

Memorial Day Remembrance

By Dr. Greg Wiens, FLCOG State Pastor

Today we spend some time honoring those who have given their lives for the freedom we enjoy in this country. It is too easy to forget those who have given their lives for the ministries we serve in. I have personally inherited so much that other leaders sacrificed dearly for. I have had the privilege of both laying the foundation for others as well as building on the foundation that others laid for me. How about you, have you taken time to thank those who went before you that have enabled you to be where you are today?

When I change many facets of ministry, I have to remind myself that those before me forged so much of what I changed at a great price. They provided me the materials out of which I could build something different. Without their hard work, I wouldn't have anything to change. It is easier to change the direction of something that is already moving (momentum) than to create movement (momentum) from the start. I am grateful for those before me who have given me momentum in ministry to direct.

Before David became a king, he had the opportunity to take over leadership that would one day be his. King Saul had been pursuing him with the intent to kill him and eliminate him from being the next king of Israel. You know the story, at one point in 1 Samuel 24, we see King Saul sleeping in a cave and David has an opportunity to kill him and take his God given rightful place as the next king. But David refuses to kill him. He honored King Saul in spite of Saul's sinful leadership and emotional abuse of just about everyone around him.

I have seen verse 6 used to justify tolerating all kinds of sinful and wrongful leadership practices. The point here isn't that we should hold leaders accountable for their actions and hold them to very high standards. David says: "When God wants me to be king, I will be king. I do not need to force God's hand and thereby allow my reach to exceed my grasp." For David that meant continuing to be faithful in his learning to lead from the margins; for he knew that God would allow him to lead from the center in His time.

So often when I was young (as is true with so many young leaders), I was tired of leading from the margins and wanted to lead from the center, but God had other plans. God had to mature me and the places he wanted me to lead. So like David, I could not allow my reach to exceed my grasp. My grasp was limited, so I had to develop my grasp of leadership so that it could one day reach farther.

Are you in a place where your reach exceeds your grasp? In other words, is your desire for influence greater than your present level of influence? Too often pastors' want the next larger church or just a little more influence than they currently have. If so, listen to King David say that his grasp is just fine and he will learn to live within his grasp; until his grasp become larger.

I am truly thankful for those before us who have sacrificed so we can enjoy the fruit that we are experiencing today at Florida Church of God Ministries and around the nation.