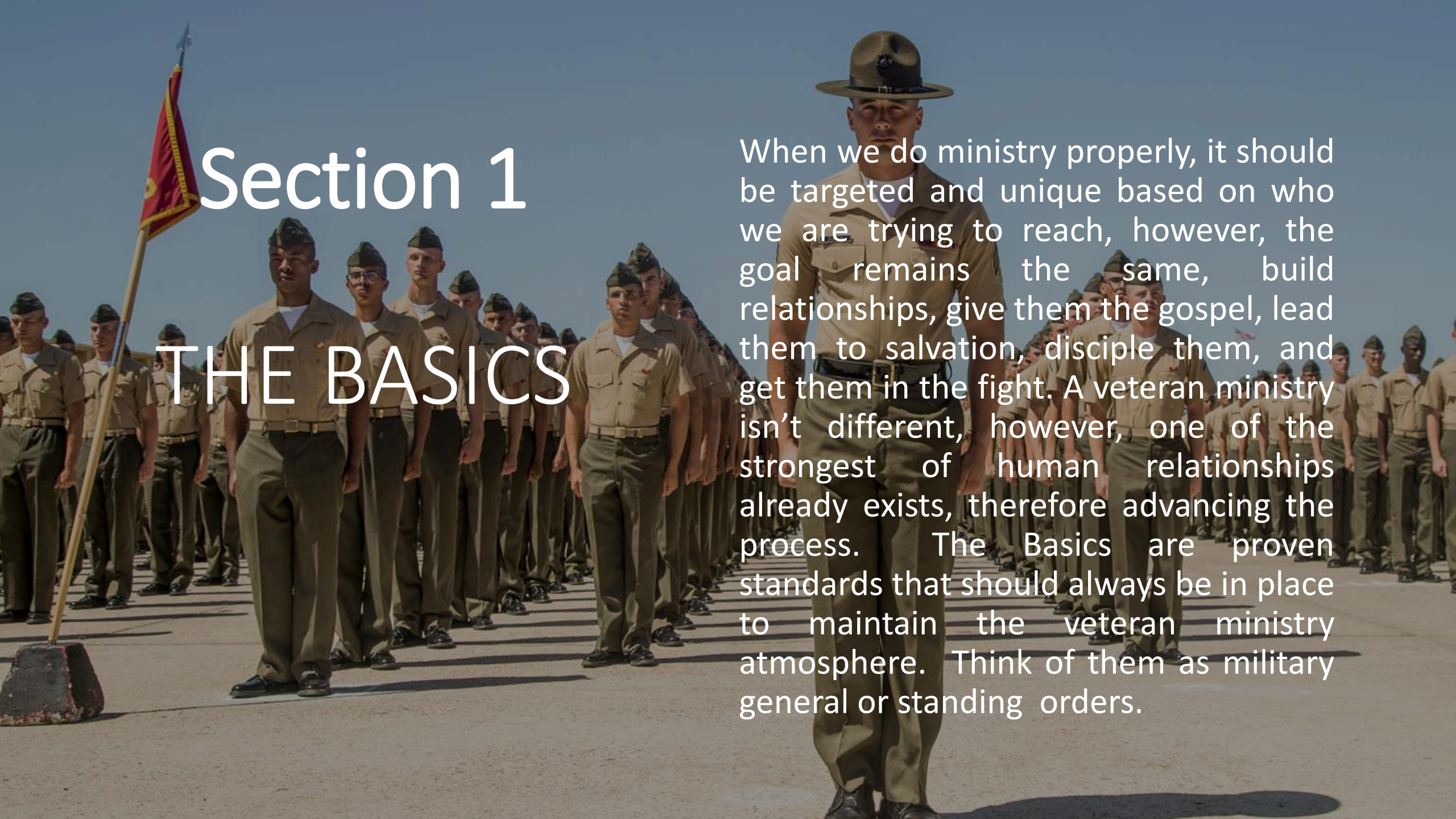




How to start a Discipled Veteran Ministry at your church

www.discipledveteran.com

CHURCH FOR VETERANS



Section 1

THE BASICS

When we do ministry properly, it should be targeted and unique based on who we are trying to reach, however, the goal remains the same, build relationships, give them the gospel, lead them to salvation, disciple them, and get them in the fight. A veteran ministry isn't different, however, one of the strongest of human relationships already exists, therefore advancing the process. The Basics are proven standards that should always be in place to maintain the veteran ministry atmosphere. Think of them as military general or standing orders.

1. Set & Maintain The Ministry Standard

Discipled Veteran is not a subculture or Veteran club of the church. Discipled Veteran's purpose is to motivate and mobilize an existing group of veterans within your church who have similar experiences to recruit, enlist, train, and join in the Great Commission Mission, with the church. Look for avenues that will cause interaction between veterans and non-veteran church members. It does not escape me that our recommended invitation cards may seem to contradict this because they read "church for veterans", however, the focus of the card is to attract lost veterans and is not meant to make a doctrinal statement. Also, in that you are reading this, one could only assume that your church is for vets.

2. Motivate, Encourage, & Hold Accountable

Continual motivation and encouragement with each veteran and the group is a very important aspect of the leader's role. He sets the tone for how active or inactive the group will be in progressing the mission. Remind the group that we are in a war as literal as any war we've ever been in, our brothers and sisters are laying on the battlefield dying, and it's our duty to get them. The only difference is the ramifications of this war are eternal and we will never be friends with the enemy. Accountability is crucial, that's how a veteran knows you care about them and that's also how a veteran shows he cares about you. Hold them accountable in carrying out the mission. You will see as we move forward techniques, we have in place to help accomplish this.

3. Build Comradery

Most every veteran will tell you the one thing they miss most about the military is the comradery of those they served with. Satan has been very successful at capitalizing on this tactic. He draws veterans in via comradery and treats them with alcohol making their situation worse. We use the same comradery to draw them in and treat them with the gospel. Comradery is not only an important factor in creating and progressing the mission of your team, but also an important factor in drawing in lost veterans. The leader must foster comradery by not only getting to know the veteran, but their families, for the purpose of nurturing comradery. You will see as we move forward techniques, we have in place to help accomplish this.

4. Infiltrate The Local Veteran Community

You are not in the fight if you don't leave headquarters and get on the battlefield. When you go on the battlefield the purpose is to search for and engage targets. Because of the existing comradery, veterans want to talk to other veterans. That's why you often see veterans wearing branch, unit, and warfare badges on hats, shirts, and license plates, in hopes of running into someone with a similar history. Furthermore, veterans tend to go where veterans go because they often share the same interests due to their past experiences. This is the open door that makes it easy for veterans to interact with other veterans and gives them the ability to invite them for a cup of coffee during a veteran meeting at your church. You will see as we move forward techniques, we have in place to help accomplish this.

5. Independent Church Ministry

Although this list contains tactics that have been proven to reach veterans with the gospel, your ministry is your individual church's ministry, and what may have worked in other areas may not work in your area and vice versa. Complacency kills, so Keep your head on a swivel looking for new opportunities to reach veterans. We are always available to discuss any idea and we appreciate ideas that work. Don't recreate the wheel but do what works in your area.

6. No Visitors

If our mission is to attract veterans to the group through comradery every veteran must be part of the team. If your team is doing it right, you will always have saved veterans and lost veterans on the team. They will have different jobs of course but they are on the team. You should track and treat every person on the team the same. Include everyone, even the lost veterans in the effort of inviting new veterans to the group. If you treat them like the team, they will want to be a bigger part of the team. This gives the enemy, Satan, less opportunity to separate them from the team. Leader, your mind set should be, this is your unit and some of them may spend eternity in hell if you don't do your job. This is very important.

7. Satan Is The Only Enemy

Satan is the only enemy every one else is either saved and, in the fight, or a victim of the enemy. A very successful tactic of the enemy is to lead us to believe that addicts, abortionists, LGBTQ, atheists, and anyone else who doesn't agree with our doctrine are the enemy, and we to often fall for it. This causes us to treat them like the enemy making it impossible for us to reach them, Satan retains them, and this keeps us from our objective.

