

**November 16, 2014**

**Serve**

1 Peter 4:10 – *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace*

One of the dictionary definitions of the word *serve* is “to carry out duties.” Today, we honor with thanksgiving those who have served or carried out duties for this country and our freedoms. This past Tuesday was *Veteran's Day*. And so, today we give thanks to all of those men and women who have given of their time and lives to defend our country.

But, our thankfulness does not end with a simple remembrance on one day of the year. Neither, does the service of our veterans end when they come home. To be sure they used some of their specific gifts to wear their uniforms and carry out their orders at home and on foreign soil. But, they didn't use all of their gifts or leave them all when they left the military. Our veterans now get to serve in different ways, as workers, bosses, fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, engineers, security, police, business owners, janitors and so many other ways.

As Christians we give thanks to God for their specific gifts for military service to offer us our freedom to worship Jesus Christ publically, openly and joyfully. But, we also praise God for their service here after their time in the military is over. In fact, that is part of our service to them. Being thankful and grateful for the skills they use here and now. Just as they served to protect our soil, we now serve them by helping veterans

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reintegrate into society. Walking with them and praying for them as they begin a new stage in life. Not only that, but we offer them our

service by providing for their new needs with our specific skills. Yes, we serve them just as they continue to serve us.

This is the type of service Paul is talking about in our verse for meditation today. As Christians, we use our gifts to serve one another in love and for the purpose of glorifying God through Christ by the gifts that he has given us. So we use them to serve those who have served us.

What does this look like practically? Well it might be that you can offer a veteran a job at your business or company. It might be that you can pray for a veteran and his or her family. It may also be that you can mow a former Armed Service member's yard, cook a meal for them or just listen to them as they tell their story. Whatever your gift, use it to serve them throughout your time together. Just as they use their skills to serve us now, by lending us the courage that comes from their stories, the wisdom that comes from their experience and the joy that comes from their opportunity to do new things.

Today, we thank all of you who have served us in military service and continue to serve us in new ways today. We thank you, we remember you and we promise to use our gifts to serve and carry out our duties to you as well. God bless you and God's peace.

*Pastor Carl J. H.*

