

SERVANTS OF FREEDOM

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND
MAY 24-25, 2008

Memorial Day Weekend
Pastor Matt Heard
Read: John 15:13 / Philippians 2:3-11

Memorial Day is a day to honor courageous men and women, both those who have already given their lives for our freedom, and those who are ready to pay that price should duty demand. It is also a day to honor and worship Jesus Christ, the Ultimate Servant who fought the ultimate battle and paid the ultimate price so that we all might experience the ultimate freedom.

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13

A Just Warrior's Ladder of Service:

- 1. Friendship leads to SERVANTHOOD**
- 2. Servanthood leads to GUARDIANSHIP**
- 3. Guardianship leads to SACRIFICE**

Questions

1. Consider three ways that someone close to you has served you in the past month. Describe their actions. What impact did these actions have on you?

2. The first step on the just warrior's ladder of service is one of servanthood. Practically, this means the needs of the group outweigh the needs of the individual. How is your community serving one another? Rate yourself using a 1 (poor) – 10 (great) scale. What steps can you take as individuals living in community to better serve each other and your group as a whole?

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:45

3. Jesus Christ's first step to Earth was one of a servant. Take a few moments of quiet, individual reflection on Mark 10:45. What does this truth mean to you? Explain.

4. We live in a world that is fallen. We are surrounded by selfishness, greed, envy, and injustice. Matt used the illustration of locks on our doors as a visual image of our fallen world.

In the midst of this brokenness, we all need to be protected. We need a guardian. Consider someone in your life who protected and guarded you—either in passive (prepared) or active (fight) fashion. Now consider someone in your life who you have guarded or protected. Describe the difference you experienced.

"Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." 1 Peter 5:8

"They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings-- and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers." Revelation 17:14

5. Matt reminded us that as followers of Jesus we have an enemy (1 Peter 5:8). We are in the middle of warfare every hour of every day!

In view of 1 Peter 5:8, consider the warfare imagery of the Jesus in Revelation 17:14. What does it mean to you and your walk of faith that Jesus is a Warrior? Discuss.

6. Matt told the story of Russian novelist and avid butterfly collector Vladimir Nabokov. In the 1940s, Nabokov was visiting a friend in Utah when he went on a butterfly excursion in Bear Gulch. When he returned from his day's activities he told his friend that he heard someone groaning down stream. His friend asked if he stopped to help. Nabokov replied that he couldn't because he was in hot pursuit of a rare butterfly.

The next day, the corpse of a prospector was discovered in what has now become known as Dead Man's Gulch—in Nabokov's dishonor.

Life circumstances often cause us to make a choice of selfish pursuit or personal sacrifice. Confess one of your selfish pursuits (butterflies), while you ignored the needs of others around you. How has your pursuit affected the lives of those closest to you? How has your pursuit affected your journey of faith?

7. Read Philippians 2:3-11. In this passage, we see Christ's ultimate sacrifice of love—His death on a cross. Have you embraced Jesus' sacrifice for you? Describe how Jesus' sacrifice impacts your day-to-day life?