In Remembrance Of Me

Joe Slater

 I remember my parents talking about “Decoration Day.” Now we call it Memorial Day. Begun after the Civil War, it was made a federal holiday in 1971, observed on the last Monday in May. Originally it was to honor those who died while serving in the military by decorating their graves.

 We do well to remember and honor those who gave that last measure of devotion to preserve the freedom we all hold dear. Infinitely more important is honoring and remembering Him who gave His all to free us from sin’s bondage and give us hope of life eternal.

 The word memorial is used in the Old Testament at least 28 times relative to numerous things God wanted His people to remember. Various feasts and sacrifices such as Passover were memorials. Memorial stones marked the crossing of Jordan by Joshua and the Israelites. Despite the numerous memorials, God’s chosen people forgot Him and His blessings repeatedly.

 Jesus gave His disciples a memorial of His body and blood given for us. *“Do this in remembrance of Me”* (Luke 22:19). On the first day of each week (Acts 20:7), Christians all over the world observe the Lord’s Supper. Simple unleavened bread and fruit of the vine remind us of our Savior’s battered body and the blood that flowed from His scourged back, the nails in His hands and feet, and the thorn crown on His head.

 Memorial Day’s focus ought not to be cookouts and ball games. Priority one should be remembering and honoring fallen veterans. Likewise on the first day of the week we ought not to center our attention on ball games and birthday parties. Priority one is to honor and remember Jesus as He ordained.

**I’m Church of Christ**

 No, you're not, and please quit saying that.

 It has become increasingly frequent that we hear members of the body of Christ refer to themselves in that fashion when discussing religion with members of various denominations. Perhaps we are trying to accommodate their language and their unscriptural understanding, but you can accommodate to the point of error and such is the case here.

 “I'm Baptist.” “I'm Methodist.” “I'm Presbyterian.” “I'm Catholic.” “I'm church of Christ.”

 One of these things is not like the other; one of these things just doesn't fit. The first four descriptions share certain things in common. They are all denominational identifiers and none of them has scriptural precedent in the designation of the church. The last is added so that we can parallel the language of our denominational neighbors, but the effect condescends the church of Christ to that same level.

 We are making some mighty uncertain sounds with language like this (1 Cor. 14:8). Why not rather say simply, “I'm a Christian”? Does that not communicate the truth and perhaps also make a point about our refusal to create or join any denomination (1 Cor. 1:10-13)? The phrase “church of Christ” is no more ours to trifle with than the honorable word “Christian.” Our denominational friends have almost given up calling themselves Christians, instead preferring to emphasize what “brand” of Christian they are. Do we resist sectarianism for 1900 years and then surrender because it is more convenient and less likely to get us into a messy discussion?

 Such has given religion a bad rap anyway. Sometimes hurt feelings result, and sometimes bloody noses. But every once in a while conversions result, and every once

in a while is worth the risk. Moreover, it demands that we be clear in who we are, not bowing to the ungodly language of church dividers.

 When the apostles began taking the gospel into all the world, there was exactly one kind of church in all the world. It was the one that Christ promised to establish (Matt. 16:16) and did purchase with His own blood (Acts 20:28). He both built it and bought it and it was His; it was the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16). There were zero denominations in all the world. No church in the New Testament called itself Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist or Catholic. But friend, no Christian in the New Testament ever referred to himself as “I'm church of Christ” either.

Repeat after me: “I'm a Christian. I'm a Christian.” It's not hard.

--J.S. Smith (via *The Gospel Preceptor*)

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If We Work Upon Marble

If we work upon marble, it will perish;

If upon brass, time will efface it;

If we rear temples, they will crumble into dust;

But if we work upon the immortal minds

And imbue them with the just fear of God

And love of our fellow-men,

We engrave on those tablets

Something that will brighten to all eternity.

--Daniel Webster