

Daily Meditation 5-26-25 “The deepest ground of my being is love”

Good morning. Blessed Memorial Day to you all, and I say blessed because it is a somber holiday, remembering the dead who have died in wars, and hopefully for good causes beyond a sacrifice of those who die, and of course, those who come back with wounds, physical, mental, psychological, emotional.

There’s a price to pay for defending our principles. And this is, to me, the meaning of today’s holiday. And it deserves our attention, especially at this time in history, when we’re going through what we’re going through in our country, in America. And others are going through so much too, watching America in its decline, in democracy in general, and worried about what their futures are about as well.

There is a very, very substantive article today I’d like to share with you about today’s holiday, Memorial Day 2025. And I want to give credit to the website: Open Letters by Mersault, M, E, R, S, A, U, L, T. I very much encourage you to go and read the entire Open Letter. It’s long, very, very substantive. Again, Open Letters by Mersault.

The title of his letter is “A Memorial Day Message from Veterans to Trump and the Republicans: You Have Defiled our Service.” And he talks, of course, about Normandy, Iwo Jima, and other places where American soldiers have died. And he says,

We have seen battle and buried brothers and sisters. We have fought not for parties but for principles. And we are furious. That is his opening paragraph, short and to the point. We wore this uniform. We lost blood, limbs, and years of our lives to defend the ideals of democracy, liberty and the Constitution built to withstand the ambitions of tyrants. This day is meant to be solemn, but we refuse to let the living desecrate their memory. What your party is doing to this country dishonors every flag-draped coffin we have saluted, every family that folded a flag and wept.

I love that line, since a few weeks ago, I was at West Point where we buried my brother, who was a graduate of West Point, and of course, they had the flag as part of their ritual, folding the flag.

Every last American who gave their life believing they were protecting something sacred, believing they were protecting something sacred.

A number of you have heard me talk about the difference between evil and sin, that the opposite of evil is not the good, that is the opposite of good. The opposite of evil is the sacred. And we need sacred objects, if you will, sacred sources in our lives. Is the Earth sacred? Are the vows that we take, sacred? Are the principles that our nation is built on -- are they sacred? The fundamental principles, for example, that all people are created equal. And just to come to that truth, it began, of course, in the Constitution 250 years ago. It says all men are created equal. But civil war that to be inclusive enough to include slaves and ex-slaves, and it took 80 years of protest by women to include them in that line: Are all men created equal, men and women?

And then it took a civil rights movement in the 50s and 60s, a lot of bloodshed and a lot of imprisonment, a nonviolent revolution to bring that fruit to fruition in laws, civil rights laws, which, sorry to say, have been decimated by the Supreme Court and the piling on of political shouters.

Now this letter for Memorial Day goes on. He addresses the current president in the second person:

You are not a commander in chief. You are a disgraced showman with a bloated sense of grandeur and a coward's soul. And he reminds him of things that he said of the military in his first term. And now in the second term, you haven't just doubled down. You've declared war on the very institutions that hold this republic together. You have gutted the Department of Justice and weaponized it against your critics. You have hijacked the military, turning soldiers into pawns in your theater. You've handed federal agencies to ideological loyalists and unelected extremists from Project 2025, whose mission is not governance, it is domination.

So he is naming the undoing of the laws by which we have agreed to live, the Constitution and the sacred elements within it.

You have criminalized protest and dissent. You have empowered Christian nationalists to rewrite Civil War education standards and public health policy to reflect their theocratic

worldview. You have purged public servants who refuse to swear loyalty to you personally. You have unleashed attacks on journalists, branded the free press as the enemy of the people, and laid the groundwork for state-run propaganda. You have pushed mass deportations, internment camps and loyalty oaths. You've openly called for the jailing of political opponents and re-educating their supporters. You haven't saved America. You are strangling it, one institution, one agency, one freedom at a time. You preach patriotism then vote against health care for veterans. You wave flags while voting to cut food aid, housing programs, and suicide prevention support for the men and women who wore the uniform. You shout "USA, USA" while disgracing everything we fought for. You are not defending America. You are helping to torch it.

He's applying this letter on Memorial Day to Republicans in Congress, to the MAGA movement therefore, not just to one individual who happens to be president. So again, I encourage you to read this entire letter. It's very powerful, and it has a very clear list of decisions that have been made under the present administration, and their impact on veterans. Many of the cuts in Medicaid and Medicare and so forth, have a direct impact on veterans.

So I think he's calling us to be aware of hypocrisy, and that is one thing to honor this Memorial Day, the price that our veterans have paid to defend us. But it's another thing to be asked about the America we are defending.

Thank you. See you next week.