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Hope and Memorial Day

By Clifford Lones

It is very wonderful that our nation has set aside a day each year that is called Memorial Day. Specifically, Memorial Day is to bring in memory those men and women who served our country especially during wartime and gave their lives that we can live in "The Land of the Free." However, generally speaking, Memorial Day gives us a special day when we can remember all our relatives and friends who have passed away, leaving us with happy memories of their lives.

Furthermore, Memorial Day brings thoughts and questions about life, death, God, heaven, and seeing our loved ones again in heaven. We know there is a God because, as some people say, there is a natural revelation of Him. We look at Creation and see such superior intelligence. The position of the earth from the sun allows life on earth. The tilt of the earth gives us the four seasons of the year. The very makeup of our own bodies such as our nervous system, our blood circulation system, our brain which enables us to remember and thus gives us intelligence, etc., all prove there is a God. Then, there is special revelation of God in the Bible, the Word of God. The superiority of the Bible over all literature that has ever been written, and the impact the Bible has had on humankind for so long, without force, but by people's own free will. Yes, it is God who has made provision for heaven for eternal life for us with him and our loved ones. We have great hope as we commemorate Memorial Day.

It has been said that one of the greatest words in our vocabulary is HOPE. Real hope is not a "hope-so-hope," but a "know-so-hope." The Bible says in Titus 1:2, "In HOPE of eternal life that God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began." Our hope is a "know-so-hope" because God cannot lie. God cannot lie, else He would cease to be God. God can do anything but lie. So when God says we have eternal life, we know for sure we have eternal life with Him and others in heaven. This is what He planned before the world was created.

But eternal life promised by God is conditional. John 3:16 states, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Each person must personally receive God's Son, Jesus Christ, whom God gave to die on the cross for our sins, so we can have a "know-so-hope" as we think about life, death, God, heaven, and our loved ones during this Memorial Day observance. •

Now and then

Not now — not then

By Al Wezeman

According to God's Word, the Holy Bible, there is a now time and eternity then. The first two chapters of Genesis in the Holy Bible tell of the beginning of time, the Universe and our creation in the image of God. Because of our image, we are able to know God in a whole spectrum of ways. Being made in the image of God means we are eternal beings. God created us for His honor and glory. We are created for God in now time and for eternity. Jesus said, "If you knew me you would know my Father as well." When we learn about Jesus from the Holy Bible, we learn about God.

Our relationship to our Creator God is the most important thing in our earthly life. Our relationship now determines our relationship then. We all are going to go into eternity then somehow.

According to God's Word, the Holy Bible, we caused an estrangement between God and ourselves. The third chapter of Genesis tells of our disobedience to God's command. Recognizing God as perfect in every way means our sin against God separates us from God. Our perfect relationship is broken and we cannot look forward to eternity then with God. In desperation we cry out, "What must we do?" God has already done it. In chapter three of Genesis, verse 15, we read of God's promise of a Savior. God's promise is reiterated throughout the Holy Bible and culminates in the New Testament. The Gospels tell of God's sending His Son to this earth through the power of the Holy Spirit. They tell of Jesus being sacrificed for our sins, rising the third day, and reigning in Heaven now. Jesus is going to return to gather to Himself all those who trust in Him completely, for forgiveness of sins.

Now then we must humble ourselves before God, pray and seek His face. We must turn from our wicked ways. When we trust in Jesus, God is faithful and just to His promise and will forgive us and purify us. (see II Chronicles 7:14, I John 1:9 and John 3:16).

Because we die once and then the judgment, we must love and obey Jesus now to have the estrangement taken away and have that wonderful relationship to God now so we can be with God in eternity then. Pay attention, it's near! •

Renovating Saint Mary's Youth Program room

By Pam Mettler

Jim Hurst, director of youth ministry with Saint Mary's Church, 406 E. Savidge Street in Spring Lake, is busy drawing up plans for a "soft opening" and a "grand opening" that centers around a new youth program room that will provide a dedicated space for Saint Mary's Parish and other area students to produce videos and create a community of friends embracing social media.

"We are transforming one large space behind the religious education offices at Saint Mary's Church into a technologically updated room for our youth program and it will be ready in fall '12," said Hurst.

The new room will be about the size of a standard classroom. It will provide a more workable millennium-era "crib" style that will allow students to gather, talk and create YouTube videos for posting online. They will also have a safe place to go to meet with friends under supervision.



"The whole idea is to embrace technology that kids are involved in right now and our video capacity will be greatly increased as we begin to scratch the surface of where we can take this program," Hurst said. "We are working with First Priority clubs at other high schools to expand the program. ...this youth room is not distinctly a Catholic program but one for youth from the region."

Any area junior high or high school students interested in participating Saint Mary's Youth Program are encouraged to contact Jim Hurst directly via email at irishcowboy36@yahoo.com or on Hurst's office phone at (616) 935-6974. •



Harley needs a real family to call his own

By Mary Modderman and Mary Weimer

Harley is a beautiful blonde...er...yellow Labrador Retriever. This large, gentle hunk of soft furred love is considered a senior dog. Seniors come already trained, but willing to learn more once he is shown love, kindness and soft place to sleep. He has real benefits to offer...already neutered and house trained! (Puppies are cute, but they require more commitment: training, housebreaking and longer time together with you.)

Harley is not a runaway or a stray. He's a loyal guy whose owner is dying and his daughter is allergic to dogs. Complete with a history that will help him integrate into a new home, Harley has super adoption potential. And Harley appears to be a very easy keeper who would benefit from some exercise...like long walks with you! This homesick sweetheart doesn't understand why his family left him with Pound Buddies, or why he has to stay in a pen when he'd rather be at someone's side.

Please, please consider adopting this big, loving guy and offer him a good home where he can live out his senior years. His companionship would add some real gold to your life for giving him that chance. You could make lasting memories together.

Labs are very adaptable dogs that love being close to their family members, making them ideal rescue choices. Most rescue dogs adapt very readily to new homes and owners. It takes them from only a few minutes to less than a month to feel at home.

To meet Harley, please call (231) 724-6500 and leave a message or email us at adopt@poundbuddies.org.

To see more adoptable dogs, go online to www.poundbuddies.org. You can make a difference by saving a precious life! •