dressed in the familiar white garb of the Korean civilian. We quite naturally took them for friendly South Korean natives. It was evident that they seemed undisturbed by the presence of American soldiers in the vicinity. They seemed to be fully occupied with trying to keep warm.

"Let's stop here and go over and ask those Koreans for the use of their fire," I said to Cliff. "We can dry out, get warmed up a bit and have something to eat."

"That sounds good to me," was Cliff's ready response.

The Koreans did not seem particularly delighted

to share their fire with us. We could not talk with them, but we made signs which indicated that we would like to warm some cans of food on their fire. They moved together rather reluctantly, it seemed, to allow us some space at the edge of their fire.

I cannot remember the menu for that morning's breakfast. Perhaps it was spaghetti and meat balls with crackers and instant coffee. It may have been beef with vegetable stew. Whatever it was, it tasted very good to us. We always found the army's C-rations provided a satisfying if not altogether delightful meal. Whenever we ate in the presence of Koreans, as we did on this morning, they would look longingly at our appetizing food and would always come in for a share of it. It is quite impossible for the average American, to say nothing of one who is a Christian, to eat in the presence of hungry people without at least sharing some of what he has.

As we were finishing our meal we noticed that a thick cloud was settling down upon the valley in which we were waiting. We were completely surrounded by high hills and already the tops of these hills were hidden in the clouds that were coming lower and lower.

Our breakfast was over and we were throwing the C-ration cans away when I noticed a jeep racing back along the road from the forward area. The officer in the jeep hailed me. I ran to the road to talk with him. "Orders have just come from the general over the radio for us to get out of here, Chaplain, and we are to get out fast. Turn your jeep around and get back across the ford as quickly as possible." With those words he was gone. I had no time for questions.

It did not take us long to be complying with this

order, but as we started back along the road the cloud settled down upon us and we drove through thick fog, which greatly retarded our progress. After what seemed like a very long time, we reached the ford and made it back through the deep water with no more difficulty than we had encountered getting across more than an hour before. We soon joined the main body of our convoy which was stopped about a mile below the ford, waiting for all of the men and equipment that had crossed the river to return.

As we sat in the jeep along the road one of the officers from the S-2 (Intelligence) section came walking by us. I hailed him.

"Say, Captain, why the sudden exit? I thought we were going to make an attack on the enemy."

"Well, Chaplain, we were. As you know, it was to have been a surprise attack. But we discovered just in the nick of time that instead of our surprising the Communists they were all set to give us a big surprise. Instead of there being one division in that valley there actually were three. They must have discovered our intentions and they were going to let us get across the river, for they would then have had us surrounded. With their artillery they could have zeroed in on that ford and cut off our retreat and they then could have annihilated us. However, just as our advance elements discovered what the situation was, that cloud settled down on the valley and covered us up completely. The enemy didn't know that we were retreating and even if they had known, there was nothing they could do, for they couldn't see us to shoot at us. That cloud coming down on us was the luckiest thing that ever happened to me in my life!"

"That wasn't luck, Captain," I answered him. "That happened because we have a God who answers prayer. We prayed definitely about this mission this morning."

"Chaplain, maybe you've got something there," he said.

"I know I have. There's no doubt in my mind. It was the Lord's doing."

I proceeded to tell him briefly of our experience after we had crossed the ford, describing our stop to eat with the Koreans under the bridge.

"Chaplain," the Captain broke in, "those Koreans you ate with were undoubtedly North Korean Communist soldiers who were planted there disguised as South Korean civilians in order to throw us off the track. They were just waiting for a signal to take care of you. If it is any comfort to you, you had breakfast with the enemy this morning!"

It is all right to hear such things after one is back in a place of safety with his own troops. I couldn't help wondering how I would have felt as I stood around that fire eating my breakfast that morning had I known that the Koreans on all sides of me were enemy soldiers. But we were under the sheltering wings of our heavenly Father's protection. We had prayed, and no matter how close we came to the enemy he could not hurt us. That promise He had given me was still good.

Not one man in our entire regiment was even injured on that whole operation. How faithful is our God! But I often wondered in succeeding days what might have happened if those He had burdened to pray had failed to pick up the spiritual weapon of prayer and by it hold back the enemy for us. I am

sure terrible things have happened because believers failed to pray.

