

## Sermon 14/11/21

Bible Reading: [John 15:9-17](#)

(1) It's important to remember things because remembering something helps to keep it alive and to keep it important to us.

That's what Remembrance Day is all about – it's about making sure that we don't forget something really important. The people who gave their lives for us, the sacrifices that were made. The families who suffered for us and our freedom.

And the poppy helps us to remember that. It's a reminder of the poppies that grew in the fields that were devastated by war in Belgium. It's a symbol that helps us to look back and remember those who fought for us and lost their lives fighting for us. It's also a way of helping those today who are still suffering the consequences of war by providing vital funds to the charities that support war veterans and our service men and women. And it's also a way to look forward to a time when there will be no more wars and suffering.

On Remembrance Day we remember with gratitude those who gave their lives as it says in our Bible reading, 'for their friends'. We remember those who gave up comfort and home and friends and family and all their own prospects for the future – their hopes and dreams and aspirations for us.

They gave all of those things up so that we can enjoy them now. They gave up their today, for our tomorrow.

And it is right that we say thank you to all our service men and women, both past and present.

And as Christians we also want to say thank you to someone else who showed true love by making the ultimate sacrifice for each and every one of us.

In church this morning we want to remember Jesus, Jesus who loved us so much that he gave his life for us all.

The Bible tells us that the Son of Man (Jesus) did not come so that people would serve him but that he would serve others and give his life for many people.

But what does that actually mean? It's easy to say but do we really understand it?

(2) As we are thinking a lot about poppies today, I thought I would use a poppy to help us understand what this means. Christians believe that when God created the world it was perfect – absolutely perfect.

And God created a man and a woman to live in this perfect world and to enjoy a friendship with God. This continued for some time before the first man and the first woman decided to put themselves before God. They thought they knew better than God and they disobeyed the only command that God gave them – not to eat the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden.

From that moment on, something called '**sin**' came into the world. Sin is what some people call the 'I' disease. That's not a disease that affects your eyes.

Sin says that I am more important than you and I know better than you.

Sin is the total opposite of putting other people before ourselves, because it's thinking about yourself before anyone else at all.

And so sin or 'I' disease brought darkness into the world – and that darkness makes me think of the black centre in our poppy.

And maybe that can help you when you look at your poppy.

(3) This darkness or 'I' disease caused a big problem because it meant we couldn't have a friendship with God anymore. And so, the world became a dark place – a place of war and fighting and greed and exploitation and selfishness etc. etc.

But God still loves his world and everyone in his world and he wanted to save the world and do something about the darkness.

He loved the world so much that he decided to send his son Jesus to come and save it – and there was only one way that could happen.

God had to allow his Son to make the ultimate sacrifice – Jesus had to put everyone else before himself and to lay down his life for the world.

And the red poppy petals can remind us of God's great love for the world and the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made for us when he died on the cross.

(4) But fortunately, we know that the story doesn't end at that point because there is hope at the end of the story. After 3 days Jesus came back to life, he was raised from the dead.

God's love was so powerful that it even had power to defeat death. And the green poppy leaf can maybe help to remind us of this new hope and new life that we can have in Jesus.

We can now enjoy the friendship with God that was lost for so long.

And we can start living a life that puts God first and other people before ourselves. That's what God helps us to do – he pours his love into our hearts so we can show God's love to those around us.

Today we are remembering the many men and women who have shown incredible love and sacrifice for us. And we thank God for them.

But we are also remembering the greatest love and sacrifice of all – the love that God has for us which we see in Jesus.

God loves us and he wants us to be in a friendship with him. So, as we say thank you, let's remember to say thank you to Jesus who gave his life for the whole world.

### Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank you for what you did for us. We thank you that you laid down your life so that we could have friendship with God again.

We thank you for those who have followed your ultimate example to put others before themselves – those who went into war and battle for us so that we can live in peace and freedom and hope.

On this day when we remember so many lives lost and so many lives given. We think of so many families torn apart by the ravages of war. On this day we think of all the tears that have been shed and continue to be shed. The tears of pain and the tears of loss, the tears of mourning and tears of waste and the tears of what might have been.

Help us to remember and help us to be thankful.

In Jesus name.

Amen.