8. The Pastors Position

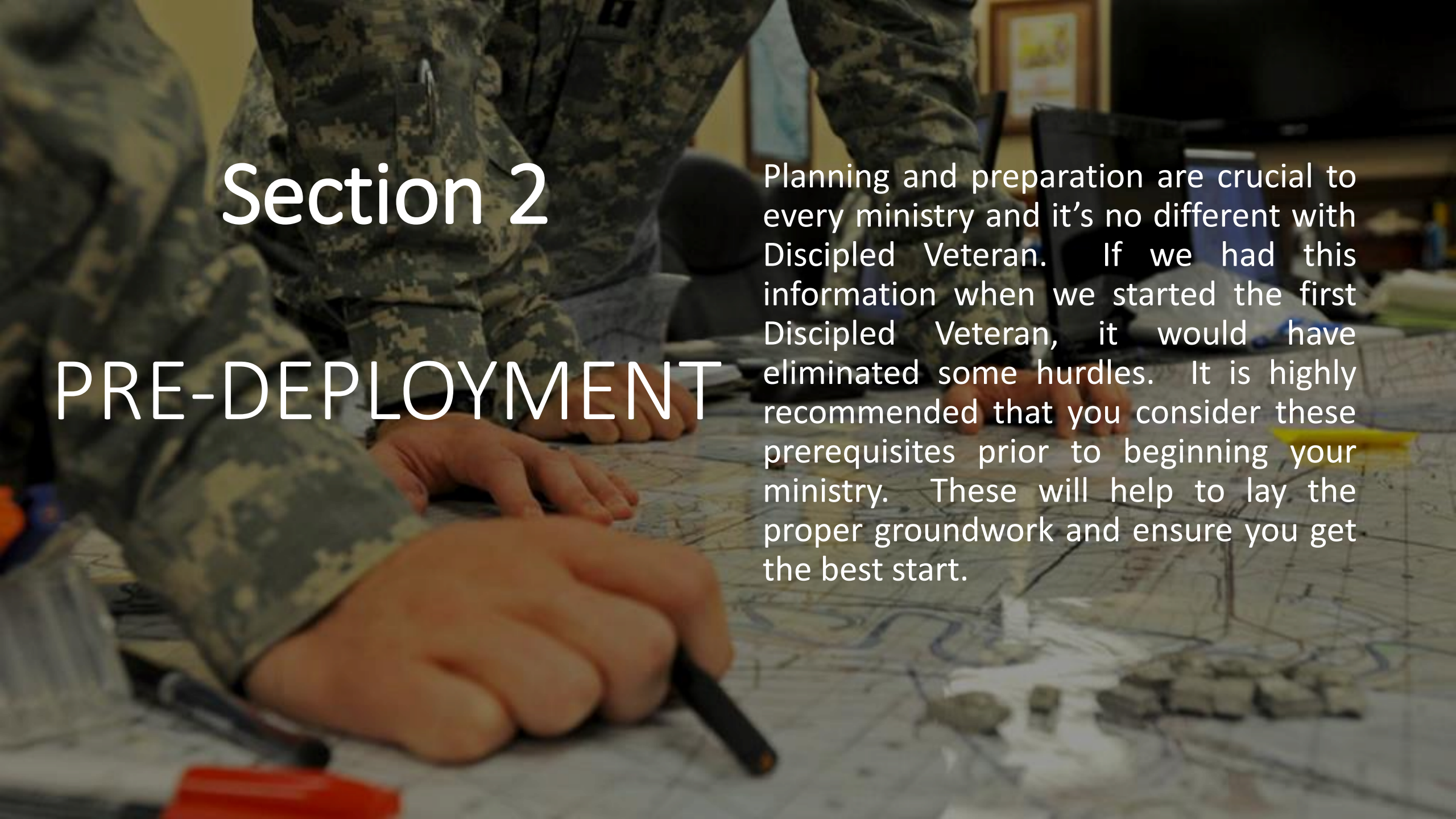
Sometimes pastors, especially pastors who are not veterans have hesitation about a ministry that may seem exclusive in nature. Rest assured that is not the case as it pertains to Disciplined Veteran. Not every President of the United States is a veteran, but every President is the Commander in Chief of the military. That is the position the pastor should hold as it pertains to Disciplined Veteran groups. Veterans understand, recognize, and respect authority and appreciate a pastor who cares enough about them to host a ministry for them. I would encourage the leader to call attention on deck when the pastor enters the room.

9. Ask Questions

We are not perfect, but through the process of experience we have learned where the enemy, Satan, has laid some traps in the past and can help you get around them. Please call, email, or text with any questions, concerns, ideas, or anything else that you would like a second opinion on.

stephendmassie@gmail.com

304-228-3531

The background image shows several soldiers in camouflage uniforms. In the foreground, a soldier's hands are visible, holding a black pen and pointing at a map spread out on a table. Other soldiers are visible in the background, also looking at the map. The scene appears to be a planning or briefing session in a military setting.

Section 2

PRE-DEPLOYMENT

Planning and preparation are crucial to every ministry and it's no different with Discipled Veteran. If we had this information when we started the first Discipled Veteran, it would have eliminated some hurdles. It is highly recommended that you consider these prerequisites prior to beginning your ministry. These will help to lay the proper groundwork and ensure you get the best start.

Choosing A Leader

Choose a saved, veteran, man to lead your Discipled Veteran Ministry. Be mindful that in choosing a leader the most important attribute is someone who can and will follow God. However, when I go into battle, I want to follow someone with some scars on their face. Remember the people we are trying to reach are going to have the same scars and will appreciate following some one who has dealt with what they are dealing with and can give them counsel on how God led them through it. The enemy, Satan, loves it when we think ministry leaders must be a clean faced guy who has been saved since childhood. He hates it when he faces someone he has faced before, knows his tricks, and how to lead others through them. We fall for this tactic often. Time and availability are desired attributes of every ministry leader, a retired veteran or one who is 100% rated by the VA often meets the bill. However, if we build the team properly less time is required by the leader because he will have lieutenants carrying some of the weight.

Build Your Team

Diversification is the name of the game because you want to be able to reach as many different groups of veterans as possible. If possible, have someone from each branch, varying eras, at least one female veteran, and others with as many different experiences as you can. The goal is to have someone to fill each gap. A Vietnam veteran will reach a Vietnam veteran better than an Iraq veteran, a female will reach a female better than a male, a veteran with PTSD will reach a veteran dealing with PTSD, and so on. It is recommended that you assign some lieutenants at this meeting also, normally one to oversee comradery building events and one to oversee community outreach events. Hold them accountable to the duties they take on, literally one of our brothers may spend eternity in Hell if they do not perform. As we move forward these duties will be outlined and discussed further. This allows the leader to heard the cats, build relationships, and follow up with every veteran and their family.

Planning Meetings

At this point, the leader, under the direction of the pastor should begin leading. The items from this point forward are ministry details that although pastor must approve, you are a leader, lead. Know this, you are never alone, there are numerous leaders at faithful churches all over the country who have recently done what you are doing. We and them are always available to assist you. At this juncture of your planning, you will take steps that will allow you to progress your mission or cause you to have to regroup, correct course. Have as many meetings as you need with as many different people as you need using the information you learn to lay the groundwork for the remaining topics in this section.

Curriculum Familiarization

We recommend you begin with our study of David, it is called 'The comfort of God's Greatest Warrior' and is downloadable under the resources tab on our website. In your free time or maybe as your daily devotion start to familiarize yourself with the curriculum. This will help you get the ministry vision, help you understand how God gave veterans David as an example, refamiliarize you with military acronyms, and prepare for when you begin teaching. At the same location you will find similar studies that should carry you through the first two years of lessons for the group.

Create a Social Media Presence

Create a Facebook page specifically for your group. Name it "Discipled Veteran (church name or town)". There are many examples of the other groups already on Facebook. If used properly it will be a wonderful tool. If you are unfamiliar with how to do it ask your church's media person or a younger veteran on your team to do it, but we highly recommend you get it done. Here are some reason why you should have a Facebook page for your group. It allows you to display what your group is doing and has been doing in terms of events and outings which will attract other veterans to get involved. It allows you to add veterans you meet, if you remember their name and look them up. It allows you to disseminate information to the group efficiently. It allows you to video conference and message other leaders. It allows you to send your weekly meeting message to all your veterans with the stroke of a couple keys. Set the admin permissions so you must approve all posts but allow others to post to the group to maintain group communication when not together.

Church Member Referrals

Everyone knows an unchurched veteran and you need to know as many as you can. This is also a great way to get the entire church involved in the Discipled Veteran Ministry. Utilizing the referral cards located under the resources tab of the Discipled Veteran website solicit & collect referrals from your congregation. We have found one of the best ways to do this is to insert them into the Sunday morning bulletin and announce and remind them to fill them out and return them in the offering plate, the office, or to you. Make sure they know that they shall remain completely anonymous if they like. This should give you a stack of veterans in your community to visit, reach out to, and add to your new Facebook page. We recommend you do this over a couple weeks and use it as a tool to get the church excited about this new ministry.

Select A Meeting Time

Select a meeting time, preferably during a regular midweek church service and here is why. The goal is to get veterans into the church, if your meeting is during the midweek service, before or after the service they may see someone in the regular service that they already know, which will assist in the goal. There are other things going on during the mid week service like nursery, youth groups, and other adult groups and services which accommodate a veteran's family who might join them. The mid week service is recommended over Sunday simply because it is easier to get an unchurched veteran and their family to church during the mid week service. Have one of your members spouses available and looking for new veteran spouses to set with in the main service. If your wife can make friends with a new veteran's wife and get them coming to church, you will find it much easier to keep the veteran coming. In one of the following sections, we will discuss the importance of the veteran's family and what a crucial role they play in this ministry.

Select A Meeting Location

We understand that space is a premium in most churches but, if possible, reserve a room specifically for the veterans group. If you must share a room figure out a way to set up and break down weekly while still maintaining a military environment. We do it for youth groups, we can do it for military veterans who preserved our ability to worship the way we do. If done properly the space will be used throughout the week for other things associated with the veteran ministry. Make it a military space with either branch decals or flags for each of the six branches, the US, and Christian flag, and a reserved MIA/POW draped chair in the corner. The meeting format is discussion with the leader setting at the end of the table, so it is important to situate the tables and chairs in a fashion to support that. Be mindful that most will not want their backs to the door if possible. Ensure the coffee pot is working and you have cream and sugar for the Air Force veterans.

Select The First Meeting Date

You must have something to invite them to, so set a date and start promoting the date for your first Discipled Veteran meeting. We recommend a minimum of a couple weeks out allowing you time to prepare your space and properly promote the meeting. Do not be discouraged if you don't have many visitors at the first meeting, use the time to motivate your team. The very first Discipled Veteran Meeting was attended by only five people.

