

Serving in the Army of God

WARM UP

"I am originally from South Africa and I have lived in New Zealand for the last 9 years, but my story goes back a few years now, to 1979-1981. Over this time I served in the South African Defence Force. I served mainly in the war in Angola over this time. The unit I served in was 101 Air Supply Unit where our main mission was to do air drops of supplies and ammunition to our troops that were behind enemy lines.

In this time period Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) was going through a so-called "democratic election". We all knew that Robert Mugabe would win this election. About the time of the election the war in Rhodesia intensified but we were sent in to retrieve arms and supplies that were in Rhodesia. As it was, South Africa had to distance itself from them in the weeks leading up to the election. We were called on to fly in to Rhodesia in C130 Hercules cargo planes. We were instructed to wear only civilian clothes and not have anything that would trace us back to the SADF. As a soldier we [had all been] issued with dogtags that had our name, rank, number and blood group. These dogtags are any soldier's identity out in the field of battle. As we got on the plane we were instructed to take off our dogtags and hand them in. At this point I felt abandoned by the country we loved and served.

Praise the Lord, when I received my dogtag from Paul Subritzky [Promise Keepers 08 Event], this incident came back to me, and the Lord reminded me of Hebrews 13:5 '...I will never leave you nor forsake you'. I am proud to serve in the army of the Most High God."
Ross

BACKGROUND

Paul talks about how we as Christians are adopted into the family of God. In the Roman world a father had absolute power over his family - 'patria potestas'. This was a power of absolute disposal and control, and in the early days was the power of life and death. In regard to his father, a Roman son never came of age. No matter how old he was he was still under 'patria potestas', in the absolute control and possession of his father. We put ourselves under the control of God who becomes our 'patria potestas'.

READ Romans 8:14-17

QUESTIONS

1. To be adopted by God means we have to put the old man away and live as a new man. What are some of the things you have had to change in your life?
2. If we are to live under the law of God, how do we discover what this law is?

3. To be a son of God means we must live in God's Spirit. If you were put on trial for being an adopted son of God, what evidence would there be to convict you?

4. Share in the group what it means to you to be brothers in Christ, of one family.

CONSIDER THIS

The Emperor Claudius adopted Nero in order that he might succeed him on the throne; they were not in any sense blood relations. Claudius already had a daughter Octavia. To cement the alliance, Nero wished to marry her. Nero and Octavia were in no sense blood relations; yet, in the eyes of the law, they were brother and sister; and before they could marry, the Roman senate had to pass special legislation.



IT'S TIME FOR PRAYER

MY RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER

When I get up each morning, my first response will be to give thanks to God that I am a part of His family.



WRAP UP

Share with one another what it means to belong to the family of God.

What symbol do we wear to show we are a part of God's family? Share this with one another.