

Chesswood Baptist Church

Where Everybody is Somebody

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MINISTRY OF THE WORD

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS

PASTOR HOWARD DANIEL, JR

SUNDAY MORNING, May 28, 2017

MEMORIAL DAY

SCRIPTURE READING: **JOHN 15:1-14**

John 15:13-14, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. **14**: Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

1. BACKGROUND

- a. Please refer to the Evening Message for May 28, 2017 for the Background.

2. INTRODUCTION

- a. The introduction today will be used to give a brief history of Memorial Day. It is so important to the history of our country and a tribute to the many that have lost their lives. It is also used as a day of remembrance of our loved ones who has gone on before us.
- b. Memorial Day, which falls on the last Monday of May, commemorates the men and women who died while serving in the American military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971.
- c. Many Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries or memorials, holding family gatherings and participating in parades. Unofficially, at least, it marks the beginning of summer.
- d. Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day because it was a time set aside to honor the nation's Civil War dead by decorating their graves. It was first widely observed on May 30, 1868, to commemorate the sacrifices of Civil War soldiers, by proclamation of General John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of former sailors and soldiers. On May 5, 1868, Logan declared in General Order No. 11 that:
- e. "The 30th of May 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance, no form of ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonies of respect as circumstances may permit."
- f. During the first celebration of Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, after which 5,000 participants helped to

decorate the graves of the more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried in the cemetery.

- g. This 1868 celebration was inspired by local observances of the day in several towns throughout America that had taken place in the three years since the Civil War. In fact, several Northern and Southern cities claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day, including Columbus, Mississippi; Macon, Georgia; Richmond, Virginia; Boalsburg, Pennsylvania; and Carbondale, Illinois.
- h. In 1966, the federal government, under the direction of President Lyndon Johnson, declared Waterloo, New York, the official birthplace of Memorial Day. They chose Waterloo – which had first celebrated the day on May 5, 1866 – because the town had made Memorial Day an annual, community-wide event during which businesses closed and residents decorated the graves of soldiers with flowers and flags.
- i. By the late 1800s, many communities across the country had begun to celebrate Memorial Day and, after World War 1, observances also began to honor those who had died in all of America's wars. In 1971, Congress declared Memorial Day a national holiday to be celebrated the last Monday in May. (Veteran's Day, a day set aside to honor all veterans, living and dead, is celebrated each year on November 11.)
- j. Today, Memorial Day is celebrated at Arlington National Cemetery with a ceremony in which a small American flag is placed on each grave. Also, it is customary for the president or vice-president to give a speech honoring the contributions for the dead and lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. About 5,000 people attend the ceremony annually.
- k. Several Southern states continue to set aside a special day for honoring the Confederate dead, which is usually called Confederate Memorial Day.
- l. With that introduction, let's see what we can glean from God's Holy, precious and Preserved Word today.

3. TEN POINTS TO THE MESSAGE

a. I am the true vine.

1. **John 15:1**, *I am the true vine*, and my Father is the husbandman.
2. This is a very appropriate chapter to commemorate Memorial Day.
3. We have taken our text from **John 15:13**, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*. Jesus then tells us in **John 15:14**, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you*.
4. We are going to set the context of this verse by having you fully understand that Jesus speaks of Israel as the vine; however, the Lord Jesus Christ is the True Vine.
5. This is a clear picture of the Nation of Israel set forth in several passages of Scripture. So, we can understand and set the context, let's review those passages. We are also going to make some applications to Memorial Day and we want to be sure we rightly divide the Word and not get off into error.
6. **Psalms 80:8-9**, *Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. 9: Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. Isaiah 5:1*, *Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath*

a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: **Isaiah 5:7**, *For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry. Jeremiah 2:21*, *Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? Hosea 10:1*, *Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images.*

7. It is very clear that the context is speaking of the Nation Israel.
8. God covers an entire spectrum. He wants us to know all things revolve around Him.
9. As we commemorate Memorial Day, one of the greatest things we can do is have people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
10. God uses a symbolic term to bring out the fact the Nation Israel is the vine.
11. In the final analysis, the Lord Jesus Christ, emphasis in this verse that He is the True Vine. He is the one who will sit on the throne of David and rule and reign for a thousand years.
12. The Old Testament reflects Israel was chosen because the Lord Loved them. **Deuteronomy 7:6-8**, *For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. 7: The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: 8: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*
13. Jesus lays out a concept that every one of us need to get firmly embedded into our heart that He is the True Vine; God the Father is the Husbandmen.
14. As we reflect again on our subject today we remember there have been many who have laid down their lives during war and during peace, for friends.
15. Jesus Christ laid down His life for both His enemies and His friends. He went to the cross for those who were against Him because we are all born in sin and shapen in iniquity. **Zechariah 13:6**, *And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Psalms 51:5*, *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Romans 5:8*, *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 1 Corinthians 15:22*, *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*
16. Many people give their lives for a good reason. God is telling the Israelites that religion will not take them to Heaven. No form of religious activity regardless of what they are can cause a dead soul to come alive. Only Jesus Christ and his finished work can accomplish the task. **Ezekiel 18:20**, *The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. Romans 5:19*, *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