Print Invitation Cards

Now that we know what day of the week and time, we are going to hold our meetings we need to get invitation cards printed. They should include the meeting day and time, the church contact info, and plan of salvation. Business card size or a little bigger makes it easy for your guys to carry and looks less like you have an agenda when striking up a conversation with veterans you meet. Available under the resources tab of the website is a downloadable invitation card example. Just change the church info and print.

Identify Your Target Areas

Veterans go where veterans go and in your area your veterans know where they are. During one of your team meetings make a list of locations where veterans meet in your area and plan a visit. We will discuss common target areas later in the “Infiltrate the Veteran Community” section, however, your area may have some not identified on our list, so look for additional places in your area where veterans might congregate like car and gun shows.

Advertise

There are many inexpensive ways to advertise your church's new veteran ministry. Facebook ads, newspapers, bulletin boards, just to name a few. There have been veterans show up to meetings and say *"nobody invited me, it just kept popping up on my Facebook all week so I thought I would come"*. Use the algorithms that are already in place, veterans search veteran stuff online and when they do veteran stuff pops up in their feed.

Know Your Numbers

What is the veteran population of your area? Our website can help. A chart on our website breaks down the veteran population of each county in the US. Some churches draw from multiple counties so keep in mind that you may want to review the counties around you. Also keep in mind that the veteran population listed on our site does not include a veteran's family count.

Create A Muster Sheet

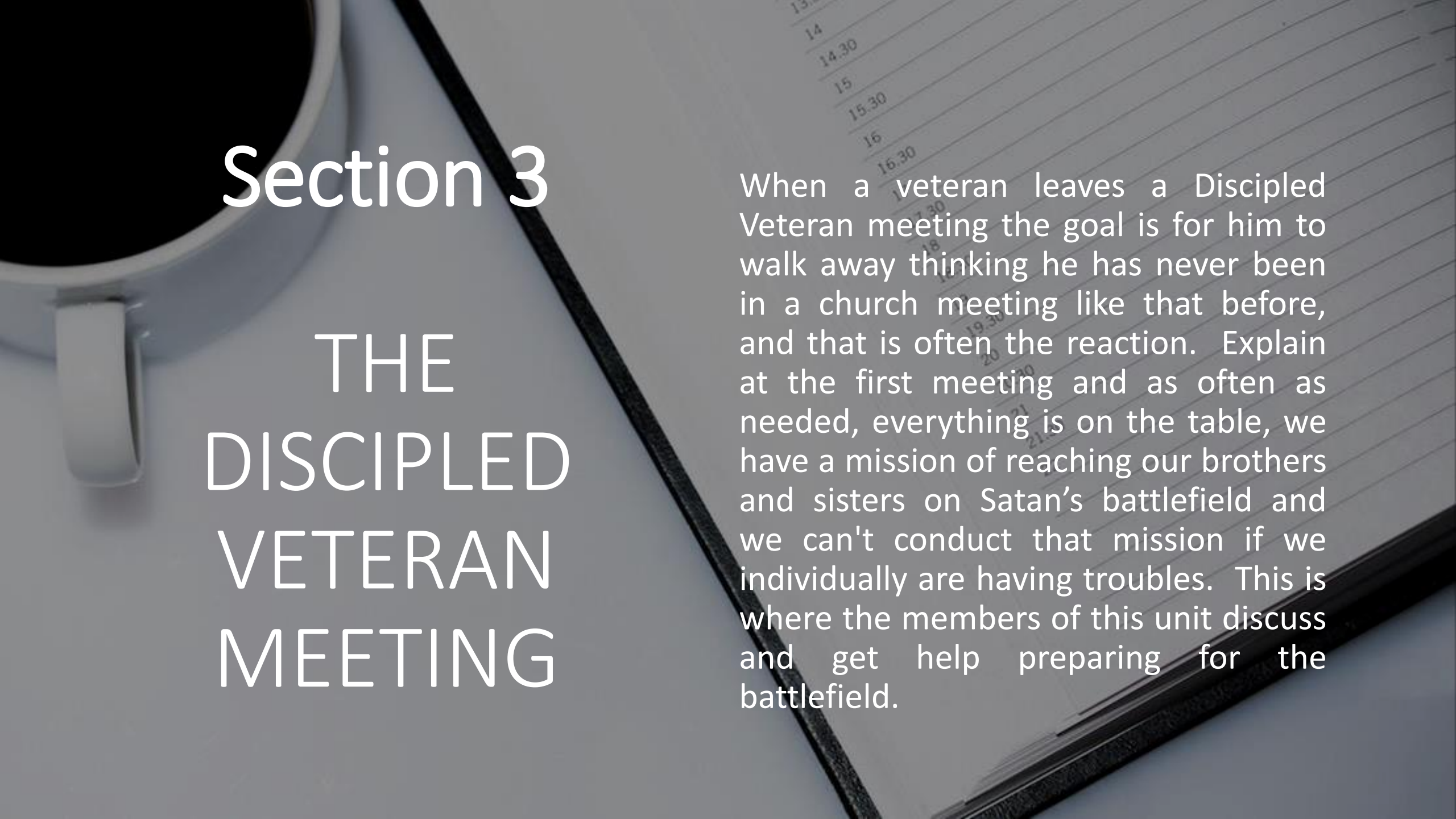
Create a spread sheet, or if the church already has a system to track people you may be able to use it but have some system in place to track your people. It is imperative to list every veteran you encounter so you can maintain communication with them. Use your muster sheet to keep additional data such as family members names, difficulties you can help with, branch of service, if they are saved or not. If you work your group, before long you will have more people to track than you can remember. This will also be very useful as you send your weekly muster messages, as you will see later in the meeting agenda section. Under the resources tab of our website, you will find an example muster sheet that you may use.

First Comradery Building Event

Comradery building events will help promote and display comradery to the group. It is recommended that you schedule your first comradery building event after your second meet. This gives you time to promote it during the meetings and to new veterans your group will meet. Ensure it is open to every veteran, even if they have never attended a meeting, as this may be the event that makes them comfortable enough to start coming to the meetings. Ensure this event includes the veteran's family, as the families need to meet and start building comradery. If a veterans wife wants to come undoubtedly the veteran will come. A cookout at the church or near by park is a great option for this first event.

First Outreach Event Date

Sometime shortly after your first meeting you should schedule an outreach event. This timing gives you opportunity to promote it in your meetings. A good resource for finding out what is happening for veterans in the community is the county veteran's affairs office. Depending on what the event is, plan to have a Discipled Veteran table set up or some presence so you can meet veterans. It's good to have some way to collect their contact information. Have them sign up for a gift certificate to a gun or hardware store. Plan a fishing trip and then take every veteran that signs up at your table.

The background of the slide features a top-down view of a workspace. On the left, a white ceramic coffee cup is partially visible. A black pen lies diagonally across the center. To the right, an open notebook with lined pages is shown, with some numbers (13, 14, 14.30, 15, 15.30, 16, 16.30, 17.30, 18, 19.30, 20, 21) written on its pages.

Section 3

THE DISCIPLED VETERAN MEETING

When a veteran leaves a Discipled Veteran meeting the goal is for him to walk away thinking he has never been in a church meeting like that before, and that is often the reaction. Explain at the first meeting and as often as needed, everything is on the table, we have a mission of reaching our brothers and sisters on Satan's battlefield and we can't conduct that mission if we individually are having troubles. This is where the members of this unit discuss and get help preparing for the battlefield.

Room Setup

The meeting begins for the leader before the meeting begins. If our mission during the meeting is to convey a message, we want the attention of the people and the attitude in the room conducive to receiving the message. Create a setting that is comfortable for veterans so you will have their attention. This is why we have ready rooms and mission brief rooms in the military. In addition to military décor ensure the table and chairs are set for discussion, not lecture. There is no need for a podium. A table with the leader at the end, ensuring all are in eye shot of the lesson leader works well.



Weekly Muster Message

It has been proven that Discipled Veteran meetings are better attended when the leader sends an individual message of some sort to everyone. This seems like a lot of work but its not if you are smart, sorry Army. It is as simple as creating a general message that is applicable to all and cutting and pasting it to everyone individually. You may want to add a line to specific individuals but generally the same message. Something like, *"I'm looking forward to seeing you this evening. We are going to be talking about one of the times King David had the chance but didn't kill Saul. See Ya there."* This does a couple things, It lets them know you care, and lets them know you are holding them accountable. It only takes a few minutes. Everyone gets a message even if they have never been to a meeting before.



Be First

The Leader should be the first one in the room. You need to ensure the room is prepared before the first person gets there. Ensure the coffee pot is full and the tables are set prior to the first arrival. You also need to be there to greet every person that arrives as they enter the room. If you are talking to someone when someone arrives have a backup person in place ready to meet them at the door.



Open In Prayer

Not only the meetings but everything you do should begin with prayer. You need God's direction if we are going to succeed at our mission. Although doctrinally there must be separation of duties among male and female veterans, opening and closing the group in prayer is a spectacular way of making the female veterans in the room feel part of the group. Make it a point to not only call on them to pray but call on other saved men who haven't historically stepped up to lead in spiritual things, this may be the prompting they need. Don't get preapproval from them prior to veterans are used to trial by fire and it will embolden them for future endeavor. Follow the Holy Spirit in your choices.



