

## Why We Remember

*Orders are being yelled around me. I hear gunshots. Ducking into a trench, I hold my breath.*

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I sat cozied up on my Grandpa's lap, in the old, squeaky, green armchair by the roaring fire. We were looking at a photo album. Grandpa's weathered hands delicately turned a page. He pointed out different soldiers and what their jobs were in the war.

Confused, I asked, "What's the point of remembering these soldiers anyway? I mean, it all happened years ago, so why think about it now?"

Grandpa chuckled. He was waiting for this question. "Well, all the soldiers that fought in World War I are very important today. Before you ask why, I'll tell you."

"When the war had first begun, men had to come and join the fight. That included me. Most of us thought it would just be a fun adventure, and that we would be back home soon. None of us expected that the war would last several years, but it did. We fought very bravely. Not just me, your old Grandpa, but all the soldiers. Many of my comrades didn't return home after the war. They didn't just fight, but thousands died. Their lives were given for their countries. Why do we remember them? We remember them because they are the reason we have peace today. Imagine if, right now, you were sent away from your family, and had to live with strangers because your parents had to go fight in the war! I'm guessing you wouldn't want that to happen! We should be very grateful to live in peaceful times, so you don't have to worry about that."

After thinking for a while, I said, "I guess that makes sense, but is that the only reason?"

Grandpa stroked his gray beard thoughtfully. "Oh no, we must also remember those soldiers because they are an excellent example to us! Think how today people can so easily live selfishly, worrying and complaining about the smallest things. What a difference it is from the sacrificial lives the soldiers lived. In harsh and dangerous conditions, they didn't give up! They fought. And again, if they didn't, who knows where we would be today. They pressed on. Through the pain, through the darkness, and through the cold.

"That explains things a little bit more... but when do we actually remember them?" I asked.

Grandpa told me all about Remembrance Day, and the time we spend acknowledging all the men and women who served their country in the wars.

"So," he said, "look at their bravery and their tenacity and see an excellent example to apply to your life." I slowly nodded my head, finally satisfied, and curled up in my grandpa's arms where we continued to look at the album.

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*Thinking back on this memory was sobering. Now, in World War II, I finally understood exactly what my Grandpa was talking about.*