

23.4 Venerating Veterans This Day

At times one of the biggest regrets I have is that I did not serve in the military. It's not about the uniform, the retirement, or recognition on days like Veterans Day. No, it is about missing the privilege of serving alongside other patriots.

Are you a Patriot? When you hear or sing the Star Spangled Banner, do you tear up a little? On days like today do you remember our forefathers in Valley Forge, Little Round Top, San Juan Hill, Battle of the Marne, and Pearl Harbor? Do you remember the courage of Americans at Heartbreak Ridge, the Tet Offensive, and Desert Storm? Just to name a few.

Some veterans bear visible signs of their service: a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye. Others may carry the evidence inside them: a pin holding a bone together, a piece of shrapnel in the leg--or perhaps another sort of inner steel: the soul's ally forged in the refinery of adversity. Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept America safe wear no badge or emblem. You can't tell a vet just by looking.

Someone made an insightful observation:

It is the VETERAN, not the preacher,
who has given us freedom of religion.
It is the VETERAN, not the reporter,
who has given us freedom of the press.
It is the VETERAN, not the poet,
who has given us freedom of speech.
It is the VETERAN, not the community organizer,
who has given us freedom to assemble.
It is the VETERAN, not the lawyer,
who has given us the right to a fair trial.
It is the VETERAN, not the politician,
who has given us the right to vote.
It is the VETERAN, who salutes the Flag,
who serves under the Flag.

Each time you see someone who has served our country, remember to say, "Thank you." That's all most people need. In most cases, it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded.

On May 13, 1938 the 11th of November became a legal holiday dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be celebrated and known as "**Armistice Day**." Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I. In 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars. They certainly deserve both recognition and honor! **Romans 13:7** (ESV) reminds us:

⁷Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Christians are veterans of war, too. It may be in the military conflicts of the world, but it is assuredly the spiritual. **Ephesians 6:10-12 (ESV):**

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

There are many sermons in these verses. Today, just remember that we are in a spiritual battle. The people indoctrinating our children and pushing mandates on us are fighting to take the soul of America. This war is not about territory, it is about tyranny. The way we fight this war is with all of the spiritual resources God gives us. That includes His armor, His Spirit, and His word. It includes prayer and the spiritual resolve to persevere.

You see, we are all veterans of a great spiritual war. That spiritual war engages our very nature. It challenges us in our choices. It involves our reason and reasonable service.

John Stuart Mill, philosopher from London, England, died in 1873, said:

“War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling is much worse. The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight is a miserable creature...”

Let's honor our veterans and recognize our fight and let's Keep The Light of Honor Burning!