

## 11/13/22 Veterans Day 2022 Meeker Colorado

Friday was the official Veterans Day celebration on the calendar. As we remember our Veterans today we honor them and all servicemen who have served throughout the years. We honor those who have fought for, sacrificed, and protected the freedoms we cherish. It is our way of reminding ourselves and remembering their dedication and sacrifice. It is with humility and profound gratitude that we honor the men and women who have in the past or are presently serving in the military. Included in this gesture, we are also fully aware of all the families of military personnel who deserve our heartfelt thanks for their sacrifices for the greater good of our nation and mankind.

The life of every individual and every family of military personnel and ultimately every community and the nation itself have been impacted by service of our veterans. It is a sacred right and duty for us to participate in remembering and honoring our veterans as reminded in Romans 13:7 *Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; **if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.*** The Greek word for honor is “timeen,” it means to show outward respect.

Another perspective in this act of honoring of veterans may be to see how our veterans compare with those heroes of the faith listed and honored in Hebrews 11. To start with look at Hebrews 11:1-2 *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. 2 This is what the ancients were commended for.* Faith is what those models of righteousness were commended for, which was further described in Hebrews 11:39-40 *These were all commended for their*

*faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. 40 God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.*

Hebrews 11:39 *These were all commended for their faith,* Let that term “faith” be kept at the threshold of your minds this morning along with **your** answers to these questions; where and how do our nations active duty military veterans get faith, how do they gain or grow in faith, and will they like their Hebrew 11 counterparts be commended for their faith? This under girds everything in our thoughts and discussion regarding Honoring Veterans. How to encourage, strengthen and help our veterans grow in their faith.

A first thought may cause you to wonder how our veterans can be compared with the veterans described in Hebrews 11. If you read carefully you will note the majority of the commendations were related to military objectives. Noah’s righteous obedience to faith resulted in the death of all but 8 of the earths population, likely into the millions! And as a result Hebrews 11:7b *By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.* Abraham was a veteran from Genesis 14 in his rescue of Lot and offering to Melchizedek and the willingness to sacrifice in Hebrews 11:17. /// Genesis records the gallantry of Isaac, Jacob and Esau in settling their lands, Moses who physically killed an Egyptian and under his leadership Pharaoh's army was drowned. Those listed in Hebrews 11 are nearly all veteran warriors at one time or another in their lives through wars and conquest of the promised land. Hebrews 11:32-39 *And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who*

*became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. 35 Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. 36 Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— 38 the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground. 39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, (read again the underlined sections)*

Their faith was commended in part because they were veterans.

But now let's turn to examine practical applications of honoring our Veterans. For those on active duty a great way of honoring them is by contacting them, letting them know they have a support system "back home" thinking of them and expressing appreciation for the duty they are serving. The card and letter shower for Garrett, Pearls grandson is a wonderful example.

Today with technology there are many tools for contacting military personnel. Believe me It does make a difference. Just to be remembered! I often wonder if the rising suicide rate for veteran's could at least in part be because of a lack of recognition, personal contacts and support from back home.

In remembering our veterans, let's put our feet into their boots and under their helmet for a few moments: Veterans do not make policy they enforce it! Do not let go of that profound truth. Very few veterans originate orders, they are trained to obey orders without question or evaluation in faith trusting that their duty is to the greater good of their fellows in service and ultimately for the nation itself.

Have you considered that duty as an important reason for honoring our veterans? Veterans are seldom in the place or a position to learn and develop ethics and

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values. The default for veterans is to abide by those values and ethics given them by the corps which has and declares no religion. A veterans value system is developed primarily before active duty and is almost always challenged during basic training and on the job training. What percentage of military personnel could or would give allegiance to the Holy Spirit activity in their lives? 1 John 4:4 *Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.* But where and how are veterans to contact and be encouraged in that instruction and who do they have as a model of that behavior? I emphasize this because the military is populated by younger citizens. For example Of the 58,256 Americans listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial of those killed in action, the average age is 22.8 years old! I submit that all wars are primarily fought by younger personnel still very much formative in learning the way of righteous decision making and embedding ethics and values into their being for eternal reward.

Now as we honor our veterans please remember that veterans were first civilians who gained military experience. If anything it means they have fewer opportunities for learning about Jesus than the rest of the population. The old Proverb 22:6 *“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it. KJV ...is an instruction that influences veterans just like the rest of us. If they have not been well trained before being drafted or enlisted into the military, they are greatly challenged for the opportunity to be trained in righteousness.* 2 Timothy 2:1-4 *You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. 3 Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer.*

Paul makes it clear to Timothy that a soldier is focused on obeying his commanding officer and if that officer is unrighteous themselves and not a knowledgeable believer, what chance does the recruit have?

Every person serving in the military must have righteous support for training in Godliness, the ultimate commanding officer, or their service will end up defaulting to unrighteousness and doubt of the reality of God with the inevitable result of someday degrading into chaos of the strongest and most clever taking charge (just like in nature).

One more thing, beyond question the power of prayer is life sustaining and an ongoing necessity for every military person. Specific prayers for specific personnel is the best, but general prayers are also used to reinforce the patriotism for righteous service. As an example is 1 Thessalonians 1:2 *We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers.*

Prayer is an essential and critical for the military and it is a duty and obligation of every professing Christian.

At this same time in honor of veterans, do not forget or overlook the families of those in service who are your friends and neighbors. Keep in contact with them regarding their veterans on active duty. Have coffee with them, pray with them, call or otherwise let them know you know and are grateful for their family members service. That is especially true around holidays, or the veterans birthday.

Another way we can honor our veterans is through our individual devotion to citizenship and the duties we have as individuals to do our part in protecting the nation from the onslaught of evil within our society as our military is protecting our nation from outward enemies. That responsibility stands alongside the honor

directed to active military service and often requires the same courage, suffering and sacrifice.

Perhaps we as a nation have overlooked or minimized the words of Jeremiah in 12:17 *“But if any nation does not listen, I will completely uproot and destroy it,” declares the Lord.* As we honor veterans let’s remember our elected officials, those policy makers for our veterans, and the incredible difficult task they have of governing a populace that is so divided and diverse. We as citizens find ourselves each in a different circumstance and with different abilities to be co-warriors on the same team as our veterans for the continuation of our nation. So be it.

CHRISTIANS do not despair, lose hope or agonize over these life circumstances. There are wonderful messages of encouragement, strength, reassurance, guidance, and hope for the Christian recorded in scripture such as 2 Cor 10:3-6 *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

I leave with you this passage for your personal journey of faith, but also for you to use in your efforts to honor our veterans:

Romans 15:13 *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*