

Passing the Pen

On this Friday (tomorrow) 60 years ago, an event of worldwide significance occurred – and it revealed a lot about one of America’s military heroes.

On September 2, 1945, the documents of surrender officially ending World War II were signed by the Japanese and designated representatives of allied nations. General Douglas MacArthur officiated over the ceremony aboard the *USS Missouri* and was the last to sign on behalf of the United States.

MacArthur, flanked by his military colleagues, took his Parker fountain pen and simply signed his first name, “Douglas.” He then passed the pen to General Jonathan Wainwright, who signed “Mac.” MacArthur then handed the pen to General Arthur Percival, who signed “Arthur.”

This unusual procedure was MacArthur’s way of honoring the two generals who had suffered severe persecution as prisoners of war. They had persevered, and now they were allowed to share in the glory of victory.

In our own professional and personal lives, we face difficulties, and, sometimes, even hostility or persecution. If we insist on a steady course, committed to doing what we know in our hearts to be right, usually everything will work out well.

On the spiritual side, Christians are confronted with an increasing environment of opposition and persecution in one form or another. One may only read the newspapers, watch television or listen to the radio to know that the battle lines are being drawn, even in America. In Romans 8:17, however, Paul describes the future of those who persevere in the battles we will fight this side of heaven. He calls the followers of Christ joint-heirs. And those who share in the sufferings of Christ will also share in His glory.

--Beecher Hunter