

In Memory

In the world today, there seems to be something everywhere dedicated to the memory of someone. There are buildings that bear people's names. There are sections of highways and bridges that are dedicated to someone's memory [Who are all these people whose roads we drive upon?]. In more recent years there has been an explosion of little vinyl stickers on car windows memorializing friends, family members—even pets. It is all well and good to remember those who are important to us, but how many in this world stop to remember the one who means everything to mankind? The one who means everything—Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ—certainly is to be remembered, but how?

A Tomb Stone?

If people wanted to so do, they could remember Jesus by erecting a tomb stone as a memorial. That is a respectable thing to do in our society. When people fail to do this for their loved one, it is usually considered a mark of disrespect.

However, there are at least three drawbacks to keep us from erecting a tomb stone as a memorial to Jesus. First of all, no one knows, for sure, where Jesus was buried. In the second place, even if we knew His place of burial, erecting a tomb stone could not mean much—He did not stay in the grave but three days (**Matthew 28:1-6**). In the third place, Jesus did not tell anyone to erect a stone in His memory. It could be, too, that He did not want the grave site marked—people are prone to make shrines of such things.

A Statue?

People often remember their leaders by erecting statues of their likeness in prominent places where all can see them. Just think of all of the statues which have been erected throughout the United States around government buildings. Granted, over the last few years there has been an uproar to remove many statues, but statues still exist, no matter.

However, we can't remember Jesus in this manner, for no one upon the face of the earth knows how Jesus looked. How could we make a statue in His likeness?

Furthermore, this would border upon, if not actually be, a form of idolatry, since this would get into the realm of making a graven image with religious intent. Idolatry is still forbidden (**1Corinthians 10:14**).

A Biography?

We could remember Jesus by writing a biography which would bring Jesus to memory every time someone read it. That is the way many, if not most, prominent people are remembered. However, there is a problem. Who could justly be qualified to write the biography? Besides, God has already had the biography of Jesus written (**Luke 1:1-4**).

A Big Sign?

We could remember Jesus with a sign proclaiming: "Remember Jesus!" That would attract some attention and make some remember Jesus. Or, we could be a little more refined and wear a cross around our necks as a memorial to Jesus. We could even put nice bumper stickers on the bumpers of our automobiles which call for remembering Jesus in some way. "If you love Jesus, honk!" is one of the old classics.

It is true that people ought to be made to remember Jesus in and through His disciples. "*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden,*" Jesus said (**Matthew 5:14**). He further said: "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (**Matthew 5:16**). But this is still not the way that Jesus told his people to remember him.

A Celebration?

We could remember Jesus by celebrating His birthday with a great religious service in great pageantry. People have done this with great enthusiasm until they have made this celebration into one of the greatest religious, social, and economic events of the year. It would not be difficult to be a part of this. As a matter of fact, the difficulty comes in not joining others in doing this. However, like in other things, there are drawbacks to this. First of all, we do not even know His birthday. Have you ever wondered why His birthday was never revealed and recorded? Could it have been because God knew how people would react to this? In the second place, even if we knew His birthday, we could not authorize and engage in a religious activity which is not authorized in the Scriptures (**2John 9**). So, we can't remember Jesus with a birthday celebration.

How Then? By Doing What He Said!

When Jesus instituted the Lord's supper, He told his disciples to remember Him. "*And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me'*" (**Luke 22:19**). That Jesus told His people to remember Him has never been in question. But *how* did He want people to remember Him? That is the question!

There is no problem in knowing how to remember Jesus. All we have to do to remember Jesus is to do what He told us to do. Note carefully what we are reminded of by Paul: "*For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes'*" (**1Corinthians 11:23-26**).

Are these instructions so difficult to understand? That is not the problem. The problem is that people want to remember Jesus in the way they choose. Why can't we be content to remember Him as He directed? Early disciples were careful to remember Him just that way. Let us do it that

way today—gathering together on the first day of each week to have fellowship with one another and with Him in the memory of His great sacrifice.