

Better Than Anyone, Christians Should Understand the Depth of Love Behind the Ultimate Sacrifice

“Freedom isn’t free” is a popular adage, especially around Memorial Day. When we look at the price paid by soldiers who come home wounded, or who don’t come home at all, we realize the cost of deliverance from tyranny and oppression.

Christians can understand better than anyone that someone pays the price for freedom.

The cornerstone of the Christian faith is that Jesus is a Savior who paid the ultimate sacrifice to bring people into union with God the Father. It is Jesus’ sacrifice that enables mankind to be free from sin and death. We are the recipients of the depth of Christ’s love and the sacrifice of His life for ours.

And yet even Christians can become complacent and lose perspective. We can become so accustomed to our peaceful way of life that we take it for granted. We can become lulled into feeling like the lifestyle we are blessed with is the way it’s always been.

We often do this with our Christian walk overall. At times we forget that we aren’t entitled to anything. God’s love is unconditional, and His grace is sufficient to cover every error we make. But He didn’t owe it to us, and we haven’t earned it. God chose to send His Son to make a sacrifice of Himself in order to give us life and give it more abundantly.

Jesus tells us plainly in John 15:13 (NIV), “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

There are those living among us today who are laying down their lives for us on an ongoing basis.

Where I pastor, we are privileged to have many active-duty military members in our congregation. Over many years, my respect has grown for these men and women who willingly put their lives in danger for people who they don't know and will never meet. We proudly celebrate their service and sacrifice.

For many of our heroes who have fallen on the battlefield, we can be comforted that they will one day be reunited with their loved ones. It is written, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Dan. 12:2a).

On this Memorial Day, pause and be sure you haven't taken these heroes for granted. Think of those in your family or in your circles who have given their lives for us. Remember the brother who was lost at such a young age, or your neighbor's father, or your friend's son or daughter. And as we spend this holiday with family and friends, it's a good opportunity to teach our children about these modern-day heroes. None of their sacrifices were in vain.

Memorial Day is a sacred day to reflect and give thanks for these heroes who have purchased with their lives the lives we enjoy today. For Christians, it's the greatest modern-day illustration of how much Jesus loves us and wants us to be free from sin, pain and death.

Remember the loss that was endured to provide us with peace in the free world. Remember those who have to endure life with loved ones now missing from family photos. Finally, as we stop by a graveside or raise a flag up the pole, take a moment to thank the Lord for how blessed we are to be the recipients of love and sacrifice. {eoa}

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