Branch Loyalty

As the veterans enter the room keep a head count of the branches represented and use it to motivate the least represented to increase their numbers at the next meeting. Branch rivalry is a good thing and contributes to comradery building. You may have noticed, if you have read the presentation to this point, that I have already taken jabs at the Army and the Air Force. The Coast Guard are now trying to determine if the water is shallow enough for them to go back and find my previous jabs. I haven't taken jabs at the Marines because, I know they don't read.



Comradery & Community Events

Take time at the onset of each meeting to update the group on what is going on. If you have your lieutenants in place, have them give the updates. It's a good idea to have a white board in the room that you can list the events on. Have them listed prior to the meeting starting. Ask the group if they know of something in the community that Discipled Veteran needs to be a part of. Always have something going on. Encourage them to take a photo or write down what's happening so they remember. Its also a good time to pass around or at least have a sign-up sheet for each event.



Accountability Reports

Holding one another accountable to each other, the group, and the mission are very important. Veterans show each other they care by holding one another accountable. Each week, saved and lost, we go around the table and report on the three veterans we met and gave an invitation card to the during the preceding week. We should report as much information as we can for each invite such as name, branch of service, era they served in, and where you met them. If we are building relationships and having conversations this information should be easy. Often you will find that some of you go to the same barber and now you can invite him multiple times. Use this as a time to encourage, strategize, and train on where and how to interact with veterans. Offer the opportunity to go out to a hardware store in two-man teams, pairing the more experienced with less experienced.



Weekly Lesson & Discussion

We've covered a lot that must get done during the meeting thus far, so it is crucial that you start on time. As you proceed it is more important to have a meaningful discussion than it is to rush through a lesson just to complete it. As you teach, stop periodically and ask if anyone has questions or would like to add anything. Keep an eye on the faces in the room, often you can see a question or concern. Don't be afraid to say hey Joe it looks like you have a question. Undoubtedly, if Joe has a question or comment someone else does also. Once the discussion starts your job is to moderate and keep the discussion on point. If you see it moving away from spiritually meaningful content move on. Its ok if a lesson takes two or three weeks to complete if it is meaningful. All the prepared lessons are on the website so if you want your group to follow along, they can go to the website and pull up the lesson or if not don't mention it to them.



Close In Prayer

The same discussion applies as in the opening prayer section, with the addition of anything that may have been brought up during the meeting that you need to remember in the closing prayer. Examples may include requests by those in attendance and upcoming events that are on your board.



Encourage Fellowship

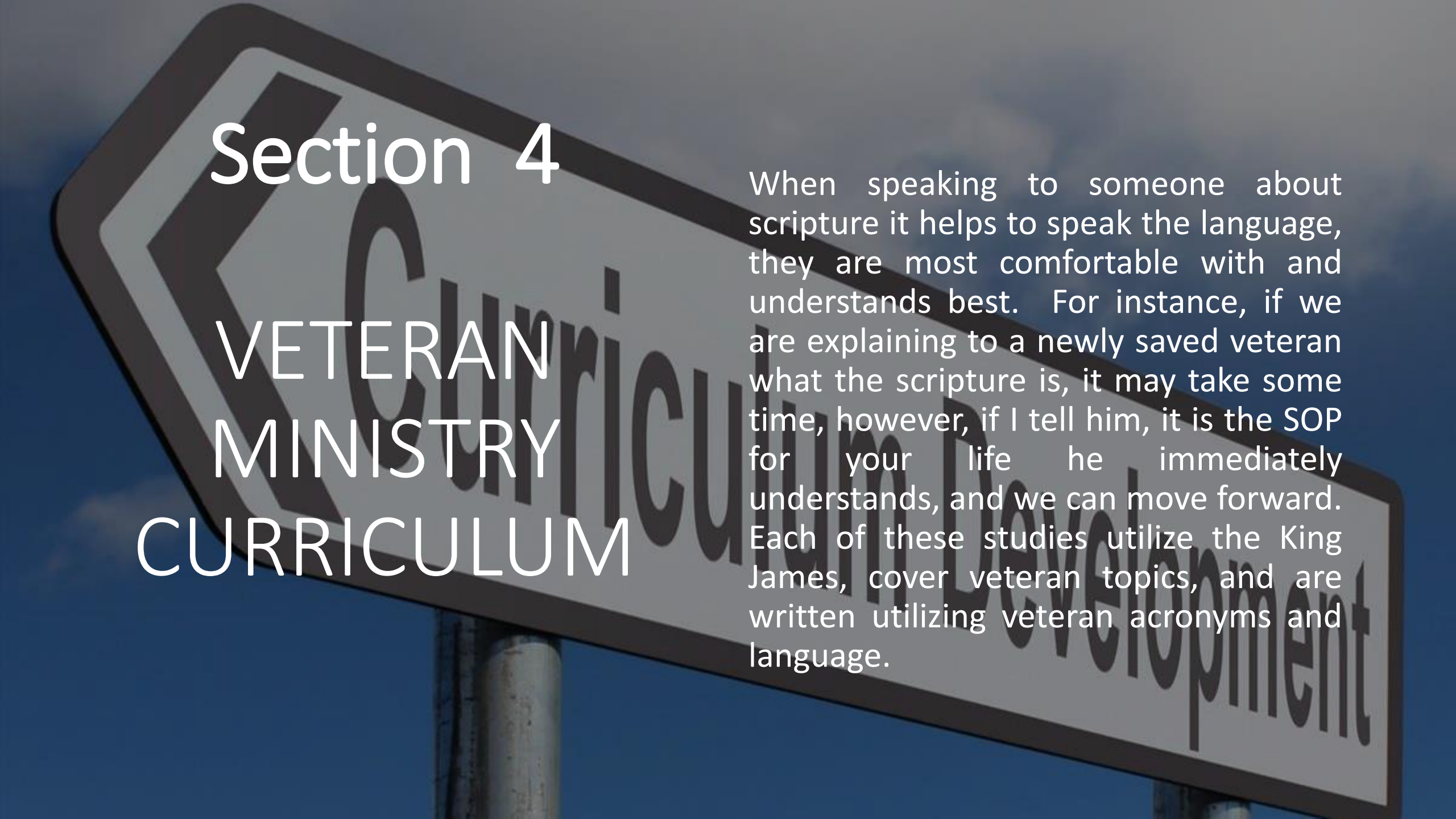
It is not uncommon for this to go on for hours. Often you can leave the building thinking you are the last one there and find a group of veterans in the parking lot planning their next fishing trip or showing off the newest gun they bought. These are the things that let you know you have succeeded at creating a unit. Intentionally invite them to hang around after the meeting.



Individual Needs

At the end of the meeting while others are fellowshiping is a great time to address individual needs. Veterans often appreciate the direct approach so if you see someone who seems like they are dealing with a problem take them aside and ask them about it. It is also a great time if you feel led to simply ask some one if they are saved. A simple statement like *“Don’t feel like I’m calling you out because I ask everyone this, but if you were standing before The Lord today, where would He send you?”* Any answer other than a resounding Heaven requires further discussion.





Section 4

VETERAN MINISTRY CURRICULUM

When speaking to someone about scripture it helps to speak the language, they are most comfortable with and understands best. For instance, if we are explaining to a newly saved veteran what the scripture is, it may take some time, however, if I tell him, it is the SOP for your life he immediately understands, and we can move forward. Each of these studies utilize the King James, cover veteran topics, and are written utilizing veteran acronyms and language.