Prayer is not only a defensive weapon to protect us from the enemy. It is also a weapon of offensive action against the enemy. As such it might be called the weapon of communication. No army can proceed effectively without good communications.

Lt. Charles R. Ford was assigned to our outfit when we were just north of the 38th parallel. He was a very unusual young man, for he was both a first-class, efficient, regular army officer and also a born-again Christian with a real testimony for Christ. One finds that combination very rarely in the army. I did not meet "Dick" Ford, as he was called, immediately upon his assignment to our regiment but in succeeding weeks we became close friends. It was during one of our many conversations that he told me of an incident which took place in his first days with our regiment. Dick had been a non-commissioned officer during the Second World War and had spent his time training troops for combat but had never gone overseas himself. After a competitive tour of duty he received his regular army commission, and again when the Korean War broke out, he was given an assignment as a training officer in the States. He told me that he often wondered if he would never see combat at all but would spend all of his time training other men for it. Then suddenly, without warning, he received overseas orders, was flown to Korea and before he could hardly believe that he was on the other side of the world, he had been given his assignment to the 187th Regimental Combat Team and found himself north of the 38th parallel.

Upon his arrival at the regimental headquarters

he was assigned to "G" Company. Captain C. C. Robertson, Jr., who was the commanding officer of the company, was also quite new to the regiment. I had not yet met him, for he had been with us only a short time. My first contact with him came some days later in the regimental collecting station where I was ministering to wounded men, and he was brought in on a litter after having been shot in the leg while leading his company in an attack against the enemy. Later he was to become one of my best friends in the regiment, for being a fine Christian himself, he did everything in his power to help me in my work with his men and could always be counted on for encouragement and whatever assistance it was in his power to give. Very few army officers are so helpful to their chaplains.

When Lt. Ford reported to his company commander, he was given a platoon and almost immediately was ordered to lead the platoon on an attack. As he and his men proceeded carefully up a rocky creek bottom, they suddenly ran into a blistering attack from enemy machine guns. Falling flat on the ground, Dick said that he lay there trembling with the realization that all men remember who have found themselves for the first time in the thick of battle—that those bullets piercing the air and striking the rocks and trees around him were aimed at him! All that he had learned as a soldier and all that he had taught others seemed completely to leave him. As he looked around him, he told me, he could see the men of his platoon hugging the ground, looking to him for orders, and he couldn't for the life of him think what he should order them to do. He seemed incapable of remembering any of his training.

Then suddenly he saw a soldier with a radio on his back hugging the ground only a few feet away from him. Quickly he called to the boy to slide over to where he was. He grabbed the radio and in just a few seconds was in touch with Captain Robertson at the company command post a little to the rear. Dick described his predicament and received a couple of crisp orders from the company commander.

"The minute I heard the orders," he told me, as he described this experience to me, "I knew that I should have thought of them myself. They were exactly what I had been trained to do and what I had taught others to do. But I believe if it had not been for that radio and being able to get in touch with Captain Robertson, I'd have been lying there frightened and unsure until someone had come to my rescue."

If well-trained army personnel need to keep their communications open at all costs, how much more does the Christian warrior need to be in constant touch with his great Company Commander, the Lord Jesus Christ. Prayer is his channel of communication. No man is wise enough to know how to meet each subtle attack of Satan. It matters not how well schooled he is in the tactics of the enemy, there will be times when he will face utter failure and defeat unless he is in the closest contact with the Lord through prayer.

Are you giving the enemy a great advantage over you by allowing yourself to neglect the use of this all-important weapon? How few there are who really know how to wage war on their knees! The prayer life of most Christians is so perfunctory. They bow their heads before meals and offer a few words of thanks and some simple, half-hearted petitions. Per-

haps for a few moments on rising or before retiring they kneel beside their beds to thank God for His many blessings and to enlist His continued favor in a general way, but when it comes to engaging the enemy of souls in mortal combat on their knees, they know nothing of what this means.

