

“Our Veterans”

By Brother Kenneth Ray

Sunday, November 13th, 2011

Veteran—a. an old, experienced soldier, etc., esp. one who has served in time of war. B. Any person who has served in the armed forces. 2. A person of long experience in some occupation or position.

Creed—1. Brief statement of religious belief, confession of faith. 2. Any set of beliefs or principles.

First, I would like to thank those who have served and do serve: Army, Marines, Air Force, Navy, and others, such as Coast Guard or National Guard. Thank you for your service and the freedoms that you help provide and protect. The pay isn't great, but it's in you or it's not. People may laugh and chuckle at those in uniform, but they are the ones that protect that right to laugh. America owes a great deal to its veterans. The church also owes a great deal to its veterans.

Like our country, the Church enjoys that which has been gained through battle, conflict, belief in something greater than oneself, and the ultimate price paid with the lives of others. People like Peter, Paul, John, David, and others. It's because of people like these that we have the freedom to worship our maker.

Honor, Courage, and Commitment; those are the core values of the Navy. Integrity first, service before self are values of the Air Force. There are similar things in the Bible.

The Marine Corps Creed—I was a little nervous about this in church, because it talks about a rifle. But, you know, Nehemiah stood on a wall, ready to defend, and ready to build.

Nehemiah 4:15-18 ...every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon...

I am not standing before you toady proclaim Nehemiah to be a Marine. But, as in verse 19, it says that “the work is great and large.” Nehemiah shows us that we need to build and protect. As they sought to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, we, too, need to strengthen our lives in Christ. Plant the Seed in the lives of others, help to build the Kingdom. As we do that in ourselves, allow God, and help it be built in others, we heed the protection of the saints and be the protectors of the saints. Pray, share sound doctrine, support the weak, feed the hungry. We don't have a rifle, but we have a sword (Hebrews 4:12), and we need to know when and how to use it.

The Soldier's Creed—Joshua was a soldier.

Joshua 1:2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise...

Command is passed down from one generation to the next, charged to carry out God's plan for His people. Joe Ramirez was showing me what is being taught to our children in Children's Church, and I thought, wow, we have a smart next generation. We gather the ability to work with those responsible.

You know, when Joshua brought the Children of Israel into the promised land, the Jordan was a river without a bridge.

We receive a reward that is promised to us. With teamwork, things go so much better. The key is to work together, or not, knowing the result. When we fall, we lift each other up, and we keep going.

Sailor's Creed—Noah was the first admiral. In contrast, Moses was a puddle pirate. He was in a basket in the Nile (in the shallow end, at that), and he had to walk on dry land to cross the Red Sea.

Genesis 6:13-22 ...The end of all flesh is come before me...

God tells Noah that He is going to destroy all flesh, along with the earth, then he lays out the plan for Noah. Noah got made fun of. Let's see, it's never rained, but your building a ginormous boat... I think you've been out in the sun too long, Noah. But the result?

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear...

1 Peter 3:20-21 ...eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us ...

It's not about the filth of the flesh. It isn't the water. It's about faith in action. But you see that Noah saved eight souls. Imagine if, through your faith in action, that eight souls are added to the kingdom. Now imagine if you don't put your faith into action, and those eight souls aren't saved.

Airman's Creed—Elijah was not a jet pilot, but he definitely jetted out of there.

2 Kings 2:11 ...Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

I'm not sure what that looked like, but I know it happened. This veteran gave us an example of what we have to look forward to.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 ...to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The Old Testament is a shadow of things to come. Elijah showed us what kind of Air Force we're going to have. There are parallel lines between the Old and New Testaments.

We have one Commander in Chief. Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force all start with the same two letters: U. S. We serve the country in a branch of its armed services. We take a pledge to the republic for which it stands (pointing at the flag).

As Christians, we are not serving Christian Fellowship, we do all in word or deed to the Bishop of our souls—Jesus Christ. Who, before Abraham was, I am (John 8:58); the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2); He who is still to come again (John 14:3); the Father of lights (James 1:17); rewarder of our faith (Hebrews 11:6); and King of the country we see. We have received our commission.