

Freedom is never Free!

“Thou Shalt Remember...” (Deut. 8:2)

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, May 24th

Memorial Day (“Decoration Day”) can be traced to those who began to place flowers on the graves of soldiers after the Civil War.

By 1890 almost every State declared “Decoration Day” official state holiday and it (Memorial Day) became a National Holiday in 1971.

To most, it’s the beginning of the Summer and celebrated with parties and cook outs.

The roots of such “Memorials” are far more significant.

The Bible references the importance of “Remembering” some 338 times!

1st reference is in Gen. 8:1 *“God Remembered Noah...”* (zākar’: to remember and/or mark.)

The last reference (Rev. 18:4,5) also deals with a time of deliverance and Judgment.

“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered (Mnēmoneu’ō: Mindful of) her iniquities.”

“Those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it! George Santayana

God knew the danger of forgetfulness, so encouraged the use of “Memorials”.

(“memorial” used 46 X in scripture.) zēk’er: a memento. *From zakar’: to mark, remember.*

The Bible is filled with such “monuments”. (Gen. 19:26; 22:14; Josh. 4:20-24; 1 Sam. 7:12)

Our country is filled with memorials to significant people or events.

Pilgrim Memorial (Plymouth, MA); Presidential memorial (Mt. Rushmore, SD);

Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln Memorials in Washington DC.

1) **Some Memorials are unusual.** (*Boll Weevil memorial in Enterprise, AL*)

2) **Many are profoundly sad and sobering.**

a) *Holocaust Memorial, Washington, DC (6,000,000 Jews died)*

b) *Revolutionary War Memorial (25,000 Americans died)*

c) *Civil War Memorials (such as Arlington) commemorating the death of some 620,000.*

d) *World War 1 Memorial commemorating the death of 116,516 Americans.*

e) *World War 2 Memorial commemorates the death of 405,399 Americans.*

f) *Korean War Memorial commemorates the sacrifice of 36,516 Americans.*

g) *Vietnam Memorial lists the names of 58,209 Americans who died in/from the war.*

h) *Afghanistan war cost 2,440 U.S. lives and 20,320 wounded.*

i) *Iraq war cost 4,424 U.S. lives and 31,952 wounded in action.*

j) *Gulf War cost 258 American Lives.*

Some 1.3 million Americans have given their lives while fighting for our Country’s values,

Almost 650,000 died fighting for another Country!

Jn 15:13 “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

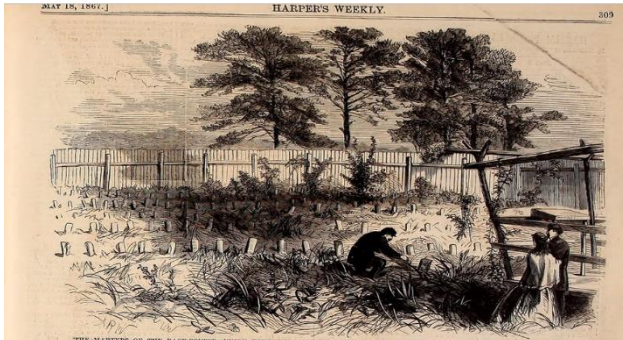
To quote the Korean war memorial: *“Our Nation Honors her sons and daughters,*

who answered the call to defend a country they never knew, and a people they never met.”

Yale History Professor David Blight, while researching for a book on the Civil War, uncovered evidence (in the Harvard archives) that the first Memorial (Decoration) Day was conducted by freed slaves.

During the War the Charleston “Washington Race track & Jockey club” had been converted to a Prison Camp for Union soldiers. Some 260 Union soldiers died from disease and exposure there and were buried in a mass grave by the Grandstand.

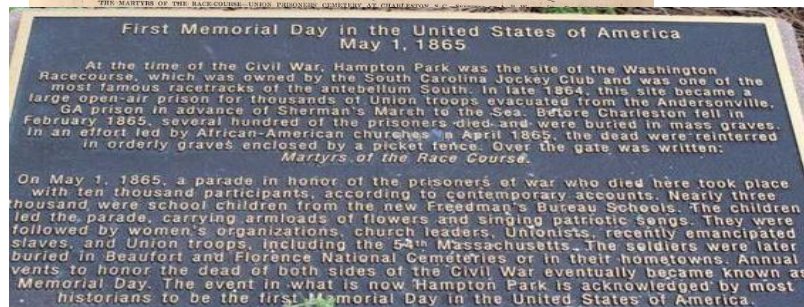
When Charleston fell, (Feb 17, 1865) the Confederate troops evacuated, leaving the slaves to fend for themselves.



One of the first things those emancipated slaves did was to give the fallen Union prisoners a proper burial. They exhumed the mass grave and reinterred the bodies in a new cemetery with a tall whitewashed fence inscribed with the words:

“Martyrs of the Race Course.”

On May 1, 1865, 10,000 people, mostly freed slaves with some white missionaries, staged a parade around the race track. Over a thousand black children carried bouquets of flowers and sang, while Black ministers recited Bible Verses.



Conclusion: Some 1.3 million Americans given their lives while fighting for our values over our 243 years. We should remember them and the values that motivated them to give

“their last full measure of devotion.”

Over 50 million innocent babies have been sacrificed over the last 47 years

because we’ve forgotten our values!

Since the first to celebrate “Memorial Day” were those who were freed because of the sacrifice of the Union soldiers in fighting for their freedom, it’s fitting that we, who were once slaves, should never forget to honor the sacrifice of our Lord! Romans 6:17-18

“ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”

Jesus’ sacrifice should motivate us to become his: *“servants of righteousness”.*

2 Cor 5:14-15 *“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*

2 Corinthians 5:20 *“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”* (Katallas’sō: mutually changed.)

(see 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Jn. 1:6-10)