Will you let the Holy Spirit search your own heart in regard to this matter? Are you willing to be a soldier if it means battling on your knees? "Praying always with all prayer and supplication." This is not an easy weapon to bear in the fray. May God help us to pray.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *Know Your Enemy*

*“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (I Peter 5:8).*

One entire section of an army, corps, division, regiment or even of a battalion or smaller fighting unit is called the G-2 or S-2. This is the intelligence and reconnaissance section which has the responsibility of learning all that can be known about the enemy. Every item of information concerning enemy troops is important—where they are, how many there are, what their morale is, how they are getting supplied, when they are expecting to attack or retreat and an almost endless list of other matters. No army could possibly function without intelligence. It many times means the difference between defeat and victory. The tide of many strategic battles in world history has been changed because one side was able to discover what the plans and resources of its enemy were.

Christian warriors have been sadly negligent, however, in the matter of intelligence with regard to their enemy. We sing lustily, “Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,” but fail to observe some of the most basic rules of warfare. Of these none is more important than the maxim: know your enemy.

Sadly enough our adversary, Satan, has been most successful in dulling the consciousness of multitudes

with regard to the necessity of carrying on any warfare with him at all. Though many Christians would admit the reality of a personal devil in whose person centers all opposition to God and His Son as well as to all that is good and righteous, they have never felt it incumbent upon them to study his tactics that they might engage him in spiritual combat. They know nothing of what it means to resist the devil so that he will flee from them. As long, of course, as the adversary can keep a believer from actively resisting him he has won a great victory, and the believer experiences continual defeat, even though he may be little aware of its cause.

Our own great nation has discovered that there were enemies working within our borders during the last few years that were an important part of a worldwide conspiracy to destroy our very way of life and all that we hold most dear. The shocking crimes of these enemies have startled our nation into action. A few have been apprehended and convicted of treason. No one has even uttered the wild hope that all of them have been discovered. It is known that these enemies still have today many ardent sympathizers and some who have perhaps actively collaborated with them in their plots against the United States, yet those who would ferret them out and bring them to justice are often themselves subject to great abuse because of their determination to discover and destroy all mortal enemies of American freedom. To act foolishly as though these enemies did not need to be discovered and did not pose a real threat is to give them a great victory. Americans who willfully ignore the seriousness of the subversive activities of our Communist enemies in this country

are themselves endangering the lives and liberty of their fellow free men and are giving great comfort to the forces of the Communist enemy.

But our concern at this time is with something even more basic than the struggle with Communism as a political principle, for that is only one aspect of the deeper struggle, the spiritual warfare between Satan and the Saviour, between the forces of darkness and the saints of the Light. If we are to be effective Christian soldiers, we must learn much about the archenemy of our souls and his tactics..

One of the first lessons of warfare is that of *camouflage*. The Communist enemy in Korea made most effective use of this method of securing advantage over our troops. I shall never forget talking to a slightly wounded GI one day just outside a battalion aid station where he had come to receive treatment for some superficial wounds received in the fighting at the front.

"Chaplain," he said to me, "the worst thing about this messy fighting over here is that one never can see the enemy. I've been right on the front line for four days getting fired at and I've never yet been able to see a single enemy soldier. If I could see them I could hit them, but it's terrible when you can't see them."

Many times during those difficult days I had officers and men tell me substantially the same thing. The rough brush-covered terrain of Korea was easy to hide in and the Chinese particularly made very effective use of camouflage. It was often somewhat demoralizing for the United Nations troops.

The Christian needs to be aware that his adversary will do all in his power to keep himself and his ef-

forts covered up completely. Often he hides behind a mantle of respectable good works. If he can sidetrack a Christian from that which is God's perfect will for his life by suggesting to him that he choose some path which seems perfectly good and upright, a signal victory will have been won; and the results in the believer's life will be tragic. How often Satan conceals his real intentions by posing as an angel of light.

If, however, the devil cannot succeed in hiding himself completely, he may try another tactic, that of *confusion*. This was illustrated for me vividly any number of times in Korea.

