

What Jesus Would Tell Us This Memorial Day

Today on Memorial Day, the U.S. pauses to remember those who gave their all in our defense.

Warfare is one of the oldest activities of mankind. Beginning with Nimrod in Babylon, rulers have used force of arms to subjugate their enemies and, often, their own people. The great empires of antiquity, Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome rose and fell to the cadence of armies on the march. And the people suffered from the plagues of death, famine and disease that followed the armies.

Into this world of brutal warfare, God sent deliverers to His people. Abraham rescued Lot, Moses freed his people from Egypt, Joshua defeated the Canaanites and the judges fought to save the Israelites when they repented of their disastrous turns away from God. God built a great kingdom on the victories of King David, but the people repeatedly fell into sin, and many of their kings moved in the oppressive spirit of Nimrod. The horrors of warfare came upon God's rebellious people, and the Israelites became slaves in the promised land (see Neh. 9:36, 37).

Christ came into a world ruled by the sword, but He refused to build His kingdom by the sword. Instead, He established His kingdom within the hearts of believers, giving them the inner strength to overcome their real enemy, Satan. Jesus was the greatest revolutionary of all time, bringing millions out of the kingdom of darkness. Even the mighty Roman Empire finally bowed its knee and surrendered to Christ.

Alas, the plague of warfare was not eradicated even in the Christian lands. The church followed the path of Israel, falling into sinful periods and suffering divisions. New

Nimrods arose, some from the church itself, to subjugate their people. And, as with Israel, God sent deliverers, some with a Bible, like St Patrick, who converted the Irish, and some with the sword, like Charles Martel, who saved Europe from an Islamic invasion.

God has also raised up deliverers for our country, whose sacrifice we remember on Memorial Day. Jesus said "Greater love has no man than this: that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). As the Lord commends them for their love, so should we.

Let us then pray for our defenders as we honor those who showed the greatest love by sacrificing their lives for us.
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