BASIC TRAINING

**MILITARY VETERAN
DISCIPLESHIP
GUIDE**

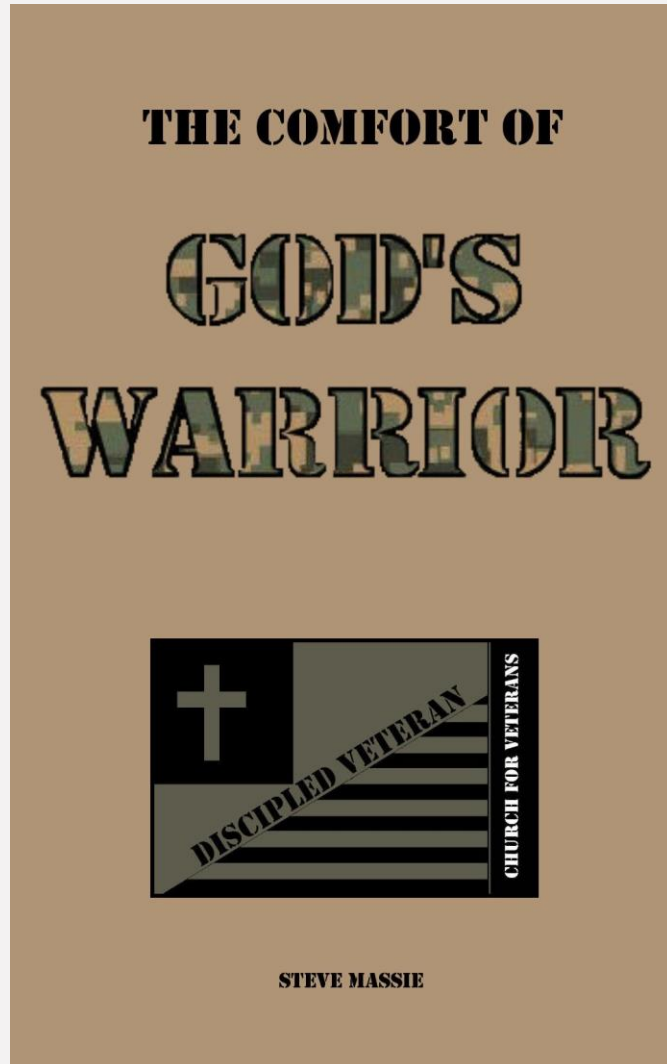


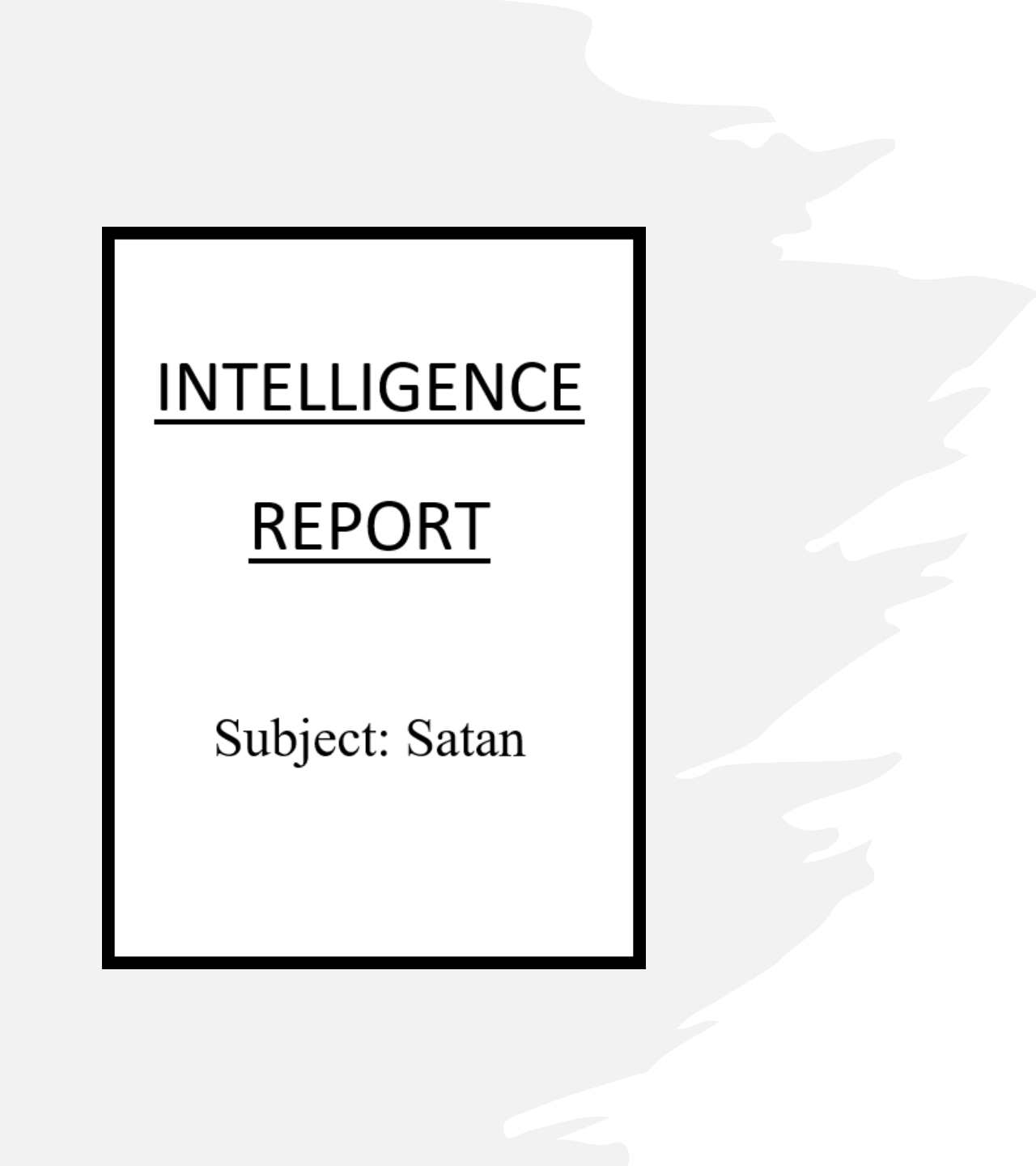
BASIC TRAINING

Basic Training is a discipleship guide written specifically to help military Veterans better understand the basics of Christianity. The terminology and illustrations used in the guide are what makes it a Veteran guide, while holding true to the scripture.

THE COMFORT OF GOD'S WARRIOR

A twenty-lesson study of the life of David. The study focuses on the similarities of David's life and the life of Veterans today. The study highlights what David had to do to get help from God, his dependence on God, and the comfort he experienced because he depended on God, evidenced by the Psalms that he wrote concerning each episode of his life.





INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Subject: Satan

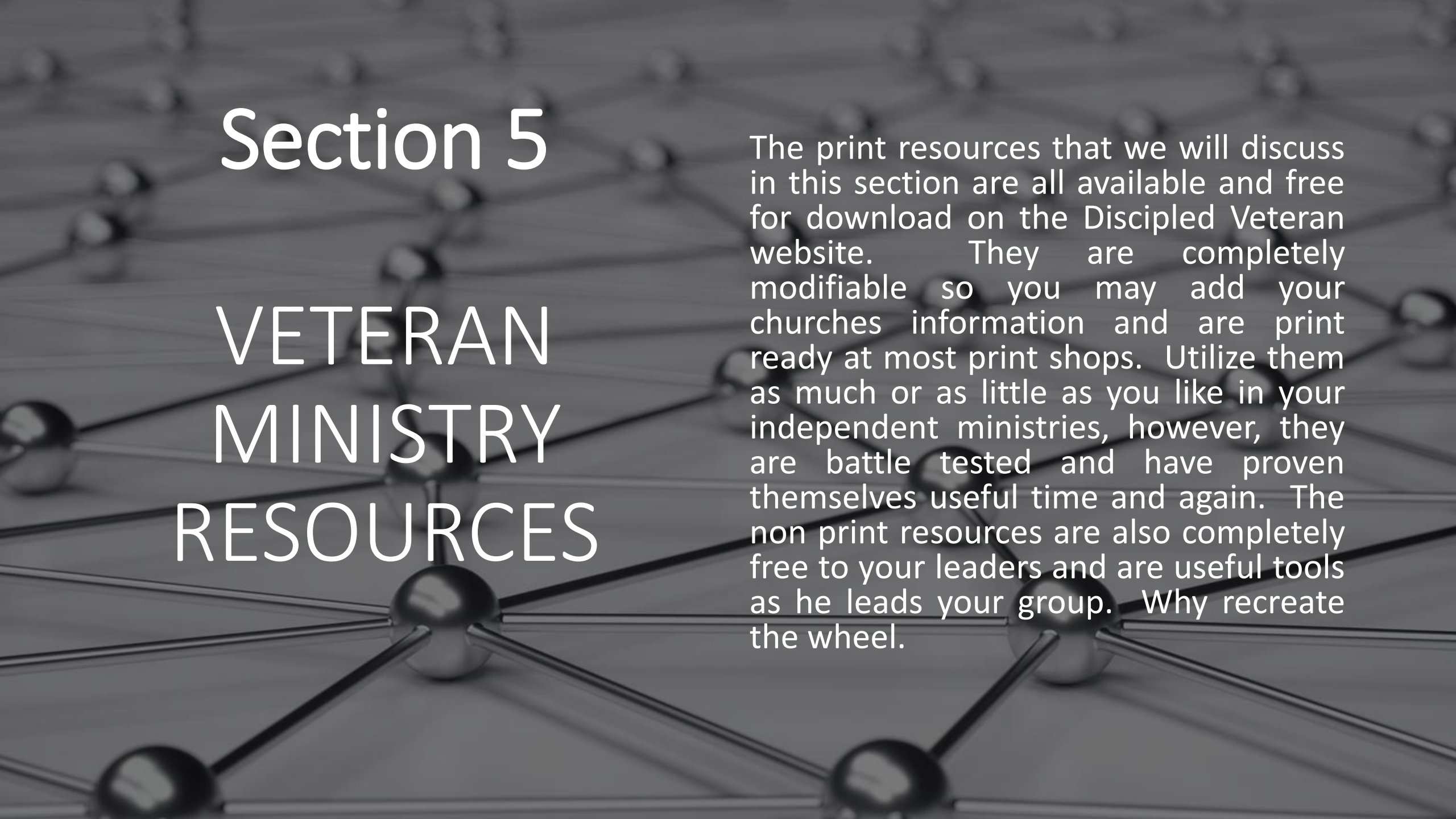
INTELLIGENCE REPORT: SUBJECT SATAN

A twelve-lesson study of our enemy. We are in a war and if we intend to survive it, we need to know our enemy, how he fights, the weapons he uses, the tactics and traps he sets. We also need to know the defenses, strategies and plans that God has put in place for us to be successful.



THE HOMEFRONT

The Homefront is a study of the most common issues Veteran led families encounter. The book applies biblical perspective to subjects like anger, communication, and family structure. The goal is to bring light to how the enemy uses our military training to attack our family, how to counter attacks, and weapons God gives us to prevent it in the future.



Section 5

VETERAN MINISTRY RESOURCES

The print resources that we will discuss in this section are all available and free for download on the Discipled Veteran website. They are completely modifiable so you may add your churches information and are print ready at most print shops. Utilize them as much or as little as you like in your independent ministries, however, they are battle tested and have proven themselves useful time and again. The non print resources are also completely free to your leaders and are useful tools as he leads your group. Why recreate the wheel.

