

Have you noticed a difference in the salute given by our military men and women as President Bush walks by? Most folks would not notice anything, but military people see it right away. Watch: When President Bush leaves his helicopter or Air Force One, the honor guards salute and face him as he disembarks, then turn their faces towards him as he passes by. They continue to salute his back as he walks away. This kind of salute has not been seen in the previous eight years, though it is customary courtesy to the Commander-in-Chief. You see, soldiers aren't required to turn and face the President as they salute. They are not required to salute his back. They are only required to salute. They can remain face-forward the entire time. And that is what they did during Bill Clinton's entire presidency. Our soldiers were forced to obey Clinton's orders, but they were not forced to respect him. From their salutes, we can surmise that they did not. Why is such respect afforded to President Bush? He doesn't even know how to bite his lower lip and not get teary-eyed whenever he speaks!

The following incident from Major General Van Antwerp may give us an insight. Gen. Antwerp is president of the Officers' Christian Fellowship. He lost nearly all his staff when the Pentagon was attacked Sept. 11. His executive officer LTC Brian Birdwell was badly burned and in the hospital when President Bush visited him. Our President spent time and prayed with Brian. As he was getting ready to leave, he went to the foot of Brian's bed and saluted. He held his salute until Brian was able to raise his burned and bandaged arm, ever so slowly, in return. The Commander-in-Chief never initiates a salute, except in the case of a Congressional Medal of Honor winner. The injured soldier did not have to return the salute. But he did, out of respect to his President - a Soldier's President. Congressman J.C. Watts (R. Oklahoma) said, "Character is doing the right thing when nobody is looking." The nation and world learned some of what our last President did when nobody was looking. That President was disbarred -- the worst disgrace (other than imprisonment) to a lawyer. CNN will have a difficult time shining his or his wife's tarnished images. In this time of war and danger, I am so grateful to have a President whom the soldiers salute -- fully. On Special Report with Brit Hume, hosted by Jim Angle, at the close of the show when they normally have some funny video clip, they showed President Bush and the First Lady on their way to Marine One to leave for Camp David for the weekend. As the video starts, the First Lady is leading the way into the helicopter with the spaniel dog on the leash, and the president is right behind her with the Scotty on the leash. As the First Lady entered the chopper, the Marine at the gangway saluted and held his salute. The Scottie, the President was walking, decided it wanted to squat right when he got to steps. The president pulled on its leash, but the stubborn Scottie persisted in squatting. The President bent down and scooped up the pooch and entered Marine One. After he entered, the Marine cut his salute and returned to the position of attention. Moments later the President reemerged from the helicopter and out onto the steps. The Marine was standing at attention, head and eyes straight ahead. The President leaned over and tapped him on the left arm. The startled Marine turned his body toward the President and received his returned salute! I was so impressed by this true act of respect for our military people by our President! He really does get it. Most any other person of his stature would have just continued his journey, disregarding the neglected return salute. Not George W. Bush. He is earning the respect of the military community, not expecting it -- as most have and would. President George W. Bush -- The man who admitted to having a drinking problem in younger years, and whose happy-go-lucky lifestyle led him to mediocre grades in college and an ill-fated oil venture. Who mangled syntax, and whose speaking missteps became known as "Bushisms." He came within a hair's breadth of losing the election in November. While votes were counted and re-counted, Bush quietly but

confidently waited at his ranch. Make no mistake, his orders were carried out, but he stayed in the background, faithful and confident. Bush named Jesus Christ as Lord of his life on public TV. Not an oblique reference to being "born-again" or having a "life change." He actually said the un-PC-like phrase, "Jesus Christ!" On September 11, he was thrust into a position only known by Roosevelt, Churchill, Lincoln, and Washington. The weight of the world was on his shoulders, and the responsibility of a generation was on his soul. So President George W. Bush walked to his seat at the front of the National Cathedral just three days after two of the most impressive symbols of American capitalism and prosperity virtually evaporated. When the history of this time is written, it will be acknowledged by friend and foe alike that President George W. Bush came of age in that cathedral and lifted a nation off its knees. In what was one of the most impressive exhibitions of self-control in presidential history, President George W. Bush was able to deliver his remarks without losing his resolve, focus, or confidence. God's hand, which guided him through that sliver-thin election, now rested fully on him. As he walked back to his seat, the camera angle was appropriate. He was virtually alone in the scene, alone in that massive place with God, just him and the Lord. Back at his seat, George H. Bush reached over and took his son's hand. In that gesture his father seemed to say, "I wish I could do this for you, son, but I can't. You have to do this on your own." President George W. Bush squeezed back and gave him a look of peace that said, "I don't have to do it alone, Dad. I've got help." What a blessing to have a believer in God as President.

Please take a moment after you read this to "pray for him". He truly does have the weight of the world on his shoulders. Pray that God will sustain him and give him wisdom and discernment in his decisions. Pray for his protection and that of his family. Our President needs those who believe in a good God around the world to be praying for him. As this makes the email rounds, eventually there could literally be millions of people praying for him.

"Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen."