

## FREEDOM IS NOT FREE

I watched the flag pass by one day.  
It fluttered in the breeze.  
A young marine saluted it, and then  
He stood at ease.

I looked at him in uniform,  
So young, so tall, so proud,  
With hair cut square and eyes alert.  
He'd stand out in any crowd.

I thought how many men like him  
Had fallen throughout the years.  
How many died on foreign soil?  
How many mothers' tears?

How many pilots' planes shot down?  
How many died at sea?  
How many foxholes were soldiers'  
graves?

No, freedom is not free.

I heard the sound of "Taps" one night,  
When everything was still.  
I listened to the bugler play  
And felt a sudden chill.

I wondered just how many times  
That "Taps" had means "Amen,"  
When a flag had draped a coffin  
Of a brother or a friend.

I thought of all the children,  
Of the mothers and the wives,  
Of fathers, sons, and husbands  
With interrupted lives.

I thought about a graveyard  
At the bottom of the sea,  
Of unmarked graves in Arlington.  
No, freedom is not free.

*Cadet Major Kelly Strong, Air  
Force Junior ROTC, Homestead  
Senior High School, FL, 1988*

I never hear a bugle blast or  
gaze on marching men, but  
what I breathe a prayer to  
God that war not come again,  
and rob us of our manhood  
strength, who die in war's  
mad fray.

O' Lord, we lift our pleading  
voices on this Memorial Day.

Send peace and joy around  
the world that men may hate  
no more, but fellowship and  
love of man shall take the  
place of war.

## For Those Who Gave

BY JAMES J. METCALFE

How many crosses fill the  
field... Where now we count the  
dead? ... How many lives are  
we behind? ... How much are  
we ahead? ...Have we  
improved the world at all?  
...Have we made any gain? ...Or  
were the sons we  
sacrificed...The ones who died  
in vain?... They fought for us  
and all their own...That every  
war might cease... They gave  
their lives that we might live...In  
true and lasting peace...Let us  
remember them today...And  
bow in silent prayer...For  
soldiers, sailors, airmen  
and...Their crosses  
everywhere...And let us give  
our thanks to God...In all  
humility...To those who gave  
their all for us...With love and  
bravery.

## THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

**H**ERE RESTS IN HONORED GLORY AN AMERICAN SOLDIER KNOWN BUT TO GOD. The inscription on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, D.C., is a constant reminder of our great debt to those brave men who gave their lives to keep our country free. Today our President will lay a wreath before the front panel where the three symbolic figures commemorate the spirit of the Allied World: "Victory through Valor attaining Peace." The ceremony, like to tomb, is simple – but touching.

The first of the three Unknown Soldiers gave his life during World War I. To him went the Congressional Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Cross. The Unknown Soldier was joined by two unidentified servicemen later: one a World War II casualty; the other, a young man who gave his life in the Korean conflict. If the magnificent old mansion of General Robert E. Lee could speak as it overlooks the murky waters of the Potomac River, it would say: "Be still, Americans! Lift up your voices in prayer. Here lie three heroes who kept you free!" With a click of his military heels and a snap of the rifle, the lone sentry would turn to resume his measured pace, that of guarding the symbolic tomb.

No President and no other national hero ever went to his final resting place with higher honors that did the Unknown Soldier on Armistice Day, November 11, 1921 – and nobody knows his name or the names of those who joined him. Proudly, with fixed bayonets, the changing guards stand watch – ever watchful lest some person or some thing come between them and the symbol that they guard. The uniformed men would give their lives to protect the noble idea for which the Unknown Soldier died.

Far away, on the road leading from the Mount of Olives, eight olive trees stand like sentries guarding Gethsemane – traditionally supposed to have been the place where our Lord was crucified. He gave His life for an entire world and was an "Unknown Soldier" to almost all. On this day when we honor our dead, let us remember the New Life in Christ for us all.

**TO THINK AND PRAY ABOUT:** Pray that others will know Christ.

## “JUST A COMMON SOLDIER (A Soldier Died Today)”

By A. Lawrence Vaincourt

“He was getting old and paunchy, and his hair was falling fast, and he sat around the Legion, telling stories of the past of a war that he had fought in and the deeds that he had done. In his exploits with his buddies, they were heroes, everyone, and tho’ sometimes, to his neighbors, his tales became a joke, all his Legion buddies listened, for they knew whereof he spoke, but we’ll hear his tales no longer for old Bill has passed away, and the world’s a little poorer, for a soldier died today. He will not be mourned by many, just his children and his wife, for he lived an ordinary and quite uneventful life. Held a job and raised a family, quietly going his own way, and the world won’t note his passing, though a soldier died today. When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state, while thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were great, papers tell their whole life stories, from the time that they were young, but the passing of a soldier goes unnoticed and unsung. Is the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land a guy who breaks his promises and cons his fellow man? Or the ordinary fellow who, in times of war and strife, goes off to serve his Country and offers up his life? A politician’s stipend and the style in which he lives are sometimes disproportionate to the service that he gives. While the ordinary soldier, who offered up his all, is paid off with a medal and perhaps a pension small. It’s so easy to forget them for it was so long ago, that the old Bills of our Country went to battle, but we know it was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys, who won for us the freedom that our Country now enjoys. Should you find yourself in danger, with your enemies at hand, would you want a politician with his ever-shifting stand? Or would you prefer a soldier, who has sworn to defend his home, his kin, and country and would fight until the end? He was just a common soldier, and his ranks are growing thin, but his presence should remind us we may need his like again, for when countries are in conflict, then we find the soldier’s part is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start. If we cannot do him honor while he’s here to hear the praise, then at least let’s give him homage at the ending of his days. Perhaps just a simple headline in a paper that would say, Our Country is in mourning, for a soldier died today.”



II Cor. 3:17 -- “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is...”

# LIBERTY

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## MEMORIAL DAY

★ HONORING ALL WHO SERVED ★

**Throughout the history of America there have been many wars and conflicts, some small. Our country stands today because each time they were needed, brave men and women stepped forward to answer the call of duty. On MEMORIAL DAY, 2024, we honor those brave Americans, living and dead, who put on uniforms and took up arms for this great country. We remember.**