

67-1866-1 - Ho. May - May 26, 1968 Memorial Day  
To: May - May 25, 1972 A.M.

"THE EXPENDABLES"

John 11:47-52

INTRODUCTION:

1867 some sensitive women of Columbus, Mississippi decorated not only the graves of their own dead who had given their lives in the great Civil War which had just ended but also the graves of Northern soldiers who were buried there. This noble deed inspired others to do the same and the annual custom eventually became our nation-wide Memorial

Day. 100 yrs ago General Order No. 11 issued by "Black Jack" Major General John A. Logan, Command in Chief of The Army of The Republic set aside May 30 for the purpose of strewing flowers and otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of this country.

It has become a beautiful day of tribute, celebrated with music, parades, speeches, and the decorating of the graves of those who have died in the wars of our nation.

It has become an effective way of helping us remember those who have made it possible for us to be where we are and have what we have today. Those who have paid the supreme sacrifice, those who have been expendable.

Edmond Burke said, "People will not look forward to prosperity, who never look backward to their ancestors."

Joshua knew this. I can sketch for you that memorable scene in the Old Testament lesson, in the 4th chapter of Joshua 5th Verse, where the question is asked, what mean ye by these stones. The Hebrew people had just crossed the Jordan River and had taken the first step to invade Palestine. God had interceded for them and had made it possible for them to cross the river. Moses, their commander, was gone. And now Joshua, a religious man, ordered a monument to be set up of twelve stones -- each for one tribe of Israel. The instruction he gave the people was that in future days when their children shall ask what mean ye by these stones, they were to reply the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord and these stones shall be a memorial unto the children of Israel forever.

Hence, it is not a bad idea for us to set up a memorial to remember that we have a great nation, and that some have paid the sacrifice.

A refugee from Europe came down the gang-plank of the ship onto American soil, knelt down and kissed our soil. That one gesture, and act, tells more than a long volume what is still right and good in America.

When we think of Memorial Day, we think of several different areas.

### I. Memorial to the [Natural Experience] of Man.

Now humanity can almost be divided into (two classes) Those who live the full rich life. And the second class, those who die <sup>that made</sup> the full life possible for other people.

The most tragic fact of reality is that some of us must be sacrificed for the rest of us.

Memorial Day vividly reminds us of this historic principle. None of us doubt for a moment that we are citizens of the greatest republic in the world of man. Because so many gave their lives to make it possible.

More than (500,000) military personnel have died during Americas wars. In Saratoga and Yorktown, <sup>Spotsylvania Run the war</sup> in Flander's Field, and Gettysburg, in Normandy, in Pearl Harbor and Korea and also Vietnam, in Arlington Cemetery and similar gardens around the world the silence grieves of more than half a million Americans give testimony that everything costs. And freedom costs most of all.

Of course there have been others beside the military folks that have given their lives for our land, and for liberty, and for our health. We think of the pioneers who came and sacrificed the security of their homeland to carve out this empire. Take this vast wilderness of America and make what we have today.

We should never forget the first group who were poorly clothed, half starved, untrained, poorly equipped, who faced death in order to make this nation secure.

Scientists, inventors, who have braved the odds of nature and forced ahead, have also been great heroes in the building of this nation.

Medical progress has produced some of the world's noblest expendables. When we consider the multitudes who have suffered and died in the agony of disease and affliction.

There have been those who have been willing to suffer even death through experiments, and discovers.

In the field of education, business, politics, and religion, we have had those who have crusaded and have laid down their lives, that others might well continue theirs. For their sacrifice and pleasure -- freedom, position, or wealth.

There have been some such as George Washington who willingly gave themselves. Woodrow Wilson said of him that Washington had small patience and no soft words for the agreement whatever it's kind. He would help men in distress with a generosity, in wise choice of means, which few took the pains to exercise. But he had only sharp rebuke for carelessness or neglect or any slackness in the performance of a duty. Men who had cheated or sought to impose upon him, deemed him a hard master. He exacted the utmost authority but he spent it with the other hand to relieve genuine suffering, and real wants.

There was also Thomas Jefferson who was a believer in the ability of the average man. The average individual had something to contribute to his country.

Theodore Roosevelt it was said that he was the greatest moral force for clean government, and square deal of modern time. From the time he entered the New York's Arena: he was a fighter for morality. He was known as a crusader.

Every age and every area of life has had it's expendables. People who had to lose that others may gain. But are they so expendable. Could we have done without them. Wasn't their very act a sacrifice and more successful and more essential than all our little acts of selfish achievements.

## II. This Memorial also could be tied to the example of Jesus.

In our text Jesus was being discussed by chiefs, priests, Pharisees, who were almost at their wit's end because Jesus kept right on working miracles. Verse 47.

They were afraid that the Jewish people were going to turn to Jesus by the mass as Messiah and King. This they knew would appear as a political revolution to Rome and cause destruction of Israel. Verse 48.

Caiphas, the high priest rebuked them for their ignorance in practical affairs such as this. Verse 49.

He declared that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not. Verse 50.

