

That We Might Not Forget

Text : **Genesis 9: 8-17**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Tomorrow is “Memorial Day.”

1. The holiday has ambiguous origins.
 - a. Before the end of the civil war Southern women were decorating the graves of Confederate soldiers. Some say this was the true origin of “Decoration Day.”
 - b. In 1865 a local Pharmacist in Waterloo, N.Y., Henry Welles put flowers on graves of soldiers.
 - c. The next year (1866) Gen. John Murray took up the cause and organized the town.
 - d. For political reasons, Pres. Lyndon Johnson declared Waterloo, N.Y. as the official place of the origin of Memorial Day.
2. In 1868, Gen. John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, declared that May 30th should be a day to honor fallen soldiers.
 - a. Flowers were put on every grave in Arlington National Cemetery.
 - b. In the beginning the holiday was called “Decoration Day.”
3. Typically, flags were flown at half staff, graves were decorated, patriotic parades, lengthy services were held to honor the fallen, and a picnic was held in cemetery.

B. The sole purpose of the holiday was to remind us of the price others paid for the freedoms we enjoy.

1. ***Freedom is not free.***
2. It is purchased by the blood of fallen patriots.
 - a. More than 40 million men have served in our American military.
 - b. In excess of 1.3 million men have died defending our freedom.
 - c. That totals more than **1.8** million gallons of blood being shed to secure our freedom.
3. An article on the VFW website reads in part : *“Sacrifice is meaningless without remembrance. America’s collective consciousness demands that all citizens recall and be aware of the deaths of their fellow countrymen during wartime.”*

C. The objective of any memorial is cause the observer to remember.

1. Some events are of such great significance that we must pass them down to succeeding generations to insure they are never forgotten.
2. One scholar describes a memorial like this : *“A memorial draws minds back in the past to an event in which the observer did not participate, but from which he derives a benefit.”*

D. God is the originator of memorials so they are totally appropriate.

1. The very first memorial was the rainbow. (reference text)
 - a. **Gen. 9: 16-** When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth
 - b. God put it in the sky as a reminder of His promise not to flood the earth again.
 - c. Rainbows still cause God-fearing people to remember the consequence of sin (*judgment by flood*) and the promise to those who were delivered.

Note : *We know the science behind rainbows ... something fundamentally changed.*
2. When God rescued Abraham's descendants from Egyptian slavery, He established a memorial so they would not forget, ... **the Passover.**
 - a. **Exodus 12: 26-27** “And when your children say to you, ‘What does this rite mean to you?’ 27 you shall say, ‘It is a Passover sacrifice to the LORD who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.’” And the people bowed low and worshiped.
 - b. God did not want Israel to forget the deliverance they had received.
 - c. They never forgot to observe the Passover, but
 - 1) It became an empty ritual, a religious holiday.
 - 2) The memorial didn't cause them to obey God.
3. Jesus established a memorial of the Christian's deliverance from the bondage of sin.
 - a. **Matt. 26:26-28** While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” 27 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; 28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. (cf – **I Cor. 11: 23-26**)
 - b. Jesus does not want for Christians to forget the consequences of our sins and the cost of our deliverance.
 - c. As with all memorials, there is a danger of it becoming an empty ritual.

Note : *This is what has happened to memorial day. Once it was moved to the last Monday (1971), the meaning went by the wayside. It was reduced to little more than a long weekend, the beginning of the summer vacation season and a day for picnics. (But, in the North the picnic is no longer in the cemetery.)*

Some things are worth remembering and it is totally appropriate to have a time set aside for remembrance and a memorial to remind us of them.

I. Every American should remember the cost of his freedom.**A. We should each remain aware of the cost so that we will appreciate our freedom.**

1. No other nation in the world has ever had the freedoms we enjoy.
2. Not everyone who has fought for freedom has attained it. (e.g. *china, Iran, etc*)

B. We have done nothing to deserve this level of freedom. (*gift of God & forefathers*)

1. Others fought and died to purchase it for us.
2. We were not even the ones who chose for us to be born here.

ILL. - Lack of gratitude is reflected by the lack of commemoration.

C. Many have lost sight of the value of their freedoms and the price paid for it.

1. By nature, people do not value what they did not earn or purchase.
2. Those who fail to appreciate the value of their freedom also fail to protect it.