We were in positions to the north and a little west of Uijongbu on the west central front in the spring of 1951, a few days after our drop at Munsan. All of a sudden I heard a loud voice coming from the direction of the front lines. I could tell that it was greatly amplified and was reaching us over a loud speaker. I felt sure that our outfit did not have any equipment like that in use, but it was easy to determine that the voice was speaking English so I began an investigation to determine what was happening. It did not take long to find out. The Chinese had set up several loud speakers on the top of the ridge which represented their front line, and they were broadcasting an appeal to the soldiers in the foxholes facing them. They were telling us that we were fighting a needless war. The Koreans, they said, hadn't asked us to come over and tear up their country. We were destroying their homes and farms, making orphans of their children and generally ruining their land. All this was because a few Wall Street capitalists had ordered us to fight a bitter war far from home to

serve their interests. Our mothers, wives, and sweet-hearts were lonely for us and longing to have us at home. It was a senseless war anyway, for the Red army was invincible, and it was foolish for us to think that we could defeat it. Why did we not just lay down our weapons and tell our superior officers that we weren't going to fight a bloody war any longer for the sake of a few capitalists?

On and on for hours the enemy speaker droned. I must add also, to the credit of the American soldiers, that this propaganda accomplished nothing for the enemy. The only reaction among the soldiers in the foxholes was one of amusement that the Communists would think them so stupid as to be susceptible to such a ridiculous propaganda. There was no laying down of arms. On the contrary there was a determined effort to locate and destroy the loud speakers. This was done. Every American soldier knew that that bitter struggle in a bleak, far-away land was very vitally connected with the liberties of those that he loved back in the familiar scenes of his homeland. He knew that he was not fighting for Wall Street financiers, nor yet alone for the Koreans, although his compassion reached out to them in many ways. He was fighting for his own liberties, for the safety of his own home and for his own way of life.

The American army was much more successful in introducing confusion into the enemy ranks. Often we would hear loud speakers blaring from overhead, and the words in Chinese or Korean would be mixed with the roar of large airplane motors. Over the front lines of the enemy an American army transport plane would be flying back and forth dropping leaflets urging the enemy to surrender and promising him

kind treatment and plenty to eat if he did so. The loud speakers would broadcast specific directions from the plane to those who wished to surrender. They were to follow a certain prescribed pattern in order to escape being shot down by United Nations soldiers. Many did follow these instructions, and sometimes the large numbers who were surrendering to our troops posed a real problem. The enemy had failed to introduce confusion into our ranks, but we had successfully introduced it into his own.

How skillfully the devil labours to introduce confusion into the hearts and minds of Christian soldiers! When they are fired with enthusiasm for onslaughts upon his territory through prayer and the preaching of the Word, he whispers in their ears that it is foolish to think that their efforts will really accomplish anything. He will point to the weaknesses and failures of other Christians. He will magnify the successes of the few giants of faith who have successfully defeated him and make these successes seem to be so unusual as to be outside the reach of any but an extraordinary, select few.

Perhaps he will point to the little that seems to be accomplished by the combined efforts of all Christians in holding back the tides of iniquity in the society of which they are a part. He will say to the believer, "You are just one little individual among millions. What can you expect your puny efforts to accomplish?" He will even make use of the prophecies of the scripture and, pointing to them, remind the believer that God has warned us that the world situation will wax worse and worse until the coming of Christ. With these tactics he often succeeds in getting Christians discouraged, and he persuades

them to refrain from all-out attack upon his strongholds.

A prominent evangelical minister in the west when questioned recently by a friend of mine as to why he did not take a strong stand against the apostasy which had crept into his denomination and had seized control of the ecclesiastical machinery answered, "Well, I believe the Lord is coming so soon that it would be useless for me to try to do anything about this bad situation."

What confusion! What failure to recognize the hidden tactics and the subtle blandishments of the enemy! Such an attitude is as much a victory for Satan as that of the member of my own church in Texas who said to me once, "I don't believe there is any use of my even trying to do anything for the Lord. I haven't any talents or special abilities and I'm sure my efforts would count for nothing!" May God make us aware of all of the efforts of the enemy to confuse us, discourage us, and thus render us impotent in conflict with him.

We have spoken already of the enemy's effort to dull the believer's consciousness of Satanic power and activity and thus take away any sense of urgency in spiritual conflict. There are those, however, who, while not being deceived as to the necessity of using spiritual powers in overcoming the wiles of the foe, nevertheless fall prey to another device of the devil. This is the tactic of *concealment*. It is often referred to in military terms as ambush.

The most horrible day of my war experiences in Korea started off very well. Our military maneuvers had been highly successful. We were pushing the enemy back rapidly. In fact, we had him on the run.

