

Remember those who have gone before.

5/29/2016

### Battle of Coral Sea- May 4-8, 1942

1 fleet carrier [scuttled](#),  
1 destroyer sunk,  
1 oiler sunk,  
1 fleet carrier damaged,  
69 aircraft destroyed.<sup>[3]</sup>  
656 killed<sup>[4]</sup>

...but it stopped the Japanese fleet, and helped prevent the cutting of supply lines to Australia and a possible invasion.

Our brother Ed Hagedorn was there.

### Normandy beach- June 6, 1944

The largest seaborne invasion in history, the operation began the liberation of German-occupied northwestern Europe from [Nazi](#) control, and contributed to the Allied victory on the [Western Front](#).

The [amphibious landings](#) were preceded by extensive aerial and naval bombardment and an [airborne assault](#)—the [landing of 24,000 American, British, and Canadian airborne troops shortly after midnight](#).

Allied [infantry](#) and [armoured divisions](#) began landing on the coast of France at 06:30. The men landed under heavy fire from gun emplacements overlooking the beaches, and the shore was mined and covered with obstacles such as wooden stakes, metal tripods, and barbed wire, making the work of the beach-clearing teams difficult and dangerous.

Casualties were heaviest at Omaha, with its high cliffs.

German casualties on D-Day were around 1,000 men.  
Allied casualties were at least 10,000,  
with 4,414 confirmed dead.

Tom Ryon's father, Jesse, was there,  
and survived the horrors of that day.

What would our world be like today,  
if Nazi Germany had not been contained,  
and eventually defeated,  
if Japan had been able to have their way in the Pacific?

What if... we don't know,  
but we DO know the freedoms that we enjoy today,  
because of their sacrifice.

We could look at so many  
key, critical turning points in American history  
and say "What if?"

What if brave men and women had been unwilling to serve,  
to put themselves in harm's way, yes,  
and be willing to die, if that is what it took,  
to guard our freedoms,  
that we so often take for granted?

As a nation, we have set a day aside-  
to honor our fallen brothers and sisters,  
fathers and sons, neighbors and friends.

We remember those who have gone before,  
and sacrificed their lives to preserve ours,  
to give us a gift that they were willing to forego.

The closing scene from Saving Private Ryan,  
shows a retired vet returning to Normandy,  
who survived because a squad of infantry  
gave their lives to preserve his,

And amid tears, he asks, “Was it worth it?”

That’s a question that each one of us is confronted with,  
 each Memorial Day and really, should be every day,  
 Was their sacrifice worth it,  
 based on my life today, based on my appreciation today?

Turn with me to Hebrews 11:32.

After listing a Who’s who of  
 great heroes of faith from the Old Testament,  
 the writer of Hebrews begins to summarize,  
 so we pick up reading in v. 32-

<sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. <sup>35</sup> Women received back their dead, raised to life again.

Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection.

<sup>36</sup> Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison.

<sup>37</sup> They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—

the world was not worthy of them.

They wandered in deserts and mountains,

and in caves and holes in the ground.

<sup>39</sup> These were all commended for their faith,

yet none of them received what had been promised.

<sup>40</sup> God had planned something better for us  
so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

You see, if we are American Christians today,  
we have dual citizenship.

As Americans, we are beneficiaries  
of the sacrifices of those that have gone before us,  
who have purchased our freedoms and quality of life  
by their sacrifice.

But as Christians, we are part of another,  
far older stream of history,  
where we also inherited freedoms and a quality of life  
based on the sacrifice of those who have gone before us.

It is to that history, that the writer here points us.

What did it take, to preserve Abraham's line,  
so that through his descendents,  
all the nations of the earth would be blessed?

There's a whole lot of blood and guts and glory  
in that story, that history as well,  
but also a whole lot of individual sacrifice and suffering.

But the kicker is the final verses of the chapter, in v. 39-40.

<sup>39</sup> These were all commended for their faith,  
yet none of them received what had been promised.

<sup>40</sup> God had planned something better for us  
so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

Only together with us, would THEY be made complete,  
would they get what they were working so hard,  
sacrificing so hard for... only together with us.

**Without us, their story would be incomplete.**

**They had a job to do, a torch to pass, and they did it.**

**And now, both on the national scene,**

**and as citizens of a Heavenly Kingdom,  
we need to remember their sacrifices,**

**and pick up their torch, and start lighting up our world.**

**Work's not done, people.**

**Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom.**

**Sacrifice is the price of a future for our children.**

**We remember those who have gone before us BEST**

**when we imitate the best of their example.**

**Then our sacrifices merge with theirs,**

**and their story becomes our story.**

**Let's read what the writer of Hebrews says next-**

**12Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.**

**<sup>2</sup> Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

**For Jesus, was it worth it?**

**"... who for the joy set before him endured the cross,  
scorning its shame..."**

**It was SO worth it, for \_\_\_\_\_.**

The flogging, the abandonment,  
the rejection, the crucifixion...  
Enduring the cross, scorning its shame...

You, EACH one of you, for him, it was worth it.

For all those people who went before the cross,  
and have sacrificed since the cross,  
our brothers and sisters today, right now,  
in Syria and Iraq, Pakistan and North Korea...

Only together with us, will THEY be made complete,  
and only together with generations to come,  
will WE be made complete.

October 6, 1536,  
William Tyndale was convicted of heresy,  
strangled to death, and his body burned at the stake.  
Supposedly his dying prayer  
was for the King of England to have his eyes opened.  
Two years later,  
King Henry authorized the translation  
of the Great Bible for the church of England,  
which was largely Tyndale's own translation.

In 1611 the 54 scholars who produced  
the [King James Bible](#) drew significantly from Tyndale,  
as well as from translations that descended from his.

One estimate suggests the New Testament  
in the King James Version is 83% Tyndale's  
and the Old Testament 76%.

Any of you ever use a King James Version?

Do we owe a debt there?

**What are ways that we can carry the torch today,  
that we can remember those who have gone before us?**

- 1. We can use the incredible resource  
that they fought so hard to preserve;  
we can study and meditate on the Word of God.**
- 2. We can pray for those suffering persecution today.**
- 3. We can write letters to our congressmen on their behalf,  
and write letters directly to those in prison,  
so that they will know they are not forgotten.**
- 4. We can get involved in VBS,  
teaching Bible classes to our kids,  
serving in Children's Church...**
- 5. We can pray prayers of thanksgiving,  
that then merge into prayers for anointing  
and commissioning for unique roles of service  
in the Kingdom.**
  - a. Some may be called to serve as elders or deacons,  
or perhaps to be trained to serve as evangelists.**
  - b. You may be called to**
    - start a community Bible study  
in your neighborhood,**
    - start watching a neighbor's kid  
to help out an overworked single Mom.**
    - Offer to pick up a kid from school,**
    - serve in a million different ways that are  
as unique as the people we live around.**
    - To write a poem or a song, or paint a picture-  
that draws people to the reality that is Jesus.**

**Today, right now, How is God speaking to YOUR heart,  
Challenging YOU to pick up the torch,  
that makes the sacrifice of previous generations  
worth it?**

**Memorial Day should mean more to us  
than just getting cheaper groceries  
or a good deal on a new car or mattress.**

**You are a citizen of two kingdoms-  
one earthly, one Heavenly.  
People have suffered and died to preserve both for you.**

**How will you now prepare the way for the next generation?  
...because it is only together with them,  
that we will become complete.**