ILL. - A young person who is given a car treats it differently than one who works and saves to buy it.

D. Our freedoms not guaranteed; they must be defended.

1. Our freedoms are under attack today in most malevolent ways.
 - a. External enemies want to destroy us just because we are not like them.
 - b. Internal enemies want to take away our freedoms to allow government control.
2. Thomas Jefferson warned, "*The cost of freedom is eternal vigilance.*"
3. **THUS**, it's important that we remember those who paid the price for freedom. **Rm 13:7**
God gave America this freedom to use to His glory ... use it or loose it.

II. As Christians, we should remember the cost of our deliverance from sin.**A. We have done nothing to earn or to deserve deliverance from our sins.****B. At one time, each of us allowed himself to be ensnared in the devil's sin trap.**

1. We've all found ourselves in a condition from which we could not free ourselves.
 - a. **Ecc1. 7:20- Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.**
 - b. Compare ... **Rom. 3:10, 23** (cf – **Eph. 2:12-** ... **No hope w/o God in the world**)
2. There are unavoidable consequences for rebellion against God .. i.e. .. for sin.
 - a. **Nahum 1: 3- The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, And the Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.**

b. **II Thess. 1: 7-8** and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, ⁸ dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (*Rebellion has consequences.*)

3. Like physical death, spiritual death, (.i.e., separation from God) is a condition from which no man can rescue himself or anyone else.

a. Our duty is to keep every command. Thus, it is impossible to do extra to compensate for our failures.

1) **Luke 17: 10-** ... when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, “We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which was our duty to have done.”

2) **Prov. 20: 9-** Who can say, “I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin”?

b. No one else can rescue us from our impending condemnation.

Psa. 49; 7-8 No man can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him — ⁸ For the redemption of his soul is costly, and he should cease trying forever — (*Can't save our loved ones*)

C. Only the precious blood of God's Only Begotten Son could pay our ransom.

1. God's Son came to the earth for the specific purpose of rescuing man from sin.

a. **Matt. 1: 21-** She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.

b. **Mark 10: 45-** For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

2. Only the precious blood of God's son could ransom sinners back from Satan.

a. **I Tim. 2: 5-6** For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

b. **I Pet. 1:17-19** If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*; ¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood of Christ*.

3. *When we are tempted to turn back to live by the standard set by our society, REMEMBER the cross and the horrible price Jesus paid to free you from sin.*

D. Like the soldiers who died to make our nation free, God has made the ultimate sacrifice to make us free from the bondage of sin.

1. God now offers freedom as a free gift to those who place their faith in Him..

- a. **Rom. 6:23**
 - b. Man can do nothing to earn God gift, he must accept it by faith. **Eph. 2: 8-9**
2. Remember the words of our veterans :
- a. *“Sacrifice is meaningless without remembrance”*
 - b. This is equally true of the sacrifice of Jesus; it must be remembered.
 - * c. *Comprehending and remembering the cost will change our lives.*
3. Knowing how forgetful men tend to be, our Lord provided memorial for us.
- a. **I Cor. 11: 23-26** For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁵ In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. (cf - **Matt. 26:26-28**)
 - b. Each week the Lord’s supper reminds of the consequences of -our sins.
- D. **THEREFORE**, we must not forget the price that was paid for our transgressions.
1. It is vitally important that we be gathered around the Lord’s table each Sunday.
 2. We must never allow the communion service to become an empty ritual.
 3. *It is not in the performing of acts that we approach God, but in the humble submission of our hearts before Him.*

CONCLUSION :

- A. As we enjoy the holiday let us remember and be grateful for :
1. The price that was paid for our nation’s freedom.
 2. The price which was paid for our freedom from sin.
- B. Let us be grateful for the religious heritage into which we were born.
1. Our country (Cf - **Prov. 13: 34**)
 2. The church / our congregation
- C. Let us accept with joy the responsibility these lay upon us.
1. As freedom was entrusted to us so we must pass it on to those who come after.
 2. As others shared the free gift of eternal life with us, we must share it to others.
 3. As this congregation was passed down to us, we must pass it down to others.
 4. As the truth was committed to us, we must commit it to the next generation. **2Tm 2:2**

Lesson Text :

Genesis 9: 8-17

8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying,
9 “Now behold, I Myself do establish My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; **10** and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that comes out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. **11** “I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.” **12** God said, “This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; **13** I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. **14** “It shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow will be seen in the cloud, **15** and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. **16** “When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” **17** And God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.”