**Warrior Spirituality**

*Princes and knights were expected to be men of noble character, military prowess, and deep Christian faith.*

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Toward the end of the tenth century, Adalberon, bishop of Laon, wrote, “There is a noble class which comprises the warriors and protectors of the churches. They defend all the people, great and small, and, incidentally, protect themselves.”

This class was no group of ruffians looking for a fight, at least not after the dynamic reformation that swept through Europe from roughly 1000 to 1300. Like the sixteenth-century Reformation, this movement sought to restore the values of the early church. In regard to the warrior class, it encouraged the rise of chivalry and the glorification of the Christian knight.

Though only an elite few became knights, nearly every medieval person had contact with them. Furthermore, the values of the ruling class, composed of princes and knights, permeated society.

**Servant Warriors**

Bishop Adalberon also wrote this: “The city of God we believe is not only one but subdivided into three parts: some pray, others fight, and still others work.… The service of each allows the contributions of the other two. Each, in turn, lends its support to all.”

If Adalberon’s description of medieval society is too simple, everyone agreed that those “others” who “fight”—princes and knights—must protect their people against invasion and internal disorder.

Medieval people thought the house of God—church and society together—required strong governing. Bernard of Clairvaux, the Cistercian monk who led the early 1100s reform movement, wrote, “Where a multitude is gathered together without any contract of peace, without any observance of law, without discipline or a ruling head, it is called not a people but a mob, not a state but confusion.” So a ruling class was necessary to keep order.

The ruling class was obliged first to seek the welfare and salvation of the people they ruled. Bernard’s friend and younger contemporary, the scholarly John of Salisbury, wrote, “Between a tyrant and a good prince there is this single difference: the good prince obeys the law, and rules the ...