Orders had been given that we were not to stop but were to press our advantage to the full. If the enemy could be kept off balance and not allowed to regroup, we would be able to press forward several miles before stopping to establish a strong line of defense.

As I have said, orders were given that our convoy was not to halt under any circumstances. We were pitted against the Chinese in this particular sector, and our artillery, mortars, and machine guns were destroying them in such numbers that their dead bodies were actually piled on one another in spots. There were places on the road where the bodies were lying so thick that it was necessary to drive our trucks right over them. There wasn't even time to clear them off the road! The reader can imagine what it meant to a Christian minister to drive over those dead men. He will understand that it was all I could do to allow my driver to continue along that road over those bodies. I kept thinking that each one of them represented a precious eternal soul for whom Christ died and that the reason we were over there mowing them down with our machine guns and driving over them with our vehicles was that the Christian Church had failed to get to them with the witness of the gospel as Christ had commanded. Had they been reached with the gospel they would never have been God-hating, cruel Communists. They would never have listened to the false propaganda of the Marxists who stirred up hatred of the western nations. But there they were, mute witnesses to the lethargy and carelessness of the Christians of the world.

After several hours the main body of our regiment was ordered to stop and establish itself for the night,

setting up a perimeter of defense around the bivouac areas. One battalion was to go ahead, pressing our advantage over the enemy, with orders to take a certain hill three or four miles up the road and dig in there for the expected counterattack. In order to proceed to its objective it was necessary for the battalion to pass through a very narrow defile on the road. Little precaution was taken to see if there were enemy troops around that little canyon. None made any appearance nor fired at our troops. In their haste to reach their ultimate objective, the officers of the battalion apparently presumed that the enemy had all retreated ahead of them.

Reaching the hill which was the objective of that particular operation, the men began to dig in for the night, making themselves as secure as possible against the attack which was almost sure to come under cover of the darkness.

There had been a few casualties along the way, so as soon as the battalion command post had been established, the ambulances were started back along the road with the wounded. A number of empty trucks were sent along with them to bring back supplies. As this convoy of trucks and ambulances reached the narrow defile, enemy machine guns and mortars opened up from both sides of the road. Riflemen appeared behind almost every rock and tree. Their fire was murderous. They had closed their trap. None of our trucks were able to get through—in a few moments they had all been set on fire. Even the wounded men in the ambulances were all killed. As far as I know only one man survived that massacre, and he only for long enough to stumble back through the darkness to the regimental command

post. I talked to him briefly as he lay dying in the aid station.

"Oh, Chaplain," he cried, "we didn't even have a chance. They didn't even give us a chance to surrender!"

For two days the enemy held that narrow cut, and it was impossible for us to get supplies and equipment through to our battalion ahead. They fought doggedly to get back to us and we tried desperately to get through to them. Our only communication was by radio. When we finally did break through, the effort had cost us many casualties. And it was all because the enemy had concealed himself and his intentions from us, and we had not taken proper precautions against him in our haste.

Satan, the great enemy of our souls, will seek desperately to convince us that he is not around and does not have to be reckoned with. When we have had success in our Christian lives, he will try to make us believe that he has retreated far from us. A member of one of my churches, explaining to me that she would not be at prayer meeting on a certain Wednesday evening, said to me one day, "I guess it won't make much difference whether I'm there or not. Things seem to be running very smoothly in the church, and I guess we haven't anything special that we need to pray about." I was amazed at the utter lack of understanding of the constant danger threatening the church of Christ. The devil knows that if he can lull believers into complacency and make them feel that they do not have to reckon with him and take precautions against him, he will have them trapped and can bring great spiritual catastrophe upon them. That is why the scripture warns us, "Be sober, be

vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).

Still another tactic of the enemy which should be considered and prepared for is that of *counterattack*.

There were days in our fighting over in Korea when everything seemed to be going our way. The enemy would be giving ground steadily. Then suddenly our forward troops would run into blistering fire, and thousands of screaming troops would rush madly at our lines. Sometimes there would be some forewarning of such an attack, but it did come often without warning. Everything that the enemy possessed would be hurled at us. Hundreds of enemy soldiers would be sacrificed in order to keep great pressure on our forces.

