

Hello everyone! And welcome to our Wednesday Word devotion for today, November 11, 2020. Thank you so much for tuning in, and for taking this time out of your day to focus on God and focus on your faith.

Today is Veterans' Day, dear friends, and I'd love to take a bit of time to pray for and share some gratitude for all the folks who have served in our country's military. While Veterans' Day is not a church holiday, it is a federal holiday, praying for our country's military and remembering the sacrifices of folks who came before us is a powerful and beautiful thing.

Veterans' Day falls on November 11 every year, which in 1918 was Armistice Day, and marked the end of the First World War. So when we remember and pray on this day, we mark the day of peace that brought an end to that terrible and bloody conflict.

As we pray in the midst of this remembrance, we think not only of the sacrifices of those who have served our country, but we also think of the power of God and our faith. There are no guarantees of how certain things are or are not going to shake out when a serviceperson is deployed or on active duty. And this not knowing yet boldly going forth in service over self is what soldiers do, day after day. What incredible faith and conviction that kind of action takes.

One bit of comfort that we can gain from this faith is that God will always journey alongside us by the power of the Holy Spirit. We take great comfort in knowing that through the dying and rising of Jesus Christ, not even death could defeat God - God and the life God brings will always win. By God's great love for all people we can take comfort that even if the worst happens, we will be joined with God and Jesus Christ in the communion of saints, the kingdom of heaven for all time. Nothing we do, no powers of any kingdom or principality, not even death itself will ever separate us from God and God's great love. For this gift of love, of new life, of assured holy power, we give unending thanks.

I also think today about what we can do for our veterans and folks currently serving in our country's military. So many veterans are deeply hurting when they come back from deployment, especially from physical wounds and the mental wounds of PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, suicidal thoughts, and other mental health struggles. As a tangible act of faith and love for my veteran neighbors, I will be making a donation to the Wounded Warrior Project today, a nonprofit organization devoted to supporting all kinds of healing for wounded veterans, and their transition to civilian life. I will post a link to their website in the caption for this video if you feel so called to support them as well.

And now dear friends, I invite you to join me in the Word of God as we read from the Psalms today. The Bible certainly has no shortage of battle and victory language, especially in the Old Testament, but I appreciate the way it's used in this Psalm today. Though we learn of God's victory, the focus is more on the people's relationship with God, rather than victory or defeat itself. God is with all the people involved, and even through the midst of this conflict, the people still are able to give thanks to God.

This is Psalm 44:1-8.

We have heard with our ears, O God,
our ancestors have told us,
what deeds you performed in their days,
in the days of old:

2 you with your own hand drove out the nations,
but them you planted;
you afflicted the peoples,
but them you set free;

3 for not by their own sword did they win the land,
nor did their own arm give them victory;
but your right hand, and your arm,
and the light of your countenance,
for you delighted in them.

4 You are my King and my God;
you command victories for Jacob.

5 Through you we push down our foes;
through your name we tread down our assailants.

6 For not in my bow do I trust,
nor can my sword save me.

7 But you have saved us from our foes,
and have put to confusion those who hate us.

8 In God we have boasted continually,
and we will give thanks to your name forever.

And now please join me in prayer:

Almighty and ever-living God, we give you thanks for the men and women who have served and defended our country and the values of freedom and justice we hold so dear. Help us be mindful of the sacrifices they made and the hardship endured by their families and friends, so that we never take for granted the privileges they have secured for us. Hear us, we pray, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Go in peace dear friends, have a beautiful day. Amen.