

AN OLD FRIEND

When I was young a friend of mine retired with 30 years of military service, more years than I had lived. I asked him if it was worth it, and a tear came to his eye. He said, son, I'd do it again and then he told me why.

He said, this nation cannot stand unless we have someone to guard our country night and day the way that I have done.

There's better paying jobs he said, with much better hours too, but the future of this country depends on folks like me and you. I've not got a lot to show and my years at home were few, but I did the job the best I could and now it's up to you.

I think about this friend of mine as my 30 years grows near and I understand just how he felt and why I saw that tear. I've been gone from home a lot myself and I have a scar or two. But if I had it all to do again, I'd do the same thing too.

There's a youngster out there somewhere who will enlist to take my place. He'll ask me was it worth it and see a tear run down my face. They're good these young replacements, I work with them every day. With faith in God They'll do the job and the best of them will stay. Then in 30 years, a youngster who service just began, will ask and get the answer, son, I'd do it all again.