

Today is Memorial Day and I would like to share with you some thoughts a friend of mine posted on FB. He is a Chaplain in the United States Navy and principal assistant chaplain at USS John C Stennis (CVN 74). I also include Freedom Is Not Free by Kelly Strong.

“Don't wish me a Happy Memorial Day. There is nothing happy about brave men and women dying. It's not a holiday. It's a remembrance. If you want to know the true meaning, visit Arlington or your local VA cemetery, not Disneyland (post COVID, of course). Don't tell me how great any one political power is. Tell me about Chesty Puller, George Patton, John Basilone, Dakota Meyer, Kyle Carpenter, Mitchell Paige, Ira Hayes, Chris Kyle, Jackie Cochran, Dorothy Lewis, and any other heroes too numerous to name.

Don't tell me I don't know what I am talking about. I have carried the burden all too many times for my fellow warriors who now stand their post for God. Say a prayer... and then another thanking those who fought and died for your freedoms. Reach out and let a Vet know you're there...we're losing too many in "peace". Remember the Fallen for all the Good they did while they were here.”

I agree with my friend, this is a day of remembrance of those who lost their lives while fighting for our country. My dad served in the Army Air Corps during WW2 and was a prisoner of war in Bulgaria. Yes, he came home, but as I look back, there was a piece of dad that was left behind, something in him was not the same. No one would have known it except a few. So while we remember and thank God for the men and women who served our country and lost their lives, I also remember the men and women who are living, but lost a piece of themselves during their time in military. Yes, we have Veterans Day in September to honor our VETS, however we sometimes forget about the silent loss many continue to live with.

Freedom Is Not Free - - Kelly Strong

I watched the flag pass by one day.
It fluttered in the breeze.
A young Marine saluted it,
and then he stood at ease.
I looked at him in uniform
So young, so tall, so proud,
He'd stand out in any crowd.
I thought how many men like him
Had fallen through the years.
How many died on foreign soil?
How many mothers' tears?
How many pilots' planes shot down?
How many died at sea?
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves?
No, freedom isn't free.

I heard the sound of TAPS one night,
When everything was still
I listened to the bugler play
And felt a sudden chill.
I wondered just how many times
That TAPS had meant "Amen,"
When a flag had draped a coffin
Of a brother or a friend.
I thought of all the children,
Of the mothers and the wives,
Of fathers, sons and husbands
With interrupted lives.
I thought about a graveyard
At the bottom of the sea
Of unmarked graves in Arlington.
No, freedom isn't free.

Blessings on this Memorial Day
Pastor Linda