



A Debt

Give to everyone what you owe them: ... if honor, then honor (Romans 13:7).

“What do you say?” the little one was asked as a piece of candy was placed into his hand.

He thought. He squirmed. Then he smiled and said, “Thank you!”

Sometimes even adults have to think and squirm a bit before the words, “Thank you!” come to mind.

Veterans Day can make that happen.

It can make us think. The 11th day of the 11th month at the 11th hour in 1918 evokes few memories among us. We know of Armistice Day only from history books.

But the number *11* does catch our attention. We quickly think of the day we call *9-11*—and then we remember.

We remember that America is no stranger to danger from those who would bring death and chaos to everyday people.

We remember that fellow Americans have always stepped forward to risk their lives so that the lives of others might be protected.

Veterans Day reminds us of a debt we need to pay them.

America has usually been reluctant to go to war. President Wilson campaigned by assuring that young Americans would not bleed onto foreign soil. A generation later, President Roosevelt did the same.

Neither succeeded in this. Both came to realize that there was no choice.

Instead, young men put on uniforms and marched into harm’s way.

America learned that war would never be far off. The storm clouds of armed conflict were always on the horizon. Sometimes, they obscured the sun. Sometimes, the storms broke over our heads.

Every time, there were fellow Americans who were willing to leave behind family and friends to stand up for freedom.

Some of them have now moved on to another phase of their lives. Some have grown old. Some have died.

We now call them “Veterans.”

It is easy to forget them. Once out of uniform, they look just like the rest of us. We see them now as schoolteachers, construction workers, and moms.

We forget that they were gifts of God, called upon to serve us.

We say they were in service to our country. But in reality, they were serving us.

They were also serving children who had not yet been born. America today is built upon America past.

We can only speculate what life in America would be if her shores had not been protected and her freedoms not preserved. We are glad that we can only guess at such dreadful consequences.

Christian Americans realize that the blessings we enjoy are undeserved and never free. We understand that if America is not under God, it is without his blessing.

On Veterans Day, we give honor to those the Lord has given to defend us. By honoring them, we honor him.



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