

I. **INTRODUCTION.**

- A. Scripture text: **Mark 15:22-37.**
- B. Tomorrow, our nation pauses to remember and recognize those who have given their lives in the service of our country. We remember all the dead.
- C. Those who have died in the service of our country have given the ultimate sacrifice. Jesus Christ gave His life at Calvary, as the ultimate sacrifice of all time.

II. **THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE, **DRAWS ALL MEN TO CHRIST.****

- A. See John 12:32,33.
“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.” [33] But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.
- B. The primary reference here is to Jesus being lifted up on the cross. However, Jesus was lifted from the grave; lifted up into heaven; and lifted up in the hearts of men and women as His word is preached.
- C. The ultimate sacrifice of Christ is the greatest drawing card of all history. Even today, some 2000 years after the fact, Jesus is still drawing people because He died on the cross:
- D. The one who did not deserve to die, died. The one who was not guilty of any wrong was crucified as a criminal. The perfect one gave His life for all, and all were/are sinners.

III. **THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE, **DESTROYED THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL.****

- A. See Hebrews 2:14,15.
Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; [15] and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.
- B. The devil's weapon is death. Nothing matters if life does not go beyond death. Yet everything matters if life transcends death. Life is a defeatist, depressing voyage without result if death is the end.
- C. Even Paul, said, “If we have only hoped in X in this life, we are of all men most to be pitied” (1Cor. 15:19).
- D. The ultimate sacrifice of X destroyed the death. Because Jesus was lifted up from the grave, and into heaven, He will come again and the final enemy will forever be destroyed.

IV. **THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE, **MEANS RECONCILIATION TO GOD.****

- A. See Romans 5:10.
For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.
- B. Our sins have separated us from God, causing the need for reconciliation (Isa. 59:1,2).
Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Neither is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. [2] But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.
- C. God never changes, but because of our sin we need a remedy, a reconciler. Jesus is the redeemer, reconciler.
- D. Now we have the ministry of reconciliation from God. We are ambassadors for X (2Cor. 5:18-20).
Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, [19] namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. [20] Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.
- E. The ultimate sacrifice of X means that our sins can be forgiven and we can be in full fellowship with God.

V. **THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE, MEANS CHRIST RULES EVERY WHERE.**

- A. See Revelation 1:18.
and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
- B. Notice in this statement that Jesus holds the keys to death, and the place of the dead (Hades). Hades is the unseen realm where all souls go upon the death of the physical body.
- C. But Jesus rules everywhere. He rules in heaven, on and under the earth! (Mt. 28:18; Phil. 2:9,10).
*(Mt 28:18) And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
(Phil 2:9-10) Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, [10] that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth,*
- D. The ultimate sacrifice of X means that He has overcome every obstacle, every problem, every place, and every temptation that could be. May we resolve to be with X in Paradise!

VI. **THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE, MEANS WE MUST RESPOND GOD.**

- A. You can curse the cross or obey the cross; despise the cross; or love the cross. You can do most anything with the cross you want, except IGNORE IT!
- B. Four things now necessary because of X's great sacrifice:
 - 1. We must carry the death of X with us (2Cor. 4:7-10). This why Paul never lost hope in all his troubles.
But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves; [8] we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; [9] persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; [10] always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
 - 2. We must proclaim the death of X each Lord's day (1Cor. 11:26).
*For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
To eat the Supper, is to proclaim X's death.*
 - 3. We must preach the death of X, and it alone (1Cor. 2:2).
*For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.
This is the true power source of spirituality.*
 - 4. We must die the death, to have newness of life (Rom. 6:3-5).
*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? [4] Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. [5] For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection,
The power to leave the life of sin is found in death.*
- C. The ultimate sacrifice means we must respond to it in repentance and faithfulness.

VII. **CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**

- A. Again it is fitting and right that we remember and honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for friends, family, and country.
- B. May we also remember and honor the One who gave the ultimate sacrifice for all humankind.
- C. Our response is more than flowers, taps, and prayers. It is a life-changing decision that makes Jesus Lord of our life.
- D. Plan of salvation for non- Xians, erring Xians.