Invitation Cards

These invitation cards are not usually appealing to graphic design people but they work very well with veterans. We recommend that you have them printed in no larger than a 3x5 so that they are easy to always carry. It's a great way to get the entire church involved in the ministry. When a veteran meets a veteran the last thing they do before departing is give them a card. When a non-veteran church member thanks a veteran for their service, hand them a card and invite them. The format on our resource page contains space for you to plug in your church information and meeting times before printing.



Veteran Referral Cards

Everyone knows an unchurched veteran, and this is another very good way of getting the entire church involved in the ministry. In the weeks leading up to your ministry launch, place these cards in your Sunday morning bulletin and encourage the church to refer an unchurched veteran that they know. This gives you a list of knew veterans to visit and invite to the meetings. Continue to make these cards available somewhere for future referrals. They may be given anonymously.

Veteran Referral Card	
CHURCH MEMBER NAME	
CHURCH MEMBER PHONE	
VETERAN NAME	
VETERAN PHONE	
VETERAN ADDRESS	
VETERAN AGE	
BRANCH OF SERVICE	
BEST TIME TO VISIT	
REFERRAL NOTES:	

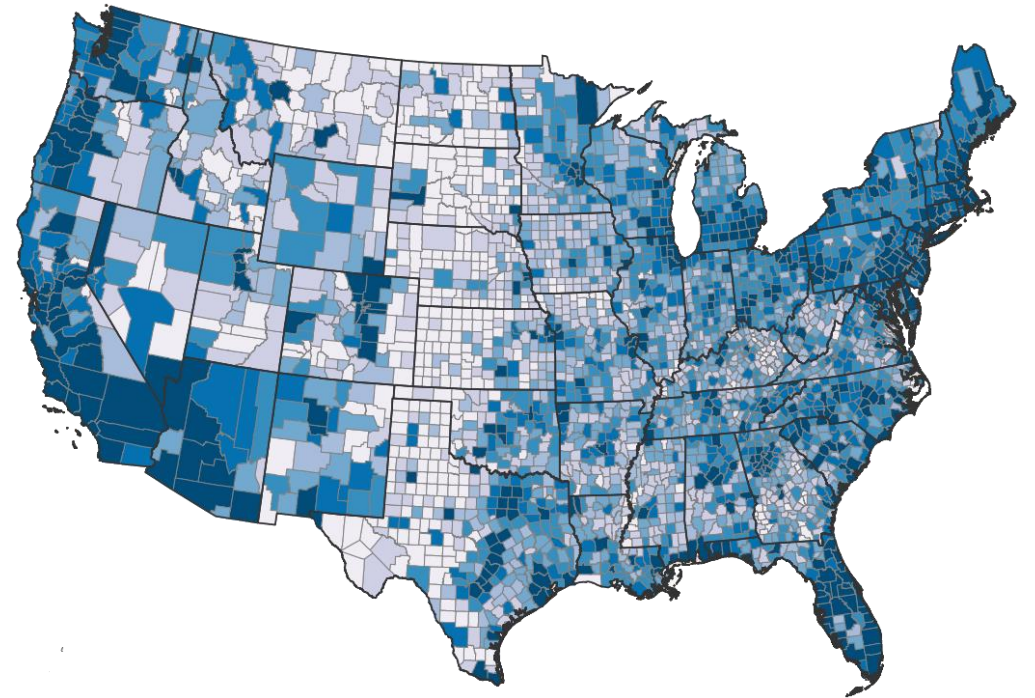
Leader Mentoring

We understand that taking on a new ministry can be a bit daunting especially for someone who may have never led a ministry. No worries we are here to help you. As a matter of fact, just as God has called on you to lead this ministry, He's called on us to help you manage it. Every step of the way we are available. From choosing a leader, picking a team, planning events, setting up the room, to the daily management, we want to help.



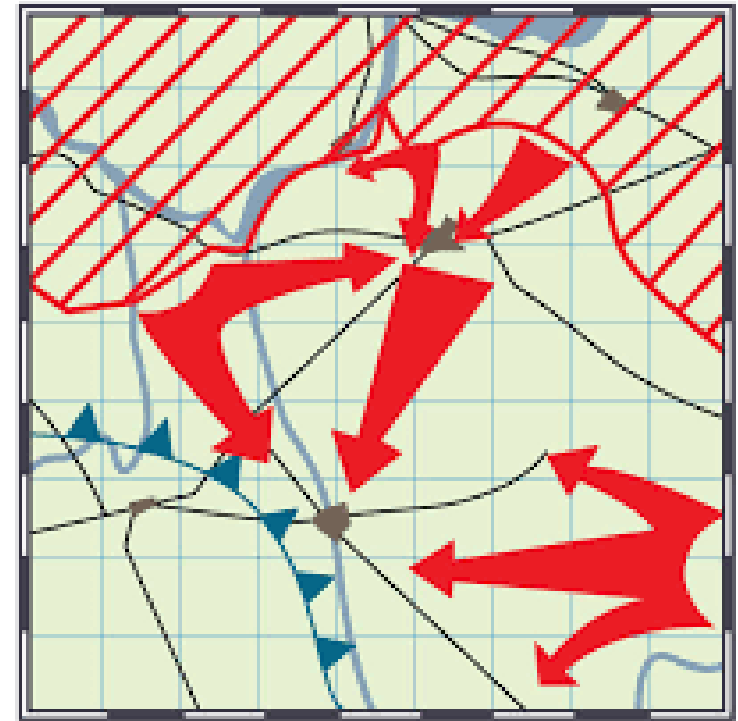
Local Veteran Demographics

The VA compiles many different veteran related statistics in every geographical area. We can usually help you source the information for your area from the VA's reports. It can be very useful to know things like the age, female population, and branch of service of the veterans populating your area when building your team or when advertising to reach the veterans in your area.



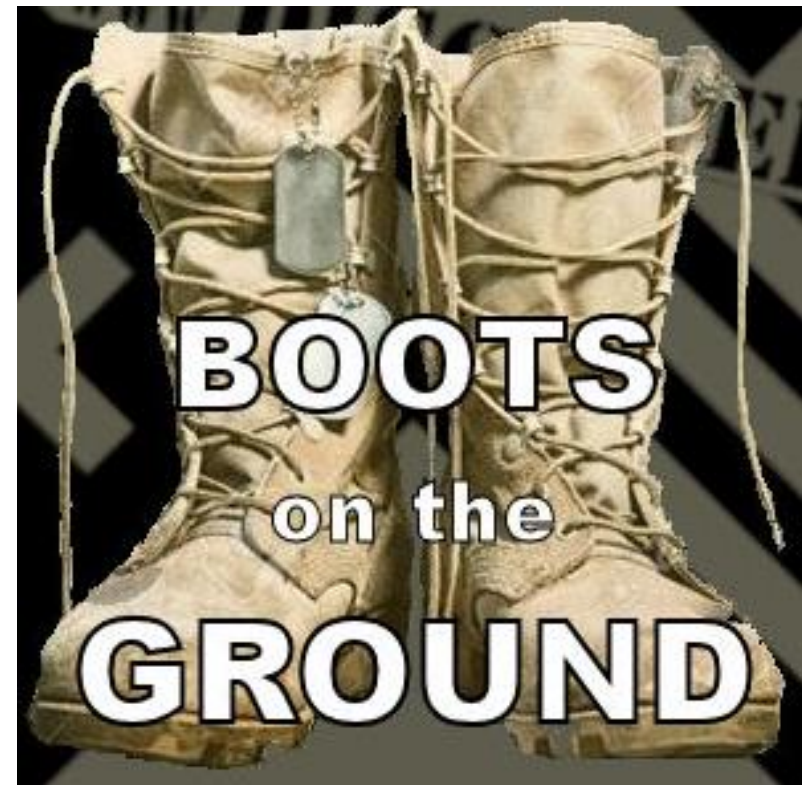
Battle Plans

Utilizing experience gained while working with churches in many different parts of the US, Discipled Veteran can evaluate and prepare a battle plan for your area. The plan will indicate the available community veteran organizational targets in your area, the person to contact, and the best ways to approach them based on how we have completed this task with the same or similar organizations in the past. Contact us for more information.



Boots On The Ground

On very limited occasions, in very highly veteran populated areas, if a church has met all the pre-ministry prerequisites, and been approved, a representative of Discipled Veteran may come to your church and help you get your ministry started. Walking side by side with your leader they will complete every step of your battle plan.



Section 6

INFILTRATE THE VETERAN COMMUNITY

Ministry is not ministry unless you infiltrate the community. In this section we provide a guide of ways that we have found to be profitable, not only in veteran population, but also in opportunities available to infiltrate the community. They will often require some relationship and trust building. However, they are well worth it to your mission if even one of these doors open.

Lowes, Home Depot, & Walmart

These stores are great locations to meet and invite veterans to your church's Discipled Veteran group. Focus on people wearing Veteran hats and shirts. They wear them because they want to talk about their service which creates a great opening. We have found the best course of action is not to approach them with the intent of inviting them but with the intent of getting to know them, leave your cards in your pocket. Let them know you are a veteran, ask about where they served, have a conversation, then as you depart give them an invitation card and ask them to join you for a cup of coffee at your next meeting. Get their name and some sort of contact, if you can, and follow up.