On those dark days our aid men and medical officers would work until they were exhausted. I have watched the doctors work steadily around the clock with no attempt to get any sleep, caring for the wounded and dying. During every hour of daylight one could hear the whirr of the helicopters as they kept coming to the battlefield, taking the most critically wounded back to hospitals in rear areas for the emergency operations which in many, many cases saved their lives. Those were dark days—days of counterattack. It was, incidentally, on such days that the American soldier displayed his true magnificence. There were never any whining complaints, never any who thought we should give up. Every man had faith that though the situation looked dark for the present, the strength and resources of his own beloved and great nation were behind him and that the tide would be turned and the enemy would be

defeated. Victory was sure to come!

In spiritual warfare there are times when in the midst of apparent peace and victory the devil suddenly hurls something very fierce at us. All his resources seem to be taxed with the weight of that which he brings against our spiritual lives. We had thought he was on the run, and instead we find ourselves without warning in the midst of trials, disappointments, sorrows and heartbreaks of great magnitude. Sometimes it does not take big things to defeat us. How many times some insignificant, petty thing brings real defeat into our lives. We must be prepared for the attacks of Satan wherever they come—"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Corinthians 2:11). We must be prepared to resist him (James 4:7).

One more method of the enemy should be mentioned before we bring this subject to a close. It is one of the favored ways of operation when things are going badly for the enemy. It is the tactic of *compromise*.

Early in the summer of 1951 as we were pressing forward very successfully against the enemy, far north of the 38th parallel on the eastern sector of the front, word reached us that we were not to proceed any farther but were to dig in and hold the lines that we had. We were given to understand that the people back at home in the States were sick of the costly war and were clamouring for peace. An effort was going to be made to reach an armistice for our government, and our home folks wanted peace. Let it always be remembered that it was not the fighting man in the front lines who thought we should stop the Korean War when we did. He did not see the

Chinese Communist as an invincible foe, for he had been beating the Chinese soundly for many days. Every soldier to whom I talked who had had any experience fighting the Communist Koreans and Chinese felt that the only way to satisfactorily end the war was to finish it up by freeing Korea completely from Communism.

When the armistice talks started, our outfit, because of its special mobility, was soon drawn out of the line, sent back to the rear areas and then very soon on over to Japan to be ready to make a parachute drop very quickly if things got out of hand. We were told that a peace camp was to be set up near the village of Munsan, where we had a few months before made a combat jump. Our high ranking officers and diplomats were going to try to come to some terms with the Communists in order to end the war through compromise.

Before many days of the armistice talks had passed, the whole world discerned the fact that the Communists did not want peace but were stalling for time and for advantage, still fighting the war but hoping to win it in a less costly way through compromise.

The whole tragic story of the end of what was at least the first phase of the Korean War has now been told. With every report the American losses through casualties go higher even at this late date—yet all this cost of human lives and human suffering was paid without a real victory because the enemy found us willing to compromise with him in order to secure a condition of artificial peace rather than victory!

The devil has made tragic inroads on the Christian Church today because he has found so many believers

who seem to be willing to place peace above victory, who are more concerned with preserving a state of quiet and restfulness in their lives than they are with being strictly obedient to the Lord's commands.

God's people have been called to a life of warfare—their role is that of the soldier. The believer is not chosen for a life of ease and comfort in this earth. He is a pilgrim and a stranger here and is to wage a constant warfare against the spiritual forces of great darkness. But the God who called us to the warfare and chose us to be His soldiers has promised that we would always come out on the winning side if we fought with Him and in His way.

I never questioned in my mind what the ultimate outcome of the fighting in Korea would be. Even when things looked darkest and a retreat had been ordered, I felt confident that we would win, for was not the United States of America, the greatest land on earth, behind us to the end? What other knowledge was needed to inspire confidence? None, indeed.

In the spiritual warfare we have assurance of victory. One is on the victory side if he is on the Lord's side. No price is too great to pay to be sure that one is walking in the center of His will. No effort for His glory will go unnoticed or unrewarded. He "always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

May God be pleased to take the simple lessons which He taught me in Korea and use them to show you that He is always ready to bring His children into rich experiences of His victory if they will trust Him and obey His Word. He is willing to overcome every obstacle and to provide all necessary strength and wisdom. May we be unwilling to be without His victory.