



This devotion is based on a letter to the local Veterans of Foreign Wars Chapter [6083] of Enterprise, AL, September 2015.

In 1945, a movie was released by Warner Brothers entitled, God is My Co-Pilot. It is the story of Colonel, later Brigadier General, Robert L. Scott who flew managed to get into combat with the Flying Tigers in World War II under General Chenault and went on to be a moving force in tactical aviation.

While the title is charming and well-intended by Scott, a dedicated Christian, we must recognize God takes a second seat to no one. He is either our Commander, our Master, our Lord, our Pilot-in-Command - or He is nothing to us<sup>1</sup>. Fortunately for Scott, unlike the title of his book, God was his Pilot and he guided his life.

There is another well meaning and similar slogan one finds on posters and bumper stickers which read: "*Jesus Died For Your Soul And The Soldier Died For Your Freedom*. I hate to be an iconoclast, but this, too, regardless the commendable motive behind it, is also not true in whole. Regardless the esteem earned by the American soldier, there is no freedom apart from that granted in the redemptive blood of Jesus Christ. Isaiah the prophet, in describing the coming Lord, says: *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.* (Isaiah 61:1 KJV)

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<sup>1</sup> Much like *The Trilemma* of Jack Lewis in Mere Christianity - I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

To the synagogue, on the Sabbath at Nazareth of Galilee, Jesus confirmed and fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* (Luke 4:18-19) The Lord came to heal, to save, and to set free. No mortal can do any commendable work apart from that which mirrors the redemptive work of the Lord. A good and Godly soldier, just as a minister of God, imitates that good work of the Lord in fighting for Liberty, Freedom, and Justice for all alike.

Jay Kim, the first Korean elected to Congress, tells this story of MacArthur's liberation of Seoul. The North Korean occupiers were evacuating the city ahead of the leading elements of MacArthur's invasion force. But they had demanded that the city be destroyed along with personal possessions, setting homes and buildings afire. Jay Kim was just a little boy at the time. There was smoke, and the sound of gunfire, everywhere. He was helping his father and other siblings salvage what little possessions they owned from their burning residence. Suddenly, there was an eerie silence as the last elements of the North Korean Army fled the city. Jay looked down the smoke filled street to see the largest soldier he had ever seen emerge from the smoke and chaos. It was a US Marine bearing his weapon at the ready. He came to the boy, stooped down and put his arm around his shoulder, gave him a stick of gum, and directed him to seek cover inside the building since there was still sporadic sniper fire in the area. From that moment forward, a little boy named Jay Kim resolved, someday, to become an American! And so he did!

That is what Freedom is about - and perfect and true Freedom only comes as a gift from God though enforced and perpetuated by his appointed minister - the Godly soldier.