

# The Populus

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Our word "people" comes from the Roman word "populus" which in ancient Rome signified "armed body." The pure-blooded Roman in the days of the Republic could not conceive of a citizen who was not a warrior. His arms identified him as a land-owner and qualified to participate in the affairs of state. He had no political rights until he had fought. In our American system, every citizen is responsible to help preserve the Republic and thus has the right to bear arms.

In modern church terminology, you hear of clergy and laity as distinctions between the leadership and the membership of the churches. Actually clergy means heritage, and the only time the Greek word "clerao" is found in the Bible it signifies all Christians. Nevertheless, God calls us His people as well: **1 Peter 2:10**. We are both clergy and laity. As God's "populus" we are obligated to be militant or soldier saints in the sense of verbally confronting sins and sinful ideas according to what is written in the Scriptures. "But **sanctify the Lord** God in your hearts: and **be ready always to give an answer (apologia: defense)** to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (**1 Peter 3:15**). "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was **needful** for me to write unto you, and **exhort** you **that ye should earnestly contend for the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints." **Jude 3**. "Thou therefore **endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ**. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; **that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier**." **2 Timothy 2:3,4**. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, **abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul**" **1 Peter 2:11**. "For though we walk in the flesh, **we do not war after the flesh**: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)  **Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ**" **2 Corinthians 10:3-5**.

This reminds us that Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall **confess me before men**, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall **deny me before men**, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." **Matthew 10:32-33**. The apostle Paul ended his last letter with these inspiring words: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. **I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith**: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." **2 Timothy 4:6-8**. tp