

Honoring Our Fallen Comrades **1 Peter 3:15-19** (read at the end)

Today is a day of **remembrance!** Of all those who have fallen to make freedom possible! We honor them today, on this Memorial Day weekend, and we will choose to live in response to the ultimate sacrifice they have made to ensure our “life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.”

War is an ugly thing, but the freedoms we get to experience today in this country, is the direct result of what those who have gone before us, who fought our wars, & many of whom gave their lives, have done on our behalf!

When you really stop and think about war, it is heartbreaking to think that we live in a world that it takes bloodshed to try to fix what has been broken!

What’s really broken is humanity itself! And broken people tend to break things! There once was a time when this wasn’t so, but you have to go all the way back to the Garden of Eden before sin entered the world!

God created all things good! And when He created man, He said it was “very good!” **But sin took God’s good creation and destroyed it!** And it wasn’t long after, that death became a reality within this fallen creation!

- Cain killed his brother Abel in cold blood!
- Wars broke out, to the point that God grieved that He even made man.
- God’s prognosis **“Every inclination of the heart of man was evil continually!”**

As we celebrate Memorial Day today, & we remember and give thanks for those who have fallen in battle. **Don’t we also long for the day when death will be no more,** & when the sin that leads to the taking of life will be overcome?

This day will come! Why? **1 Peter 3:18 - “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit!”**

The deaths of our fallen soldiers have made great provisions for us today, but the death of Jesus made the ultimate provision for us, **for all of eternity!**

“He suffered once for sins” – He experienced the most agonizing death, while fighting the greatest war that will ever be fought – the war between good & evil! And His sacrifice paid the ultimate price of sin – for all of time!

“the righteous for the unrighteous” – Jesus was not only fighting for a good cause, **He was/is the cause of all that is good.** Yet He suffered the death He did not deserve so that all of us who do deserve it might go free!

“that He might bring us to God” – Death brings us all before God, whether we accept that or not (**Hebrews 9:27**), but Jesus brings us before God too. **The difference is one brings fear of judgment, the other hope of pardon!**

“being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit!” – **Jesus’ death is the only death that brings life!** Those who have given their lives in service of our country have done so to secure our earthly freedoms, but only Jesus’ death provides for, and secures for us, eternal life & heavenly freedom!

We were not only broken & blinded to the things of God by our sin, **we were dead in our sins & trespasses.** Christ’s ultimate sacrifice made us alive!

Just as this Memorial Day weekend serves to remind us of the sacrifices that were given for our freedoms, let this day, and every day, be a Memorial Day to the Lord Jesus, whose sacrifice has made all things new!

Because of Jesus, death is not the end, death has no final say – **“death has been swallowed up in victory” (1 Corinthians 15:55-57).** The dead in Christ will rise!

We may miss those who have passed on from this life. We may miss our fallen comrades. But for those who are in Christ they are more than just a memory, for **Jesus, their fallen comrade, is alive & therefore so are they!**

This weekend is either very somber from mourning what has been lost, or it’s filled with joy from celebrating what has been gained! I pray that it’s both, not only in memory of our fallen military soldiers, but also in memory of our fallen, and risen, Savior Jesus Christ!

And let us not just remember, but also **share** this good news with the world! **“in your hearts honor Christ, the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you”**

Why a defense? Because the world is still broken/fallen and the message of Christ is still offensive to many – but it is the only hope of salvation! So let us proclaim it, & live it, but let us do so **“with gentleness & respect”- Vs. 15.**

There’s enough fighting/war in this world – **let’s follow Jesus & choose love!**

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