Veteran Treatment Court

VTC is a court program for veterans that have gotten arrested for nonviolent offences. They focus on helping the veteran with the issue that caused their problem instead of just punishment. Every veteran in the court is required to have a mentor that they are court ordered to have contact with. The members of Disciplined Veteran can be mentors. Contact your county courthouse to determine if they have a VTC or if you can help them start one. Often, they don't have them because they don't have mentor volunteers. It only takes a few hours a week, but it is an extremely valuable ministry resource.



Hospital Emergency Rooms

Your local civilian hospital emergency rooms will often have veterans come in who have no none. The doctors want to help them further but just don't know how or what to do. If you build a relationship with the hospital via their volunteer clergy network and tell them to call you anytime day or night when they have a veteran come in, they often will. Most hospitals will be able to certify you as Chaplain/Clergy with a ministry certification from your church. Leave your contact information in the ER with a request to call you anytime they have a veteran come in that they feel needs some help.



Law Enforcement

This is a great place to find veterans as many officers are veterans, and many officers respond to calls concerning veterans. Like Hospitals often officers don't have the resources to properly help veterans that they find themselves interacting with. This is a great opportunity to help. Meet with your local sheriff, police chief, or agency public relations officer and let them know you are available. Give them your contact information with the request for them to contact you 24/7 when they interact with a veteran in need. Additionally make yourself available for officers who happen to be veterans. These relationships are invaluable to a constant stream of veterans.



Nursing Homes

As our veteran population ages and nursing homes recognize veterans have financial benefits that cover nursing home costs, they are often full of veterans. Some American Legion posts have started holding meetings at the nursing homes because of the number of veterans living there. Nursing homes will often allow Discipled Veteran groups to hold weekly meetings at their facility for their residents. Sometimes, to get the residents out in to the community the home will transport them to the church for the regular meeting. Contact your local nursing homes, you will normally find them eager to assist.



Veteran Restaurant Groups

Search out the local restaurants and find out where the veterans meet for coffee. Somewhere in your town, no doubt, you will find one. When you do put on your veteran hat, take others from your group, and start having coffee there as often as you can. One of our leaders couldn't find one in his area so he started one that meets weekly. Remember its about building relationships that lead them to Jesus and a cup of coffee may be the way. Besides, I guarantee you will meet some of the most interesting people and hear some of the most interesting stories straight from the mouths of true Americas heroes.



Homeless Shelters

There are 38,000 homeless veterans in the US. The logistics of getting them to the church for a Discipled Veteran meeting is difficult. Shelters have allowed us to hold weekly Discipled Veteran Groups at their location. Meet with the shelter director, tell them about the group, and ask. On meeting day bring a couple boxes of doughnuts and coffee and you will fill the room with veterans. Keep the focus on the mission of the gospel and steer clear of other issues. The Holy Spirit will let you know when to help a specific veteran concerning other issues. Also, the VA operates a shelter in most areas allowing veterans 100 days of occupancy. Once you get in with one guy, utilize that guy and get more coming, with new people every 100 days. The task is to keep the ones you gain after they get out and gain the new ones. This is also a good place to run a van, but because it is a federal agency it is more difficult to get in, be delicate but persistent.



Local Jails & Prisons

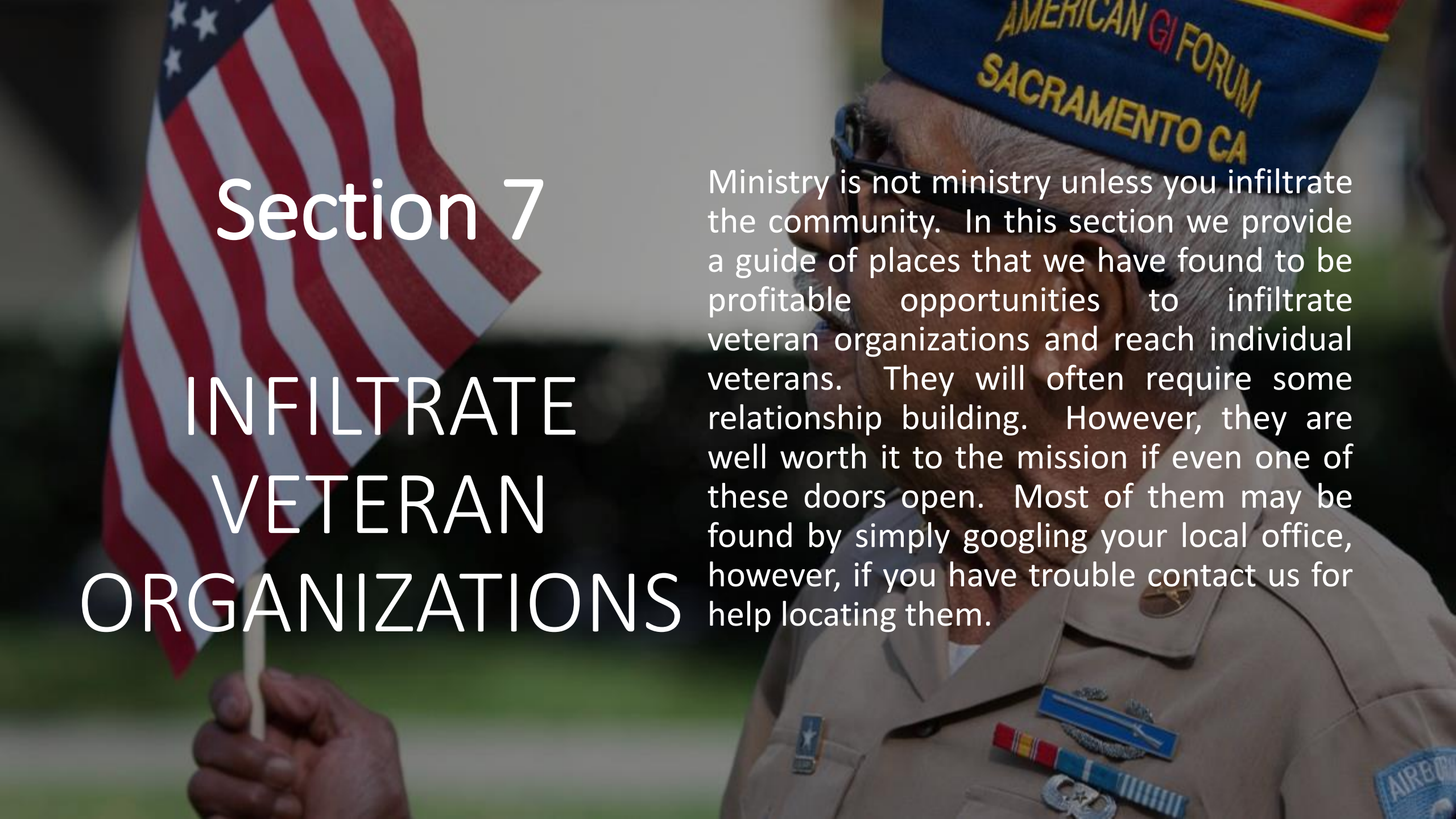
180,500 Veterans are incarcerated in the US, many as the result of issues prompted by military service. Because some jails have so many incarcerated veterans and the authorities recognize the advantage of having them separated, they often have an entire block dedicated to veterans. Local Churches who have a Discipled Veteran Group, with approval, can reach those Veterans by beginning a Discipled Veteran group in the local prison or jail. Your sheriff usually operates the jail, and you can have this discussion with him when you meet with him in the law enforcement section we discussed earlier. Prisons will generally have a warden you may schedule a meeting with. Both are generally looking for positive activities for their inmates.



Recruit Night

In the spring when high school students who have made the choice to join the military are preparing to leave for boot camp, our groups will often hold a recruit night. We set aside one of our regular meetings nights to invite them and their families to our group. During the meeting we go around the room allowing each of our group to thank them for keeping the watch and give them advice on being a Christian in the military. We then allow the recruits and their family members to ask any question they might have, giving them answers from a Christian perspective. It is generally a night filled with gratitude and honor from all.





Section 7

INFILTRATE VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS

Ministry is not ministry unless you infiltrate the community. In this section we provide a guide of places that we have found to be profitable opportunities to infiltrate veteran organizations and reach individual veterans. They will often require some relationship building. However, they are well worth it to the mission if even one of these doors open. Most of them may be found by simply googling your local office, however, if you have trouble contact us for help locating them.

Veterans of Foreign Wars

The VFW is certainly an example of going on the battlefield as it is essentially a bar. However, by organization mandate one of their officers must be a chaplain and they often don't have anyone to fill the position. This is a great opportunity for a Discipled Veteran to fill the chaplain position and have an influence. They require the members to meet specific military service requirements. I would not recommend sending one person to join alone but it is a tremendous opportunity for those who are wearing the full armor of God.



American Legion

The American Legion is much like the VFW, however normally without the bar. The American Legion is for all veterans, and they also have a mandated officer position of chaplain which brings with it the same opportunities as the VFW chaplain. Nearly every town has one and I would encourage as many Discipled Veterans as possible to infiltrate and become members.



Disabled American Veteran

DAV focuses on helping veterans obtain benefits much like the State Service Office. They are also very active in operating vans that ensure veterans can make their VA medical appointments. There are opportunities for Disciplined Veteran members to volunteer to drive the vans allowing you to interact with veterans as you take them to appointments. They too have a chaplain in their organizational structure.



Veteran Service Office

The Veteran service office is a state office that exists in most every county. They help Veterans obtain VA benefits. This is a great resource for finding out what veteran related activities are going on in the community that your group needs to be involved in. Normally the veteran service officer will allow you to leave cards. They will often even direct veterans that they feel might profit from Discipled Veteran to you.



