Ninety four years ago today WORLD WAR I ended at exactly 11:00 A.M. on the 11th DAY of the 11th MONTH of 1918.

   After the war, Congress declared November 11th an annual holiday. Originally it was called "Armistice Day". Canada observes the same holiday, calling it "Remembrance Day."

But in 1953 after the second World War ended, the name was changed to Veteran’s Day. And so today, on the 11th DAY of the 11th MONTH, we pay tribute to all of American Veterans, both living and dead, who fought so bravely to provide and protect our freedoms as a country.

Why Are Veterans So Deserving of Our Honor?

One reason is because of THE CAUSE TO WHICH THE VETERAN IS COMMITTED.

   A veteran is committed to the cause of FREEDOM.
A veteran is committed to the cause of COURAGE.
A veteran is committed to THE LOVE OF COUNTRY.

   Long after the veteran has laid aside his or her military uniform they remain some of the most PATRIOTIC, most LOYAL, most COMMITTED Americans we have in this country.

   And for that commitment to a cause greater than themselves they are deserving of our honor.
Another reason our veterans are so deserving of our honor is because of **THE COST THE VETERANS ARE WILLING TO PAY.**

The veteran gave up the safety and security of their own homes. They left behind family and friends. Some surrendered their personal plans for education and career. Some suffered the loss of sight. Some forfeited arms and legs for prosthetics. Some had their faces permanently scarred or grossly disfigured. Many sacrificed their lives. And many others will be haunted by the nightmarish images of war for the rest of their lives.

And for those GREAT COSTS they have paid, our veterans are deserving of our honor.

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In our scripture text today Jesus pays great honor to a military veteran, not because of his service to his country, but for his faith in God.

Please turn with me to the Gospel of Matthew chapter 8.

Matthew 8:5-13  (NKJV)

5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him,

6 saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.”

7 And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.”

8 The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.

9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”
10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!

11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that same hour.

P R A Y E R

There are two key points I would like to focus your attention on from our scripture text.

First of all notice..........  

I. The Military Veteran Gave Honor to Christ (vs. 5-8)

5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him,

6 saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.”

7 And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.”

8 The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.

1. A centurion was a military leader in the Roman army. The Greek word for “centurion” (eka-to-narkos) means “commander of one hundred.”

   While a centurion may have commanded one hundred, it wasn’t uncommon for a Roman Centurion to have more than one hundred under their command.
2. Later in VERSE 9 the Centurion told Jesus about the kind of authority he had in the Roman army.

9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

3. I don’t know if you know this or not, but every time a Centurion is mentioned in the New Testament, it is always in a favorable light.

*When Jesus died on the cross it was a centurion who said, “Truly this Man was the Son of God.” (Matt. 27:54)

*The first Gentile convert mentioned by name in the scriptures was a Centurion by the name of Cornelius. (Acts 10:1)

*In Acts 21, we read where some soldiers, including Centurions, were the ones who rescued Paul from being killed by an angry mob in Jerusalem. (Acts 21:32)

*In Acts 23:17, we read that it was some Centurions who and a band of more than two hundred soldiers who provided Paul with a military escort to Caesarea when he was brought before Felix the Governor.

*And in Acts 27, when Paul and a group of prisoners were being taken to Rome their ship wrecked on the Isle of Malta. The soldiers who were escorting the prisoners wanted to kill all of them to keep them from escaping, but a Centurion aboard the ship convinced them not to do it because he wanted to spare Paul’s life. (Acts 27:39-43)

4. In our scripture we meet another Centurion who is painted in a very favorable light.

We learn this Centurion had come to Jesus because he had a servant who had some sort of paralysis and was in terrible suffering.
5. The Greek word Matthew used in VERSE 6 for “servant” means, “boy,” or “one who is loved like a son.”

6. Jesus, seeing the love and compassion this rugged military veteran had for his suffering servant said, “I will come and heal him.”

7. But then notice the great honor this military veteran gives to JESUS in verse 8,

   “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed.”

8. BY FAITH the Centurion had come to Jesus. He could have commanded that his soldiers bring JESUS to him, but he didn’t. He sought out JESUS.

   BY FAITH the Centurion humbly honored Christ as the superior authority.

   BY FAITH this military veteran recognized his unworthiness to have the sinless Christ come into his home.

9. The Military Veteran gave honor to CHRIST!

Next we see.............

II. Christ Gave Honor To The Military Veteran (vs. 10-13)

10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!

11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that same hour.
1. In these verses we see Jesus do two things with regards to this MILITARY VETERAN..

(A) First of all, in verse 10, Jesus HONORED HIM FOR HIS FAITH.

10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!

There are only two times in the New Testament where we are told that Jesus “marveled” at something.

In Mark 6:6, Jesus “marveled” at the UNBELIEF of the Jewish people in His hometown of Nazareth.

And here in Matthew 7:10 Jesus “marveled” at the FAITH of this Centurion. In fact, Jesus hadn’t seen faith like his in all of Israel. He had performed miracles in their towns and villages. He had taught in their synagogues. And yet the Jewish people still rejected Jesus.

It was this Gentile military veteran, this Roman centurion, who demonstrated an UNCOMMON FAITH in Jesus, so much so that Jesus “marveled” at his faith. TRUE FAITH HONORS CHRIST and CHRIST HONORS TRUE FAITH!

The Centurion said to Christ, “Just speak a word and my servant will be healed!”

“JUST SPEAK A WORD!” Brothers and sisters here is a picture of what true faith is all about! True faith is taking Christ at His word!
How many times do we fail to “simply” take Christ at His word?

* Jesus says, “Ask and it shall be given to you, seek and you shall find, knock and the door shall be opened” and yet we still don’t ASK, SEEK and KNOCK in prayer as we should.

* Jesus says, “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed you can say to this mountain ‘be thrown into the sea’ and it will be thrown into the sea’ ………and yet we struggle with doubt and fear.

* Jesus says, “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be given to us as well”………and yet many of us worry ourselves sick over some of the silliest things.

LOOK AT THE INCREDIBLE FAITH OF THAT MILITARY VETERAN!
He told Jesus, “Just speak a word and my servant will be healed!”

(B) But not only did Jesus HONOR him for his FAITH, JESUS HEALED HIS SUFFERING SERVANT. (v. 13)

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that same hour.

Jesus is telling the Centurion, “Because you believe I have authority from My heavenly Father, and because you have trusted that can simply speak a word and your servant will be healed“, SO NOW LET IT BE DONE FOR YOU. AND THE CENTURION’S SERVANT WAS HEALED THAT VERY HOUR.

TRUE FAITH SEES THE INVISIBLE!
TRUE FAITH BELIEVES THE IMPOSSIBLE!
AND TRUE FAITH RECEIVES THE INCREDIBLE!
C O N C L U S I O N

I leave you with these closing thoughts......

It is the VETERAN, not the preacher who gave us the freedom of religion.

It is the VETERAN, not the reporter, who gave us the freedom of the press.

It is the VETERAN, not the poet who gave us the freedom of speech.

It is the VETERAN, not the lawyer who gave us the right to a fair trial.

It is the VETERAN, not the politician who gave us the right to vote.

It is the VETERAN who salutes the flag and served under the flag, who gave us the freedom to proudly wave our flags.

Today we honor our veterans, but we WORSHIP JESUS CHRIST, OUR GREAT COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF!