

Remember

12 11 17

'Honorer la guerre pour préserver la paix'

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son was revealed
to destroy the works of the devil
and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life:
grant that we, having this hope,
may purify ourselves even as he is pure,
that when he shall appear in power and great glory
we may be made like him
in his eternal kingdom.

Our text this morning may be found in Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians, chapter 5 and verse 9: **'Jesus Christ who died for us'**.

If you're into short sermons, then it couldn't be much quicker than simply hearing said today's text **'Jesus Christ who died for us'** for this brief statement simply sums up for us the essential message at the heart of the gospel: that God's Son, Jesus Christ, gave his life for us, died for us on the cross, so that we might have eternal life even though all of us will necessarily one day die.

Right, that said, let me say something surprising, possibly shocking, that the other day, I actually felt sorry for President Trump. An American soldier had been killed in Niger, I think – a sergeant – and Trump was telephoning his widow,

personally, on behalf of the United States, to express his condolences at the death of her husband in the service of their country. And Trump is alleged to have forgotten his name in the course of the conversation. And there, but for the grace of God . . . But, however bad you or I may be at remembering people's names, let me affirm that the true reason we are here today, on Remembrance Sunday, is to remember.

And what are we remembering ? The awful truth that many people have lost their lives in war, some who were young soldiers, sailors, airmen, fighting for our country; others civilians going about their everyday lives who died in the bombing of towns like London where I was born. We don't necessarily know their names but some of you here will cherish the names of family and friends whom you have lost in the many conflicts that have occurred in our life time: The Second World War, Korea , Suez, the Falklands to name but four that I can immediately recall.

And why should we remember? Because, by remembering, by honouring the dead, the fallen, those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, we are not glorifying war but valuing those who have lost their lives standing up to evil, using due force to overcome what is wrong, bad, deleterious to proper order in the world. There is a phrase in French that I think encapsulates the truth of Remembrance Sunday **'Honorer la guerre pour préserver la paix'** Let us respect war in order to preserve the peace.

So today, in our hearts and minds, by what we think and do, let us respect the fallen, our beloved dead who have died for us, and let us remember, too, that

sacrifice is at the heart of our Christian faith, that God our Father loves us enough to have died for us in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, and that his Spirit is with us here and now to help us live lives informed by duty to the country of our infant birth and nurture.

So may we be in good heart as we remember and value the cost of preserving peace – *'Honorer la guerre pour préserver la paix.'*

I have spoken in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
Amen.

Preached at the Eucharist

St Bartholomew's, Dinard

12th November, 2017

G: Sermons 36 : Remember

