



When I was young, I remember asking my parents why we observe Memorial Day. While some people use it mainly as a chance to throw a backyard BBQ, others take the time to visit cemeteries, pour over old photographs, or read the stories of those who died serving our country.

“But why?” I wanted to know. It seemed like such a sad holiday. Why do we do it?

That’s when my parents showed me something I’ll never forget. It’s a speech given by President Dwight Eisenhower – and if there’s any president who understood the “why” of Memorial Day, it was surely Ike. It’s an extremely short speech, just 250 words. But those words made me realize why Memorial Day is so important.

In honor of *this* Memorial Day, I’d like to share those words with you right now.

Whereas the bodies of our war dead lie buried in hallowed plots throughout the land, and it has long been our custom to decorate their graves on Memorial Day in token of our respect for them as beloved friends and kinsmen and of our aspiration that war may be removed from the earth forever; and

Whereas it is fitting that, while remembering the sacrifices of our countrymen, we join in united prayers to Almighty God for peace on earth; and

Whereas the Congress, in a joint resolution approved May 11, 1950, provided that Memorial Day should thenceforth be set aside nationally as a day of prayer for permanent peace and requested that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe each Memorial Day in that manner:

Now, Therefore, I, Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Memorial Day, Saturday, May 30, 1953, as a day of prayer for permanent peace, and I designate the hour beginning at eleven o'clock in the morning of that day, Eastern Daylight Saving Time, as a period in which all the people of the Nation, each according to his religious faith, may unite in solemn prayer.

Let us make that day one of twofold dedication. Let us reverently honor those who have fallen in war, and rededicate ourselves to the cause of peace, to the end that the day may come when we shall never have another war—never another Unknown Soldier.¹

Read that last paragraph again.

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That’s why. That’s why Memorial Day is so important.

You see, it’s not just a holiday. It’s an *opportunity*. By remembering what we have lost, we give thanks for what we have. By honoring the sacrifice of war, we place an even greater value on the promise of peace.

Like President Eisenhower said, Memorial Day is a day of *twofold* dedication. Dedication for those who died. Dedication for those who, as a result, may yet live. A day for remembering what was, and a day for looking forward to what may yet be.

Ever since I read those words, Memorial Day has held a special place in my heart. I'm so grateful for the freedoms we enjoy – and for those who fought to uphold them. I'm so grateful for this nation we live in – and for those who laid down their lives to protect it. I'm grateful for everything they did, and everything *we* can do because of them.

I'm grateful for Memorial Day.

On behalf of everyone at Hudock Capital Group, I wish you a safe and peaceful Memorial Day.

Sincerely,



Barbara B. Hudock, CIMA®, CPM®
Chief Executive Officer
Founding Partner

¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Proclamation 3016 – Prayer for Peace, Memorial Day, 1953".

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/proclamation-3016-prayer-for-peace-memorial-day-1953>

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