

Dr. David Jeremiah: Lay Aside Your Political Posturing and Your Endless Debates Today

Every year Memorial Day comes and goes and is often marked by parades, backyard picnics and the onset of warm summer days. But this Memorial Day, the pageantry will be limited with many of us around the United States still sheltering in place.

Nevertheless, I want to remind Americans that it is still a day to pause and reflect on the sacrifice of those who have made us free. In fact, with many of the usual trappings and traditions absent this year, perhaps it will give us some more free time to spend our day in thanksgiving to God for the many brave men and women who've sacrificed everything for our peaceful way of life.

I've spent much of my adult life leading a church in a military community in Southern California, Shadow Mountain Community Church. At Shadow Mountain, we proudly celebrate the sacrifice of our armed forces. Being a pastor in a community like this inevitably results in gaining a profound respect for our men and women who put their lives on the line—especially for those who've paid the ultimate price for their country and our freedom.

It has also taught me to never take this day for granted.

This Memorial Day is the perfect day to learn who our heroes really are and to teach our children about them. I'm reminded of the famous proverb that should inspire us all to pass along these values to the next generation: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

It's also a time to lay aside our political posturing, our

partisan arguments and our endless debates, and instead raise a hand toward heaven in praise to God for those who have given us the freedom to debate amongst ourselves, yet all remain American. It's a time to bend our knees in renewed prayer for family members whose sacrifice, whether recent or long ago, leaves loved ones with a gaping hole inside their hearts every Thanksgiving dinner without Dad to cut the turkey, or Christmas dinners with empty seats and Independence Days whose fireworks and glamour can never pass without tears.

When Jewish families gather around the table to commemorate their deliverance from Egypt through the rich symbolism of the Passover meal, they ask this question: "Why is this night different from all other nights?" The question is important because it anchors the meal and the celebration to what is being celebrated, what must be remembered.

May I suggest that this weekend, whether surrounded by your family or alone in rest and reflection, that you ask and answer the question, "What makes Memorial Day different from all other days?" And in answering that question, may you remember the hand of God in founding and guiding this nation, the men and women who paid the ultimate price for its preservation, and that this cherished freedom of ours has never been free. {eoa}

Dr. David Jeremiah *is among the best-known Christian leaders in the world. He serves as senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon, California and is the founder and host of Turning Point. Turning Point's 30-minute radio program is heard on more than 2,200 radio stations daily. A New York Times' bestselling author and Gold Medallion winner, he has written more than 50 books. His latest work, Shelter in God, is a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and releases on June 2.*