

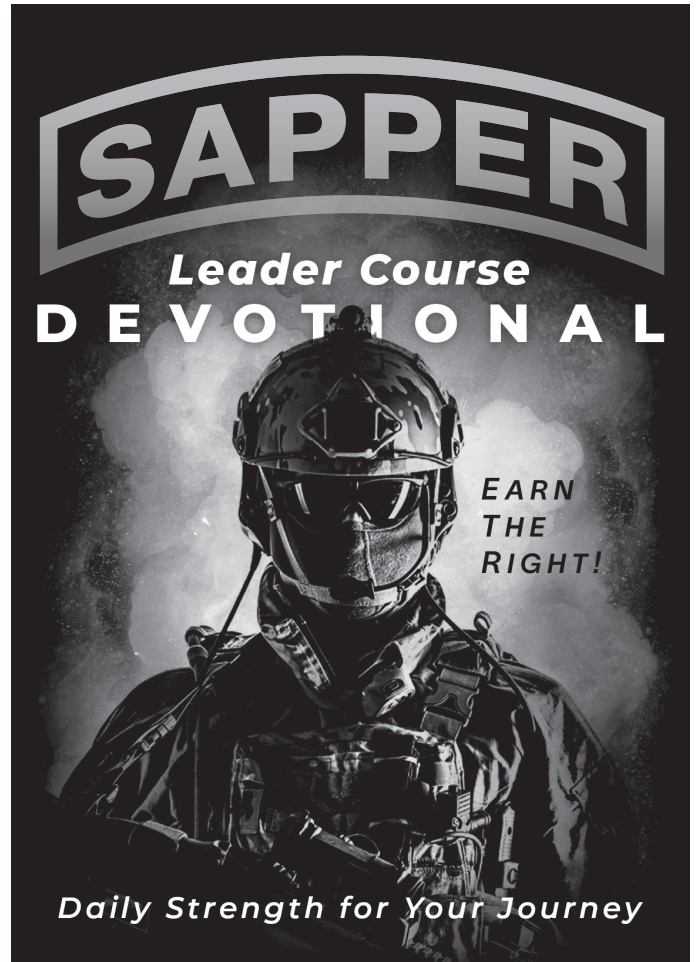
SAPPER

Leader Course

DEVOTIONAL

**EARN
THE
RIGHT!**

Daily Strength for Your Journey



Sapper Leader Course Devotional

Daily Strength for Your Journey

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Dedication

To Sappers—past, present, and future.





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INTRODUCTION

The soldier's heart, the soldier's spirit, the soldier's soul, are everything. Unless the soldier's soul sustains him, he cannot be relied on and will fail himself and his commander and his country in the end.

General George C. Marshall
(Speech delivered at Trinity College on June 15, 1941)

Sapper, congratulations on your decision to tackle one of the military's toughest training courses. Over the next few weeks you will be tested—mentally, physically, and emotionally. What I didn't understand fifty years ago as a Ranger student was the spiritual test that would come as part of the course. Looking back, that spiritual test would help me not only pass Ranger School, but also survive as an infantry platoon leader on the battlefields of Vietnam only a few months later.

Since my tour in Vietnam, I've experienced time and again the truth of General Marshall's words—*the soldier's heart, the soldier's spirit, the soldier's soul, are everything*. I've also learned that the battles we face in life extend beyond the physical battlefield. There is a war going on in the spiritual realm, and every human being, know it or not, is a participant. The stakes are high, and the outcome will echo into eternity.

On one side is God, Creator and Sustainer of everything that exists. He sent His Son, Jesus, on a rescue mission to give us life, both now and throughout eternity. On the other side is Satan and all of his evil forces of death and darkness. He has one main mission: to steal, kill, and destroy human souls. The evidence of his destructive work is everywhere. To survive and win on this spiritual battlefield you need to become a warrior for God.

