

# **“Amnesia on the Day of Remembrance!”**

**Mark 14:3-9**

**Intro.** – Several years ago at a revival meeting in New Point, Indiana, I was pleasantly surprised by sixteen people from Fairview Christian Church. This was a former ministry and they had come to see and hear their old preacher. I thought it would be appropriate to introduce, by name, each of them. So, one by one I had these folk stand. I gave their names and told a little tidbit about each individual. Everything was going well until I came to Bonnie Peterson. I had the privilege to witness Bonnie’s baptism into Christ. I knew her name like I knew my own, but when I introduced her I introduced her as Bonnie Chambers. She quickly corrected me and I was embarrassed. To this day I remember her dog’s name (Taffy), but for some reason that evening I had forgotten her name, Bonnie Peterson.

I use this to introduce the idea of *amnesia*. The word comes from two words: one meaning *remember* and the other meaning *not*. Certainly, I “remembered not” the names of these two sisters in the Lord.

Might I suggest that such incidents help us to appreciate the gift of memory given to us by God. Without our memories we would not relive past blessings, keep from repeating past blunders or be able to remember to give recognition of our indebtedness to others in our lives.

This last attribute I just mentioned is the main reason behind “Memorial Day.” This is the day set aside to remember. Memorial Day, however has fallen into everything but a day of remembrance. With all the hoopla of “the first day of summer... school is out... “V-A-C-A-T-I-O-N going to have a ball” we see more and more *amnesia* on the day of remembrance.

*Purpose: to see the appropriateness behind our remembering those to whom we are indebted*

Our text gives two appropriate thoughts of remembrance – thoughts that will prevent amnesia on the day of remembrance:

## **I REMEMBRANCE FOR THE DEAD**

- Naturally, remembrance begins with those who have already left this life. Memorial Day lends itself to our remembrance of those in our past.
- A. The Woman in our Text
  1. John tells us she was Mary of Bethany sister to Lazarus and Martha...
  2. What she does causes raised eyebrows...
  3. Note: this event took place nearly 2,000 yrs ago; yet, it is remembered even as Jesus said – wherever the Gospel was preached, what Mary did would be remembered.
- B. The Founders of our Nation
  1. Writers of the Declaration of Independence – “With a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”
    - 56 men signed = “56 Gallant Men”...
  2. Framers of the Constitution
    - when the Constitutional Convention appeared hopelessly deadlocked, Ben Franklin called for prayer... The deadlock was broken. Soon thereafter the Constitution was adopted and thirteen colonies became the United States of America.
- C. The Defenders of our Nation
  1. How appropriate to remember those who died defending our country...
  2. For over a century, America’s been observing Memorial Day in their honor...and well we should!
- D. The Defenders of The Faith
  1. This is the *great cloud of witnesses* we read about in Hebrews 11-12...

2. These are the individuals, who in our lifetime contended for the faith, once for all delivered – Sherman Nichols, Robert Lillie, Elmer Whatley, Sam/Fern Hoff, Florence Haynes, Margaret Howell, Stewart Rogers, R.C. Foster, L. Edsil Dale, Carl Ebersole, .
3. Is it a wonder to us that Scripture says, “*The memory of the righteous is a blessing*” (Prov 10:7).

Let there be remembrance for the dead. Away with thoughtless Memorial Days. Let there be no amnesia on the day of remembrance...

Another thought our text brings out that will prevent amnesia on the day of remembrance:

## II REMEMBRANCE FOR THE LIVING

### A. Jesus Commends Mary for Her Worship/Gratitude

1. What prompted Mary to do what she did in our text?
2. Her actions reflected her worship/thanks for Jesus having raised her brother from the dead...
3. Her actions reflected her faith in the words of Jesus that He would soon give His life as the needed sacrifice for all...
4. Her actions reflected a sensitivity and an understanding that exceeded the disciples:
  - a. she recognized Christ was about to physically die...
  - b. she wanted to worship and give thanks while Jesus was present and alive...

### B. The Living Deserve Thanks No Less Than the Dead

1. Ingratitude is a common human failing... note: this failing is not isolated in one's younger or older years...
  - a. boils down to thoughtlessness = mentality of “I don't know and I don't care”
  - b. it is time to be aware/thankful to those about us – i.e. let's give thanks to those alive...
  - c. Illus. – Dad use to teach us a poem:

Send me all your roses now,  
Ere pink, ere white, ere red.  
I'd rather have one blossom now,  
Than a truckload when I'm dead.

2. How to begin giving this thanks?
  - a. not a “silent appreciation” thing – like watching television with no sound.
  - b. don't assume – let those to whom you are indebted know – tell them you appreciate, love, and are indebted to them!
3. Do this knowing that time is running out!
  - a. Jesus Himself said in verse 7 “...*you do not always have Me.*”
  - b. such is our case; especially, if we have some kind of strained relationship... it's time for reconciling these relationships because time is running out...
  - c. Illus. – an ungrateful daughter who broke her parents' heart never repaired the breach... She was informed her mother was seriously ill. For the first time in her life the daughter realized the urgency in setting things right. She hurried back to the home from which she had run away, but it was too late. Her mother was in a comma... Upon seeing her mother, the daughter began weeping saying, “If only I could talk to her for just a minute...”
4. May I suggest flowers for the living -- Memorial Day is a perfect time to be reconciled...

Let there be remembrance for the living on the day of remembrance!

**Conclusion:** In June, 1864, General Ulysses S. Grant was going through the ranks of the Union army during the 2<sup>nd</sup> battle of Cold Harbor. What he saw shocked him. His men were sitting in the grass and among the thickets, sewing their names on the sleeves of their coats. After inquiring why, Grant was told, “Sir, we expect to die in the next exchange... We simply want no nameless graves!”

Memorial Day is tomorrow. It was started during the Civil War so that even those in the nameless graves would not be forgotten. How about it? Will tomorrow accomplish its purpose?

A more pressing question; however, is will we accomplish our purpose today! Here at the Church of Christ in Eaton, we have a Memorial Day *every Sunday*. Like the first Church, we gather the first day of the week to be reminded of the dead and of the living. No soldier ever passed a more difficult conflict than did Christ the Lord. In His death, Christ felt the full force of divine judgment. And no soldier ever declared a more permanent victory. Christ arose and He is alive never again to see death.

This, then as is every Sunday is Memorial Day. Is there amnesia on this day? Are our minds and hearts fully engaged when it comes to the worship and service of our Lord? Those who are lost are depending on us... AND our Lord is deserving of nothing less!