Of course the high priest was speaking of the political problem surrounding Jesus. Yet the words which he spoke were not just related to a conscious purpose or did they even come from him in the first place. For it says, and this he spake not of himself. The priest was weak and just a puppet -- he still was Israel's spiritual leader and God's spirit was prophesy through his lips -- the glorious fact that Jesus was going to die on the cross for the sins of the world. Verse 51 and 52.

Jesus is history's supreme example of an expendable. He had to die in order that we could live. Someone had to prove that a perfect life could be lived in an imperfect world. Someone had to reveal that God was willing to go this length in order to identify himself with man.

Someone had to show how dark sin was to God and that God was ready to forgive. And Jesus was the expendable one.

Think how he loved life. How every rose and every flower and every blade of grass when he touched it -- he talked about it. Think of his marvelous power over the universe. He had created all this and his pleasure was in being able to control it.

Think of his compassionate love for people and voluntary coming and taking hold and being interested in every problem of life.

When we think of how much he must have wanted to keep on living and what a great life he had to offer a sick world, we are amazed, at his willingness to be expendable.

It has always seemed so -- those who have the most to live for are often the quickest to give up their lives. They are the most sensitive. Sometimes the most talented and promising people are the first ones to volunteer for front line duty.

For example, John Wesley he was a great scholar. He was a gifted man. He had a wonderful mind. He fully consecrated himself to God and to God's power for his service.

Now he possessed a love for books and yet he spent most of his time in a saddle with the active duties of a strenuous life. That was being expendable.

He had love for art and for music and architecture -- but he turned away from these charms to go out in the highways and byways and sound the Gospel trumpet.

### III. Memorial Day In Contrast To The Call of Christianity.

The Christian message has been pitifully watered down. The call to be a Christian means to some:

1. Better system of ethics.
2. Higher morality.
3. Organized religious activity.

Call of the Master is a call from Calvary - Matt. 16:24 "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me".

< Early Disciples knew that when a man decided to "take up his cross" --- He not simply bearing a burden, he was dying for a cause.

Insulted by their enemies and sealed their doctrines with their blood.

Schumacher - Christian Index.

✓ Matthew suffered martyrdom by being slain with a sword at the distant city of Ethiopia.

✓ Luke was hanged upon an olive tree in the classic land of Greece.

✓ John was put in a caldron of boiling oil, but escaped death in a miraculous manner, and was afterward branded at Patmos.

✓ Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downward.

✓ James, The Greater, was beheaded at Jerusalem.

✓ Janus, the Less, was thrown from a lofty pinnacle of the temple, and then beaten to death with a fuller's club.

✓ Bartholomew was flayed alive.

✓ Andrew was bound to a cross, whence he preached to his persecutors until he died.

Thomas was run through the body with a lance at coromandel in the East Indies.

Jude was shot to death with arrows.

Matthias was first stoned and then beheaded.

Barnabas of the Gentiles was stoned to death at Salonica.

Paul after various tortures and persecutions, was at length beheaded at Rome by the Emperor Nero.

Such was the fate of the Apostles according to traditional statements.

Dr. R. Ketchum Do not be indifferent to this thing called Christianity. It was created for you by the blood of Christ and preserved for you by the blood of martyrs.

For almost 300 years Christianity was a forbidden thing. It's adherents were publicly whipped, dragged by their heels through the streets until their brains ran out.

Their limbs were torn off, their ears and noses were cut off, and their eyes were dug out with sharp sticks or burned out with hot irons.

Sharp knives were run under their finger nails. Melted lead was poured over their bodies.

They were drowned, beheaded, crucified, ground between stones, torn by wild beasts, smothered in lime kilns, scaped to death by sharp shells, and killed all day long."

1651 - Obadiah Holmes - held a prayer meeting in his house. Governor Endicot - Mass. ordered him whipped. So severe was the whipping that for days he could lie only by resting on the tips of his elbows and his knees and yet when the last lash had fallen, he looked at his tormenters and cried, "Gentlemen, you have whipped me with roses!"

A redeeming Christ has given you a future filled with hope.

Do not look lightly upon this thing called Christianity which cost the son of God his blood and his followers their lives.

Some grab a last straw.

Others give up their life rafts.

Some demand their rights and destroy those who endanger their position or pleasure.

Others forfeit all the rights and privileges that keep someone else from being happy.

Ought to dedicate our lives to the brightest and noblest dreams.

Determine not to live a second best life, but each moment to the fullest.

Some of us may be called upon to sacrifice our pride, pleasure, position, prosperity, perhaps our lives.

Consider that you have been blessed of God to be used as his expendable.

*Ship*  
Empress of Ireland

Went down -- 130 Salvation Army Officers on board. 109 were drowned, not one body was picked up <sup>had on</sup> with a life <sup>belt</sup> raft on it.

Survivors told how the Salvationists finding there were not enough life belts to go around -- took off their own belts and strapped them upon stronger men -- "I can die better than you can" and from the deck of the sinking ship flung their battle cry around the world -- others!"