My prayer for you is that the spiritual strength you draw from these devotionals will help you earn your Sapper tab. I hope you make it. But even more importantly, I pray that you will grow into a battle-ready warrior for the Lord, capable of fighting and winning on any battlefield.

I close with the words of St. Paul which he wrote to the Christians in Rome:

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 8:37-39 ■

MAXIMIZING YOUR MINUTES

Sapper, pay close attention to these tips for getting the most out of this devotional. The obvious stressors of the Sapper Leader Course will require some creativity and flexibility on your part, but you can definitely grow spiritually during this time.

Like any other worthwhile goal, Christian growth and maturity require consistent effort. If you make this devotional book part of your spiritual fitness regimen during SLC, it will be most useful when read each day. Reading times should take about five minutes.

A suggested way to approach your devotional time could include the following:

- *Pray and ask the Lord to open your heart and mind to the truth of His Word.*
- *Read the verse at the beginning of the devotional for that day and then paraphrase it in your own words.*
- *Read the devotional.*
- *Try to answer the following questions:*
 - *What biblical truth does this devotional talk about?*

- *How was the truth applied in the devotional?*
- *Do I believe this truth could be important for my own life?*
- *How can I apply this truth to my own life?*
- *Close in prayer and ask God to help you integrate this truth into your own life.*

Five minutes a day may not seem like much, but you can experience spiritual strength and growth by consistently using these short devotions. The Lord will honor your efforts to honor Him.

Sapper, decide right now that you are going to exercise spiritual discipline by reading these devotionals every day of the course. You'll be glad you did!

PS: Remember that there is a Sapper Chaplain present during all phases of the course. Stay tuned for dates and times of worship services. ■

Day -1 (29 Days to go)

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:9

Congratulations for volunteering for one of the military’s most challenging leadership courses! Only a tiny fraction of our nation’s military chooses to undertake what you’re about to experience.

Regardless of how prepared you may be for SLC, you’re bound to feel a bit nervous, and with good reason. The graduation rate continuously hovers around the 50% mark.

Don’t clutter your mind with what others may experience. Think this way: you’re here to handle whatever the instructors throw at you. If they can dish it out, you can take it. Hundreds before you proudly wear the Sapper tab. You can do this!

Wisdom would tell you, however, that it is foolish to tackle SLC in your own strength alone. You’ll need instructors and classmates to make it to the finish line successfully. Most importantly, you can look to God for the wisdom, strength, and endurance needed to graduate.

Over 3000 years ago, God told a young leader named Joshua to be strong and courageous in leading Israel through many battles against warring nations. He assured Joshua that as the Commander of the Universe, He would be with Joshua wherever he would go. God kept his promise to Joshua. He’ll do the same for you.

Prayer: *Father, I need you to be with me throughout SLC. I thank you in advance for your Presence. Amen. ■*

Day 0 (28 Days to go)

FOLLOW ORDERS WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Romans 13:1

As members of the combined arms team, Sappers not only follow orders, but they do this with the right attitude. They obey as part of military order and discipline, and because they fall under authority.

Authority—Are you familiar with Romans 13:1? Do you realize that all authority has been ordained by God? You see, God’s plan for you includes the authority figures He has placed into your life: your parents, teachers, coaches, and leaders, military and civilian? Your Sapper instructors are an integral part of the plan. They bear responsibility to teach you everything Sapper leaders need to know.

Something crucial to understand, though, is that God hasn’t promised to place perfect people to have authority over you. They’re human just like you. They make mistakes, just like you.

If you can keep this in mind as you go through SLC, you’ll not only experience less heartburn and anxiety, but you’ll be able to focus more effectively on the tasks needing to be done. Just as importantly, following orders with a good attitude will help your leaders do their jobs more effectively and with less stress.

Everybody benefits. Obedience to authority honors God.

Prayer: *God, you already know that many times I haven’t followed orders with the right attitude. I want to change that—beginning today. Help me to do this not only for SLC, but as I move forward into the rest of my life. Amen. ■*