

Valuing the Invaluable: Valuing Our Veterans

By Stacie Ruth Stoelting, Originally Written for CBN in Honor of Veterans Day



While frail veterans shuffle down gray hallways of nursing homes, Veterans Day gets lost in the shuffle of fluorescent, fast-paced modernity. Following the trend, Election Day snatches attention from the already neglected Veterans Day (November 11). A personal story illustrates this fact:

With passion, I sang the National Anthem for President George W. Bush. Near Election Day, the event attracted over 11,000 people – including the internationally famous. Thousands of people fused into a flowing mass

and roared like a turbulent tidal wave. (It reminded me of the coliseum scene from Ben Hur.)

Before I sang my heart out, I verbalized my heart to the audience and dedicated my singing of the National Anthem to my family, friends, and my Lord Jesus Christ. I also dedicated it to our President, servicemen, and servicewomen.

For whom did the crowd cheer the loudest? For Jesus Christ? No. For our veterans? No. For the President? Yes. The President received the most deafening, passionate praises.

Recently, another Presidential occasion eclipsed an event of vast significance: the homecoming celebration for the return of local missionaries, who have spent years of toil in Albania. The missionaries' homecoming occurred on the very evening and in the very town of the President's arrival. Who received more attention? The President did, of course. Sadly, such responses echo the imperfect message of the world: Riches, connections, offices and fame seem to win and dominate this world's game.

But our Heavenly Father rights all wrong! His eyes tenderly, lovingly view all of His children with equality. In fact, our Heavenly Father loves the President just as much as He loves the resident of a nursing home. He wants us to express His love to all -including veterans.

Most of us consider ourselves appreciative of veterans. We have them stand up in church. We pray for them. Yet do we think that we cannot locate blank squares on our daily planners to honor them with our time? Well, if so, we must expeditiously adjust our attitude about this issue: We need to focus on the fact that many veterans' hourglasses hold little sand on top.

It is urgent: Doves (especially veterans of World War II) die each day. Indeed, we must serve our servicemen soon. It is Biblical.

For further proof of my point's validity, consider God's command: "Render to all men their dues. [Pay] taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, and honor to whom honor is due." (Romans 13:7, AMP) Let's obey on Veterans Day.

For Veterans Day and any day, I propose several simple ideas about how to honor our veterans. Pick one or more and discover eternal value in validating the invaluable veterans of our nation:

1. **Send a thank-you card or e-mail a caring note to a veteran in your life.** Or, if you don't know a veteran, contact a local care facility and inquire. You could send a card addressed to all veterans at a nursing home. Many nursing homes/hospitals offer to deliver e-mails to residents. (Of course, cards are more colorful and inspirational than e-mails. But e-mails are far better than nothing!)

2. **Call a veteran and thank him/her for serving.** Often, a short call sheds lasting light onto a veteran's soul. Many feel forgotten. We can flip that fact inside out!

3. **Send flowers.** I know this sounds morbid, but there is truth to this: Rather than wait for the funeral, we need to send the flowers now. The flowers will mean volumes to the veterans; far more so now rather than later. Plus, they do not have to be big bouquets.

4. **Visit a veteran. Or take a veteran out to dinner.** Following their initial return home from war, many haven't savored a special meal given in honor of their service.

5. **Don't forget our young veterans.** They deserve an e-card, note, or gift, too. Our courageous college-age young men and women face countless challenges. Our efforts can combat depression induced by combat. Web sites such as www.amillionthanks.org serve as extremely easy media through which to convey thanks to our valorous veterans.

After we obey God's command to honor the deserving, we'll eventually experience the fulfillment of John 6:38 (AMP): "Give, and [gifts] will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will they pour [a]into [the pouch formed by] the bosom [of your robe and used as a bag]. For with the measure you deal out [with the measure you use when you confer benefits on others], it will be measured back to you."

Let's take time to value the invaluable.