

Building Bridges— Memorial Day

Heb. 11:4, Rev. 14:13

“Crossing the Bridges Built by Others”

Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and **by it he being dead yet speaketh.**

Rev. 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and **their works do follow them.**

Our theme this year is building bridges.

The last four weeks ago, we have considered...

“Building a Bridge When You Are Not Sure Where You Are Going”

“Mothers – Building Bridges for a Lifetime”

“Crisscrossing the Bridge Within Us”

“Building the Bridge to Keep Building Bridges”

In April 1863, in Columbus, Mississippi, after decorating graves of her two sons who died representing their beloved southland, an elderly woman walked to two mounds of dirt at the corner of the cemetery to place memorial flowers there also. "***What are you doing?***" friends shouted, "***Those are the graves of two union soldiers.***" Softly that compassionate mother said, "***I know. I also know that somewhere in the North, a mother or a young wife mourns for them as we do for ours.***" That loving deed set in motion our celebration that has become known as Memorial Day. Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by **General John Logan**, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11, and was first observed on 30 May 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

For many today, Memorial Day is simply the “beginning of summer” and a reason to roast hot-dogs on a grill. For others more patriotic, it is a time to be thankful for the cost of freedom.



I. WE SHOULD CULTIVATE AN ATTITUDE OF APPRECIATION

Heb. 11:32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36 And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38 (**Of whom the world was not worthy:**) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

A. Appreciation Requires Effort – Heb. 11:32 “And what shall I more say?”

- The Bible includes a “Hall of Fame of Faith” which not only aids in our remembrance of those who lived valiantly by faith, but also to encourage us to live our lives to be productive for God’s glory.

Trailblazers of the past

Abraham

Moses

Joshua

John the Baptist

Paul

Our Baptist Forefathers (Foxe’s Book of Martyrs)

