

This Veterans Day, Give Honor to Whom Honor Is Due

Anytime is a good time to pay respect and give honor to whom it is due, as we are reminded in Romans 13:7: (RSV) "Pay all of them their dues...respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due." And Veteran's Day on Tuesday, Nov. 11, is the perfect time to pay honor to our military veterans to whom we owe the defense of our U.S. Constitution and the preservation of our cherished liberties.

Is there a veteran in your life? No doubt, at least one veteran has impacted your life. He or she could be your grandparent or parent, your neighbor, a fellow church member, a teacher, a local official or any citizen filling a role of service to the community long after their time in uniform was over.

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You might have awareness of that veteran's service, whether fighting a war or keeping the peace, but perhaps you're curious about how to honor them this Veteran's Day. And so, I offer this suggestion: Search out the veteran in your extended family, just down the street, homeless at the assistance center, or in comfortable assisted living, and make this simple request of them...

Please tell me your story.

It's really that simple. One of the best ways to honor them is by taking a personal interest in their life.

Over a decade ago, I made that request of an amazing man from my early Army days. He was a rare breed, and I must share his story here—to give honor where it is way overdue.

Herbert Jack Lloyd of Hope, Arkansas, entered the U.S. Army a Private in 1955 and rose to the rank of Brigadier General, retiring in 1992. That's 37 years of uniformed service. Well beyond active duty, he served our national security in undisclosed ways and places. When I asked what he did there, he could only answer, "Well, I guess they call me a 'spook.'"

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Consider the character and combat of a man who served three tours in Vietnam. His career included the roles of Rifleman, Machine Gun Squad Leader, Rifle Platoon Sergeant, Platoon Leader, Company Commander, G3 Training Officer, Vietnamese Ranger/Airborne Advisor, Airborne School Tower Chief and Chief of Operations, West Point Tactical Officer, Brigade Executive Officer, Battalion Commander, Deputy Chief of Staff, Brigade Commander, Division Chief of Staff and Assistant Division Commander.

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I knew him as Major Lloyd, and at that point in his career, his awards already filled his dress uniform such that his highest were hidden behind his lapel. These included two Silver Stars, the Soldier's Medal, seven Bronze Stars (w/ "V" device), two Purple Hearts, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, Master Parachutist Badge (w/ three Gold Stars for combat jumps) and the coveted Ranger Tab.

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