

THE SOLDIER AND THE SINNER

By: Chuck Goodin

*Based on Luke 18:9-14, The
Pharisee and the Tax Collector.
Level 4 Monologue. Ages 17-21.*

A Senior Soldier in uniform sits in
a Holiness meeting.

SOLDIER

(singing)

I surrender all. I surrender all. All to thee my blessed-

Stopping, looking around. Then to
God-

SOLDIER

All right God. I really need to hear from you.

Listens.

SOLDIER

Please, you seem to be so silent.

Nothing.

SOLDIER

I haven't heard from you in a very long time. Please!

Nothing.

SOLDIER

I will even go to the altar if that's what it takes. Is that
it?

Still nothing.

SOLDIER

If you want me to go to the altar, I'll do it.

Still nothing. Soldier stands.

SOLDIER

Ok I'm going-

Moving slowly down the aisle, then
stops.

SOLDIER

Is this really what you want? Because I will go. I'm serious.

Waiting. Nothing.

SOLDIER

Ok, I'm doing it.

Moving again toward altar.

SOLDIER

But I have to say this is a bit weird.

Still moving toward altar, but
looking around nervously at the
rest of the congregation.

SOLDIER

I mean, what will people think? The altar is really for... you know, the other people. The first timers, or the backsliders. That's not me. I've done this. I've been here. Years ago. You know, you were there. I'm a Senior Soldier now. I am very active here. If I stay up here too long people are going to wonder what I have done. They may even question whether I should stay in the band. I'm sure people are already talking about me because Bandmaster forgot to pass the offering plate to the band during the service so no one in the congregation saw me fire my cartridge. He said we can drop it off after the service! After the service!? Who will see that? I don't want people thinking that I'm not a good Soldier.

(thinking)

Ok, ok, I forgive the bandmaster. Is that what you want?

Growing more desperate.

SOLDIER

God are you even there? Look I am at the altar! In fact I am on this platform all the time; for drama, for band and songsters, and I even sing with the contemporary band, I do it all! It's like my entire life is on the altar. So I don't know what more you want.

Looking to the back of the hall.

SOLDIER

Listen to that guy back there. Just weeping. What's up with him?

(thinking)

Why does he just sit there? I don't understand it. Why doesn't he just come to the altar? That's how you show you're sorry. And he never wears his uniform. What's up with that? I mean you look right, you act right. Am I right?

(again to the back of the
hall)

Wow, he is just crying out. He seems really desperate.

(deeper contemplation)

God, Is that the kind of surrender you are looking for? Is that what real repentance looks like? Hm, maybe...

(breaking out of it)

But it's getting embarrassing. Geez, stop wailing and get up. It's not like no one knows what kind of life you live anyway. I'm mean if anyone needs to be up here... Well at least people are looking at him and not at me. I guess I can be thankful I'm not that guy.

Tapping fingers in frustration.
Finally giving in and kneeling.

SOLDIER

Alright God, here I am. I'm down on my knees. I'm serious now. If you could just say something, then I can get back to my seat before too many people notice. Besides they will need me soon to lead the final song.

Giving up. Letting out a big sigh.
Standing.

SOLDIER

This has gone on long enough. You can't say I didn't try.

Starts to leave, then stops and
turns around.

SOLDIER

(more thoughtful)

Wait, maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I'm looking at this in a completely wrong way. I think I need to change my attitude.

Kneeling again.

SOLDIER

God I see it now. Of course you'r silent. I'm so sorry. How could I not see it before? It's so obvious.

(becoming excited)

You're silent because... you see nothing wrong in me. I'm doing everything right. Now that guy back there, well you're probably yelling at him because, let's be honest, he is pretty messed up. But if it ain't broke don't fix it? Am I right? No correction needed here.

(standing)

Wow! I am so glad I came to the altar today. I gained a valuable perspective. I should talk to the corps officer about sharing this testimony next week. Alright God, thanks for the talk. I have to get back on the platform now. See ya' next time.

Gets up and struts confidently off
stage. End.