17. Jesus Christ is above any religious entity. He told Nicodemus that he must be born again. **John 3:7**, *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*
18. Some would question whether a good God would send anyone to hell. I will tell you that a good God will not, because Jesus came to die for our sins. **Matthew 25:41**, *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*
19. God cannot allow sin to go into Heaven. **Luke 5:32**, *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*
20. We cannot go to Heaven unless we accept God simple plan of salvation. God is Holy and when we sit in His presence we must be holy, by being in Christ. **1 Peter 1:16**, *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*
21. He is a God of justice. Sin must be judged. **Romans 6:23**, *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
22. He is a God of love. He sent His only begotten Son to come and die in our place. **John 3:16**, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
23. He has given us a total pardon and total forgiveness and imputed unto us His righteousness which guarantees us eternal life. He sets us free. **2 Corinthians 5:17**, *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* **James 2:23**, *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.*
24. We are free in Him, who is the head of all principalities. **Colossians 2:10**, *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:* **John 8:36**, *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*
25. In the Old Testament prophecies, the Lord Jesus Christ was referred to as one who would be a **tender plant**. **Isaiah 53:2**, *For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*
26. God the Father is the care-taker of the Vine. He takes care of the branches as well. In order for the branches to bear fruit they must be joined to the vine.
27. This is something that is very necessary for us to see that there is a break here. God has talked about salvation and that no one can go to Heaven who does not come to Jesus for salvation.
28. This next verse does not speak of salvation, it speaks of fruit bearing. If you do not get that you are going to think that this verse teaches one can lose their salvation, which is totally false doctrine and foreign to the Word of God.

b. Every branch in me.

1. **John 15:2**, Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
2. It is very necessary for us to see the key word is **in me**. Jesus told us in the previous verse that He is the True Vine and the Father is the Husbandman. He is the one who saves and the Father is the care-taker of the Vine. He is the keeper if you will. The one who provides salvation for us. **John 18:9**, That the

saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

3. Once we are **in Christ**, He expects us to bear fruit. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
4. What does He take us away from? He **does not** take salvation away from us, because salvation is in Christ. **He takes us away from fruit bearing.** He takes many believers off the field that are not bearing a testimony for His Son Jesus Christ.
5. When we keep this verse in context, it says every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. – We demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit. I do not believe this is talking about soul winning. Soul winning is a by-product of fruit bearing. **Every Christian should be bearing fruit. Galatians 5:22-23, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23: Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.**
6. When we bear fruit, we are commending men and women to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Proverbs 11:30, The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.**
7. Fruit is mentioned no less than six times in the first 10 verses. In another verse, it says there are degrees of fruit; fruit, more fruit and much fruit and it is dealing with fruit bearing not salvation.

c. Now ye are clean through the word.

1. **John 15:3, Now ye are clean through the word** which I have spoken unto you.
2. God goes back and tells us that the purging process is the Word of God which is the cleansing agent. He cleans us up every single moment of every single day when we allow the Word of God to penetrate our heart. **1 Peter 1:22-23, Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.**
3. The Word of God is our cleansing agent. ye are clean through the word. Psalms 119:9, Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.
4. God saves us by the Word and He keeps us clean by the Word and as a result of being clean by the Word we can be fruit bearing believers.
5. **Psalms 119:67, Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. Psalms 119:71, It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.** God uses suffering in the life of a believer sometimes, in order to get us close to Him. From time to time, He needs to get our attention.
6. We must understand very clearly the aforementioned verse talks about the Word of God and the role it plays in our lives.

d. Abide in me, and I in you.

1. **John 15:4, Abide in me, and I in you.** As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
2. The emphasis of this verse is to abide in Christ which is our salvation. Also note

that we are to abide in the vine which represents fellowship.

3. We are **in Christ** for salvation. He subtracts all of our sin, past, present, future and gives us His righteousness. Now we are to abide in the vine which means constant fellowship, constant communion on a daily basis. **Galatians 5:16**, *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*
4. He speaks of the branch that is attached to the vine and it cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine. *the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*
5. There is that term **in me** again. We can do nothing outside of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
6. It is very important we understand and see that very clearly.

e. I am the vine, ye are the branches.