Johann Gutenberg

Christopher Columbus and other Explorers

The Pilgrims

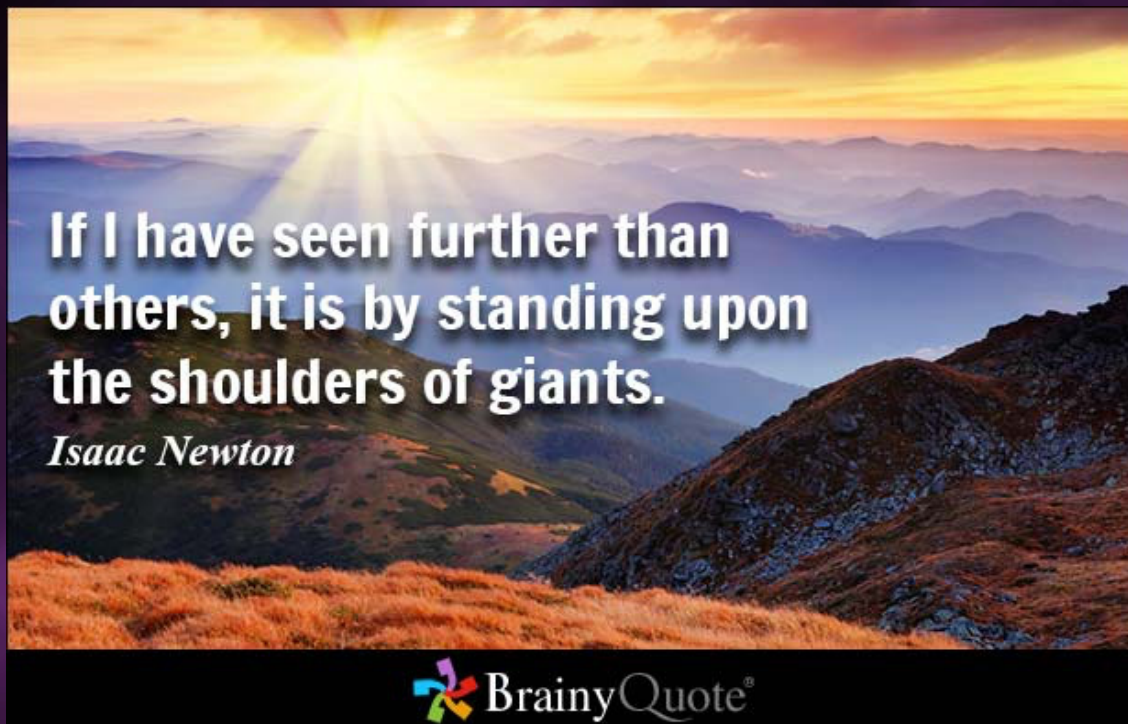
Dr. John Clark

Daniel Boone and the other Trailblazers

Scientific Giants – medicine, electricity, industry, astronomy, atomic energy

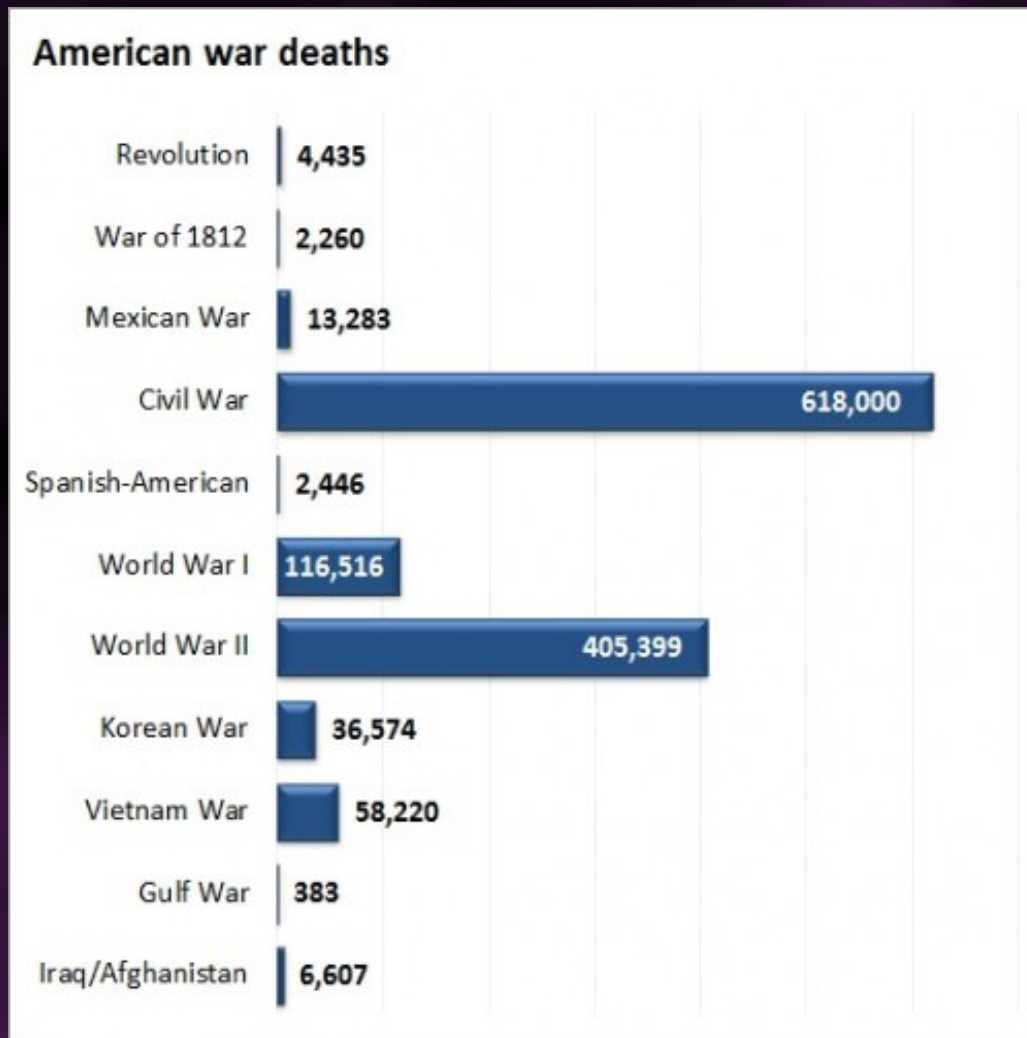
- Remembering the fact of Memorial Day's legacy, should motivate us to appreciate the cost of the benefits of freedom that we so richly enjoy today.

B. Appreciation Reflects Esteem – Heb. 11:38 “(Of whom the world was not worthy:)...”



<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/i/isaacnewto135885.html>

- As Sir Isaac Newton humbly honored others before him, we must appreciate that we, too, are standing upon the shoulders of those fallen soldiers whose sacrificed lives help preserved our freedom.
- On Memorial Day, we need to make the effort to consider the multitude of Americans who have died to preserve our nation.



American War Dead, By the Numbers

PAUL WALDMAN

MAY 26, 2014

Putting our past and present conflicts in context.

<http://prospect.org/article/american-war-dead-numbers>

- These were loved ones whose deaths caused great sorrow for many families.
- Like David, they were motivated for a cause:

1 Sam. 17:29 “And David said...**Is there not a cause?**”

II. WE SHOULD CULTIVATE AN ATTITUDE OF ANTICIPATION

Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and **by it he being dead yet speaketh.**

Rev. 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and **their works do follow them.**

A. Anticipating the Future History, Heb. 11:4

“...and **by it he being dead yet speaketh.**”

- What will others “hear from us” after we are gone?

Prov. 10:7 **The memory of the just is blessed:** but the name of the wicked shall rot.

B. Anticipating a Faithful Heritage, Rev. 14:13

“...and **their works do follow them.**”

Heritage = anything that has been transmitted from the past or handed down by tradition

<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/heritage?s=t>

Psa. 127:3 **Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD:** *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.

- One day each of us will finish our purpose upon this earth.

Job 7:1 **Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?** *are not* his days also like the days of an hireling?

Job 30:23 For I know *that* thou wilt bring me *to* death, and **to the house appointed for all living.**

Heb. 9:27 And as **it is appointed unto men once to die**, but after this the judgment:

- When we die, our “good intentions” and all other works will be done.

Psa. 6:5 For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: **in the grave who shall give thee thanks?**

Psa. 88:11 Shall thy lovingkindness **be declared in the grave?** *or* thy faithfulness in destruction?

Eccl. 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for ***there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.***

III. WE SHOULD CULTIVATE AN ATTITUDE OF APPLICATION

A. To Live our Lives in Faithfulness

Prov. 28:20 **A faithful man shall abound with blessings:** but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

Lu. 16:10 **He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much:** and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

1 Cor. 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that **a man be found faithful.**

B. To Live our Lives in Fruitfulness

Jn. 15:5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: **He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.**

Col. 1:10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, **being fruitful in every good work**, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

C. To Live our Lives to the Fullest (for the Glory of God)

1 Cor. 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or **whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.**

Conclusion

As we celebrate Memorial Day, let's cultivate...

- An Attitude of Appreciation – being thankful for those who paved a way for us.
- An Attitude of Anticipation – knowing that we will leave behind a heritage of our lives.
- An Attitude of Application – living our lives for the glory of God, to influence those who follow us.

Ex. 12:14 And this day shall be unto you **for a memorial**; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

Mt. 26:13 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told **for a memorial of her**.

Acts 10:4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, **Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God**.