

“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance;

Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.”

2nd Peter 1:12-15

Remembrance is employed three times in this passage, Peter wants the early Christians to never forget the things that he has taught...he stirs them up to remember.

In a civil national sense this season of the year stirs up our minds, teaches us never to forget the sacrifices made that we might have a freedom.

It is a most noble and dignified season.

REMEMBRANCE; Our Duty to Both God and Man

## **1: REMEMBERING IS A CIVIL DUTY**

We are members of a society, of a nation, which has set aside this time to be a season of remembrance.

Therefore it is our national duty as citizens of this United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to remember those who died in defence of this realm.

It is our national duty because it is not by accident we are British tonight. The Union Flag flies over these six counties because God by His sovereignty has made us British. I do not accept that I am British because of an historic accident or as a consequence of English interference in the affairs of Ireland. I believe that I am a subject of Her Majesty because God has made me British. Therefore to deny us our national identity is to remove our God-given privilege and birthright.

I could talk for some length about the divine superintendence over the development of this United Kingdom from King Alfred who saw off the Vikings, translated the scripture into English, John Wycliffe, who sent

preachers throughout these islands, the Reformation which saw the churches separate from Rome, to the civil war which made Parliament supreme, to the Acts of Union which made us one nation - its an incredible story and it was this book, the Bible, which lay at the heart of Britain's emergence from the darkness and superstition of the middle ages, which made this nation great - truths sadly neglected today.

God preserved this nation for a purpose - therefore we salute all those gave their lives for our country.

“I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,  
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love;  
The love that asks no questions, the love that stands the test,  
That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;  
The love that never falters, the love that pays the price,  
The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.”

## **2: REMEMBERING IS A MORAL DUTY**

There is a moral duty associated with remembering.

Even those who refuse to accept the validity of Scripture and the message of the Christian Gospel will gladly remember the war dead because gratitude is a noble virtue. To refuse to say thank you is a most inhuman thing. If we remember those who grant us relatively small but thoughtful and loving gifts how much greater must our gratitude not be for those who have given their lives for our freedoms.

During the first fifty years of the Twentieth Century Europe was delivered from German expansionism, which was aimed at removing liberty from all the nations of this continent. The horrors of the holocaust demonstrated just how dangerous and brutal German domination would have been.

The Northern Ireland Troubles was not a war in the regular sense. A war is between two nations - with interests that clash - we don't use the term murder when there is a war (unless war crimes have been committed) - BUT what happened here was an attempt by terrorists to overthrow this state by violence - to create fear, to perpetrate genocide, to kill honest hard working people and murder was perpetrated as thousands died...and these ex service people who are with us tonight stood in the gap...exposed themselves to terrible risks, and they did it in order that the terrorists would fail.

We have a moral duty to reflect and remember those who died and say thank you to those who served.

### **3: REMEMBERING IS A COMFORTING DUTY**

Remembering is so important for those who personally lost loved ones in conflict.

Remembrance began after World War One - with hundreds of thousands of deaths across the nation, with hardly a family untouched something had to be done in order to help families move on. The poppy symbol was created... because the poppies were growing in France and Belgium where many had fallen, a sad and forlorn and delicate symbol of life and loss and hope.

This is acutely important this year in the wake of what has happened in Afghanistan.

Many who have lost loved ones to the Taliban, or who served feel the sense of failure, that Afghanistan is returning to rule by the very people who took the lives of their family, friends and comrades.

We need to stand with those families in this hour of need and lend our support.

Those who served in Afghanistan did so with distinction, they did not fail, they did their duty - the subsequent failings of politicians, of foreign policy and of diplomacy is not the responsibility of those who gallantly served to make the world a better place.

There is another group of people we should stand with and comfort...those who have lost loved ones during our troubled recent history, and who feel left out and marginalised by the current political process in our nation.

Above all we pray at this time.

For the suffering, for the bereaved and we pray that wicked people will be brought to justice.

### **4: REMEMBERING IS AN ASPIRATIONAL DUTY**

What do we aspire for as we remember?

In looking back we look forward with determination that we will do all in our power to ensure that our nation will never be scarred by war again.

There is nothing glorious about war...it reflects the brokenness of our world...the corruption of our world.

Never in the history of humanity has there been peace...war is fought out somewhere in the world at any one time.

Remembering is a warning - exposing our flaws and our frailties.

Sometimes wars are necessary to curb the intentions of those who seek to remove the freedoms of others. But still it is not something a nation should enter lightly.

We aspire for peace and for wise God fearing leaders who will make the appropriate decisions.

We aspire to preach the Gospel - because that alone is the only means whereby this world can know perfect peace.

## **5: REMEMBERING IS A SPIRITUAL DUTY**

It is a God-given duty to remember.

We remember today that salvation comes through suffering.

Tonight the Kohima Epitaph was read:

“When you go home tell them of us and say,  
For your tomorrow, we gave our today”

In March 1944 the Japanese 31st Division invaded through Burma entering India, placing the British Empire forces under considerable strain.

The crucial battle was fought at Kohima when the British and Indian troops fought against a force which outnumbered them. There was a terrible loss of life but the Japanese forces were driven back and the tide of the war in the east was overturned. A disastrous situation was saved.

Sin is a greater disaster facing humanity. It destroys lives, wrecks homes, and it sends men and women to Hell

Jesus died to save us from sin.

He gave His life as a young man, thirty three years of age that we might have a tomorrow, that we might have eternal life. Is your hope found in Him tonight?