

## Message for May 24, 2020

This coming Monday is Memorial Day, when we honor those in the Armed Forces who have given their lives in service to their country. As the word "memorial" implies, we observe the day in order to remember. After all, it would be a travesty to forget the ultimate sacrifice made by so many in order to ensure our freedom and way of life. We owe all of them so much. Sometimes, however, remembering can be very painful. We have a tendency as human beings to try to forget, and bury deep within us the memory of those events which brought us untold grief. Recalling those memories may cause us to relive the pain, especially when it involves the tragic and untimely loss of a loved one. Perhaps some of you had a friend or relative who died in such a way and you still grieve whenever you think about it. For me, I personally knew only one such person who lost his life while serving his country. He was my younger sister's teenage boyfriend who died in a military helicopter accident many, many years ago. He was his parents' only child and they were understandably devastated. I can't begin to imagine the pain they felt losing an only child so young. But I know that our Heavenly Father can. After all, He lost a young Son too in service to His kingdom. How painful that must have been, to see His Son on the cross, dying in agony! But I'm so grateful that the Father has no aversion to recalling that bitter memory, since Jesus' death on that cross, and His subsequent resurrection, is what saves you and me from an eternity in Hell. Think about that. If the Father chose to not remember or call to mind that sacrificial death because it was too painful to bear, where would that leave us? So thank you Father God for always being willing to remember what Jesus did for us, no matter how painful that memory might be! And thank you for the comfort You provide to us in this life, and for the promise of a future time when You will wipe away every tear and all sorrow. We long for that day.

Yes, Monday is Memorial Day, and we should both remember and honor our fallen heroes and loved ones. It is the right thing to do. But I think it is only proper to include Jesus in our observances. After all, His sacrifice was the greatest of all.

With you in the spirit of remembrance,  
Pastor Joe

*Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted. -- Matthew 5:4*

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. -- John 3:16*

*Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. -- John 15:13*