

## Integrating Ministry To The Military In Your Church

Ministry leaders, what if you had access to a special people group within your church who could benefit from your ministry, but also help you reach your community for Christ? And what if they could then be mobilized to take the gospel message to the uttermost parts of the earth, helping to fulfill The Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20)? Would you be interested in making them part of your ministry strategy?

I hope the answer is *yes* because chances are you may already have access to them right now. They are the men and women of our military services, both active, guard, reserve, and retired. They are indeed special. And you could say they are "missionaries in waiting" ... waiting for you to train, equip, and deploy them as ambassadors for Christ.

Here in the National Capital Region, the population is dense with military people. Consider this: there's about 50,000 active duty who reside here, with another 70,000 dependents and family members, along with more than 30,000 veterans. There's no other location in the country that has 10 military hubs or bases so close together. In sum, there's upwards of 150,000 military in the greater Washington DC area.

The spiritual needs are significant. With 2 of 3 military marriages struggling and many unravelling, 4 of 5 combat veterans silently struggling with trauma, and 22 veterans a day committing suicide (that's one nearly every 60 minutes in our nation), the needs for ministry to the military have never been greater!

Here's the top 10 reasons why I think military men and women deserve your attention and why they could benefit you in your ministry:

1. They're tested and proven leaders.
2. They know how to work well in teams.
3. Their service in various assignments around the nation and overseas make them highly adaptable to new experiences.
4. Having been to a number of professional development schools and training make them teachable AND good teachers.
5. They serve as role models for others.
6. They're mission-focused and results-driven.
7. Honor and integrity are core values from their military service.
8. They're highly disciplined.
9. They're courageous and not afraid to take on challenging tasks.
10. They remain committed and dedicated to organizational goals.

Those attributes would be attractive on anyone's resume.

Think of this special group as cross cultural missionaries and as force multipliers. Your church can help impact the world for Christ by *Ministering* to the military in your sphere of

influence, *Mobilizing* them as they become equipped to deploy or move on to their next location, and then watch them *Multiplying* by training others to be disciples.

II Tim 2:2 (NASB) says, "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

Leverage the not-so-hidden opportunities to spiritually train, equip, and deploy the military in your midst. Then watch how God blesses your church community and beyond for the sake of the gospel.

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