VA Clinics & Hospitals

VA Hospitals and clinic are great places, everyone there is a veteran. It's a great place to talk to and invite veterans to your meetings. Additionally, we have been able to leave our cards in the waiting areas of different clinics. Through the volunteer services office you will find numerous opportunities that will allow you to interact with veterans. If a certified volunteer, on occasion through the Whole Health Clinic they will allow you to host a Spiritual Guidance Class. The VA Chaplin's office may or may not allow you authorized access also depending on the individual.



Veteran Readjustment Center

A Vet Center is a common VA facility in many cities. Formally called a veteran readjustment center it provides many services for veterans. Normally, all their services are free to qualifying veterans. They often have individual counseling and group counseling opportunities. They often have free classes for veterans such as art and guitar lessons. It is a great place to meet and befriend other veterans in your community. Some of our leaders have been invited to sponsor and lead a Spiritual Guidance group at their Vet Centers.



Veteran Community Partnership Program

The VA's Veteran Community Partnership program is a way for the VA to utilize organizations in the community to assist veterans. Nationally Discipled Veteran has completed the vetting process to become a community partner and therefore those churches who have a Discipled Veteran group are part of the program. Some of the Discipled Veteran Leaders have become members of the local VCP Board. The VA has a VCP roster posted on their website that will tell you who and how to contact you local VCP director. If you need help let us know.



Section 8

COMRADERY & COMMUNITY EVENTS

Comradery is the attractant that fuels this ministry. However, these are not just comradery events. Some veterans may not come to a meeting but if they come to a range day and realize these church veterans are just like them, they often feel comfortable coming to a meeting because of comradery. These events, for the most part, should never have a cost associated with them. There are plenty of free or inexpensive things you can do to create an avenue to give a veteran the gospel. Many companies will also provide discounts for veteran groups. If you need help finding them, call us.

Veteran's Day

Obviously, Veterans Day is one of the biggest days of the year for a veteran ministry. On this day there are numerous opportunities to get the word out about your ministry. Enter a float in your town's Veteran Day parade and have your group pass out invite cards as they walk in the parade. If you have a Golden Corral in your community, they make a national effort to allow us to pass out invite cards to veterans as they enter for their free Veterans Day meal. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity.



Community Events

Fairs, gun shows, and farmers market type events that allow you to set up a table are great ways to interact with veterans. Have some cards so you can invite them. Display photos of some the events to attract their attention. Have a sign-up sheet for your next event. This will allow you to gather their contact information and get them involved in your next event.



Family Cookouts

Most every veteran comes with some type of family and just like the veteran, when they got out of the military the family lost the way of life, comradery, and support they had also. It is imperative to understand a veteran ministry brings more than the veteran to the church, it bolsters every ministry in the church. The veteran comradery building events are as much for the family as they are for the veteran. Ensure some of your events include the family. Our target is souls not just veterans.





Range Days

Find one of your guys who have a farm, or many places have county and state free shooting ranges. Schedule a Saturday and spend a couple hours shooting together. If you have a group of any size, you will have plenty of weapons to share. 22s are cheap, fun to shoot, and come in many configurations. A few times we have been able to plan a competition against local law enforcement. You may only be able to do it once because we usually beat them. Require your team to show for a minimum number of practices to participate in the event. It builds comradery and gives you multiple opportunities to give them the gospel.



River / Fishing Trips

River trips are great they give you hours, up to days away from the world interacting with other veterans and what a great opportunity to tell them about the gospel. Whether a local trip or a guided trip down the New River through a Discipled Veteran fishing guide on an overnight 20-mile trip, these are great opportunities to build comradery and progress our great commission mission.



Warrior Breakfast

When a room full of veterans and their family's take over a section at a local restaurant it attracts attention. Ensure your attendees wear their military hats and t-shirts and plan at least a quarterly breakfast. Often other veterans at the restaurant will come over and ask us what is going on. Invite them to eat with you and get to know them. It is also another great way to involve the veteran family.

A photograph of two skydivers in freefall. The skydiver in the foreground is wearing a blue helmet and a blue shirt, with arms outstretched. The second skydiver is behind them, wearing a black shirt. They are suspended by a single rope. Below them is a wide river flowing through a green, hilly landscape under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

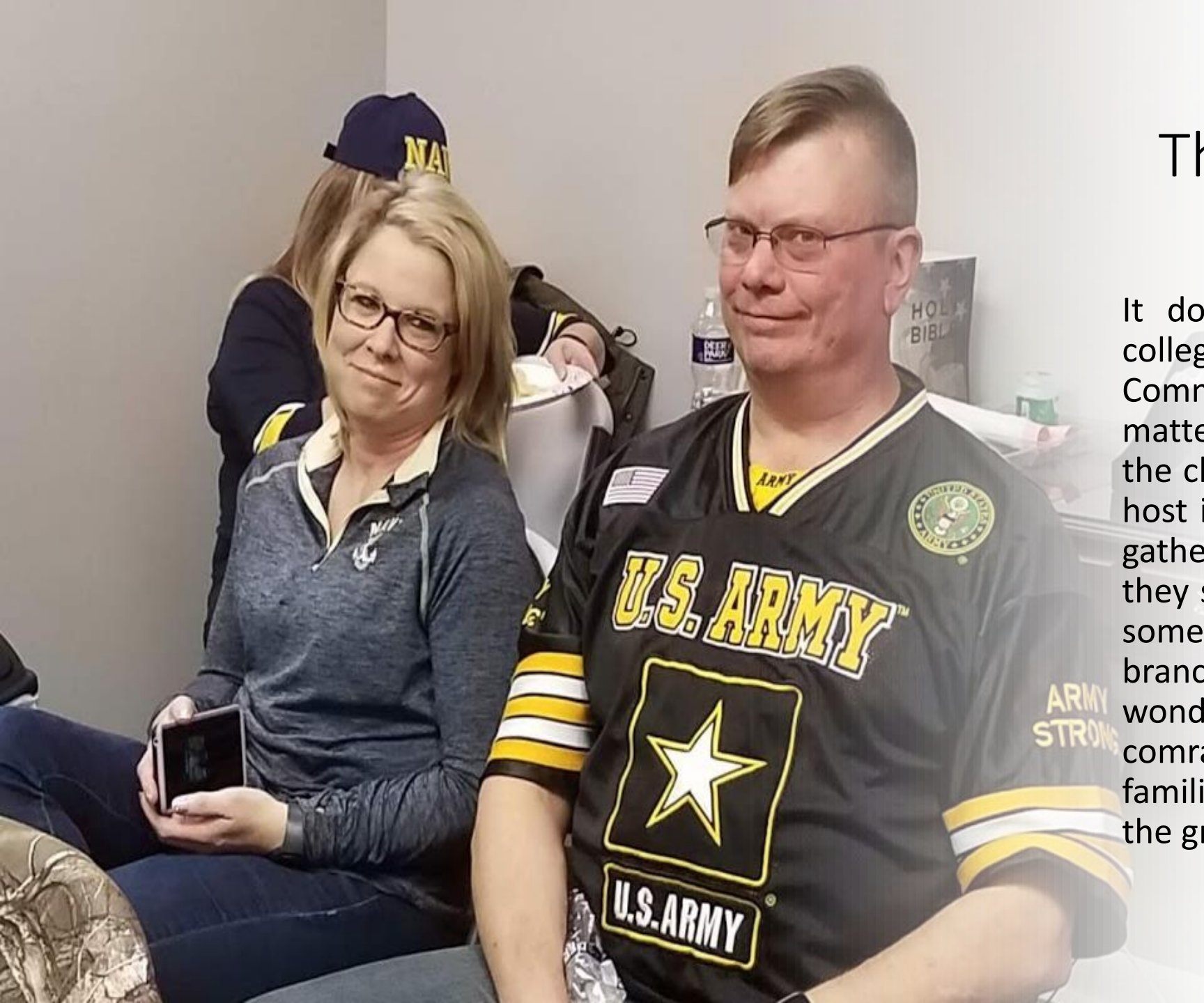
Find Your Fear

Veterans are often described as having no emotion. The reason veterans express little to no emotion is because, for good reason, emotion has been trained out of them. Also, when you have experienced such fear that nothing ever rises to that level again, emotion, especially fear, is difficult. Our first “Find Your Fear” event stemmed from a marine telling me he hasn’t felt fear since a specific event that occurred during his military carrier. Understanding this, we set out to find our fear and we did it through a skydiving event. It was the most spiritually profitable comradery building event we have ever done. Find a skydiving company and tell them what you are doing, you will be surprised at the discounts they will give you. Yes, discount skydiving!

All Veteran Choir

There is nothing more patriotic than an all-veteran choir singing the national anthem during your fourth of July or Veterans day church service. Is it the most professional sounding choir, probably not. However, it is heartfelt because those singing it have lived the dedication to country they are singing about. It also forces comradery by doing something, most are probably not comfortable with. New familiy members, the media, and other veterans will show up to the service just to hear the all-veteran choir sing on veteran's day.





The Commander in Chief's Trophy

It doesn't even matter if they like college football, who wins The Commander in Chief's Trophy does matter. Usually in the veteran room at the church, or one of the veterans will host it at their home. All the families gather wearing the gear of the team they support to watch the game, have some pizza, and promote the military branch rivalry. Again, this is a wonderful opportunity to build the comradery of the veterans and their families and attract new veterans to the group. GO NAVY BEAT ARMY!