

[HOMEPAGE]

For families of junior soldiers

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC:

God's Army: Early Persecution

MEMORY VERSE:

Isaiah 26:3 (NIV)

"Lord, you will give perfect peace to anyone who commits himself to be faithful to you. That's because he trusts in you."

The memory verse for the week is included on each HOMEPAGE. Help your child review it during the week. The portion of the memory verse printed in *italics* is the portion of the verse for younger junior soldiers to memorize.

PARENT POINT:

Talk to your child about commitment, and what it means to follow through on a commitment.



TODAY IN JUNIOR SOLDIERS the children started a four-week unit on persecution and The Salvation Army. During the early years of The Salvation Army, Salvationists faced persecution from the very people they were trying to help, but they didn't let persecution stop them. They persevered and continued to serve humankind. They made a commitment to God, and they didn't back down.

After starting The Salvation Army in 1865, General Booth dispatched officers to places that hadn't requested The Salvation Army and its ministry. Many of the officers and soldiers in these places faced great opposition. Some of this opposition was deadly.

Mobs under the name "Skeleton Armies" attacked the Salvationist as they preached on the corner, or led rallies and parades on their way to the corps. Charles H. Jeffries was the captain of The Skeleton Army. At the age of 17, Charles Jeffries found an outlet for his unruly behavior; he led a gang of people in mocking and persecuting Salvationists. Word spread of Jeffries and his gang, and soon "Skeleton Armies" formed throughout England.

The "Skeletonists" wore caps bearing the title "Skeleton Army," and carried a flag to imitate the Salvationists. They marched in parades, held disorderly open air meetings, and sent members to Salvation Army meetings with one purpose—to end the meeting in ridicule and riot.

The Salvationists prayed for the Skeletonists. The Salvationists believed that one day they'd put an end to The Skeleton Army. The Salvationists declared that, through prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit, they'd win the leader of The Skeleton Army to Christ; and they did. Charles Jeffries, the commander of The Skeleton Army became one of the most daring leaders in The Salvation Army. He even pioneered the work of The Salvation Army in China.

The early Salvationists paved the way for The Salvation Army of today. They suffered so much so we can have the freedom and privilege to serve humankind in Jesus' name.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOME

This lesson helped junior soldiers understand the sacrifices made by early Salvationists to spread God's Word. They learned about the culture into which the Army was born.