1. **John 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.*
2. Emphatically He tells us that without Him, nothing can be accomplished.
3. There are so many believers that want to operate outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. They get their instruction from men and women and not from the Preserved Word of God.
4. It is necessary for us to see He takes care of business for us. *for without me ye can do nothing.*
5. We do have a free will; we can break fellowship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. When we do so, we cannot bring forth fruit. **Mark 4:8**, *And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.* What He is looking for is hundredfold Christians.

f. If a man abide not in me.

1. **John 15:6**, **If a man abide not in me,** *he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*
2. This speaks of fruit-bearing. This is not speaking of losing one's salvation. We have to be in Christ in order to be saved therefore He gives us a relationship which is peace with God. **Romans 5:1**, *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*
3. We **must** abide in Christ in order to produce fruit. **1 Corinthians 3:11-13**, *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12: Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13: Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.* This is talking about works of the believer. This is at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This is what we will see there.
4. Fire purifies gold – it makes it more precious. Wood, hay and stubble will go up in smoke and be consumed.
5. **1 Corinthians 3:14**, **If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.** – *This is talking about rewards not salvation.* Rewards will be given at the Judgment Seat of Christ for the fruit in our lives. The fruit is

whatever He has called us to do; providing we have been faithful to the calling or task. **1 Corinthians 4:2**, *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

6. A branch that is not abiding in Christ is cast forth and is withered and is gathered and burned. That Means our works are going to be tested by fire. **1 Corinthians 3:13**, *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*
7. Don't miss the fact that this is not about salvation.
8. Losing rewards is something like that song I am not fond of, Lord, give me a cabin in the corner of glory land.
9. The Lord wants us to produce fruit.

g. If ye abide in me.

1. **John 15:7-8**, *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8: Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*
2. What a marvelous promise God has given to us! Don't miss the steps in order to get answers to our prayers.
 - a. *If ye abide in me,*
 - b. *my words abide in you* – we are obedient to the will of God – we are where He has called us to be.
 - c. *ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* – **James 5:16**, *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* This healing has nothing to do with physical healing of the body, but it speaks directly to the sin sick soul. The following verse are abundantly clear to those that seek truth. **Isaiah 53:5**, *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 1 Peter 2:24*, *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*
3. God wants us to do His will – He wants us to be obedient, He wants to be glorified in our actions.
4. We are all here to glorify our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Isaiah 43:7**, *Even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.*
5. Even the Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ; He does not speak of Himself. **John 16:13**, *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

h. As the Father hath loved me.

1. **John 15:9-11**, *As the Father hath loved me,* so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. **10:** *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11:* *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy*

might be full.

2. The Lord wants us to have a good time. He wants us to enjoy His salvation. He has provided for us that we might have the abundant life here on Earth. **John 10:10**, *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*
3. Few believers ever reach into the depths of God's abundant living. The idea is we cannot live the Christian life, we must allow the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life through us.
4. When we do, it is a lot of fun as we go through life.
5. Working for the Lord should not be stressful. We should not allow Satan to steal our joy. *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.* **Nehemiah 8:10**, *Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*
6. We should abide in His love. It gives us joy. **1 Peter 1:8**, *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:* **James 1:2**, *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

i. This is my commandment.

1. **John 15:12**, **This is my commandment,** *That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*
2. The Lord Jesus Christ does not like to see Christians with a sad countenance, bad attitudes and in a stressed out condition. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**, *Rejoice evermore. 17: Pray without ceasing. 18: In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*
3. He wants us to be obedient and stay within His perfect will for our lives.
4. The love we express for the Lord Jesus Christ should also be love we express for our fellow believers.
5. I am amazed at how many believers don't love other believers. **1 Peter 1:22**, *Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*

j. Greater love hath no man than this.

1. **John 15:13-14**, **Greater love hath no man than this,** *that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14: Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*
2. Jesus, not only laid down His life for His friends, but He also laid it down for the Pharisees who did not like Him and the Sadducees who did not understand Him.
3. Jesus laid down His life for those of us who were unsaved and have now come to a saving knowledge of God's Son.
4. It is absolutely amazing what He has done for us.
5. Once we come to know Him as personal Saviour, we can then go to work in His vineyard and do a work for Him.
6. On this Memorial Day we remember those who have paid the supreme

sacrifice so that we can enjoy the many blessings in our great country. Truly they have laid down their lives for their friends.

4. CONCLUSION

- a. Do you know the Saviour? If you do not know Jesus Christ as personal Saviour today needs to be your day of salvation.
- b. We thank God for the salvation plan.
- c. **Romans 3:23**, *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*
- d. **Romans 3:10**, *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*
- e. **Romans 10:9-10**, *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*
- f. **John 15:13**, **Greater love hath no man than this**, *that a man lay down his life for his friends.*
- g. Thank God for those who have laid down their lives so we can continue to have freedom in America! The beautiful array of American flags on our church lawn demonstrates to the world the freedom that we have in America.
- h. Would you please stand?

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