



INTRO

Memorial Day is the day we remember those who died in defense of our country and principles— a day to remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. We commemorate the day with family, friends, and food—enjoying the joyfulness that freedom provides, a freedom preserved by those who sacrificed.

For believers, the idea of commemoration should come natural to us. It’s written into the DNA of our faith. Use the upcoming Memorial Day to tap into the spirit of personal commemoration for the work God has done in your life and the lives of your students.

MATERIALS

- Student pages for each student
- A Bible for each student
- Pen or pencil

Optional: Cans of Play-Doh (one can per student); see optional activity under Putting Into Practice

OPEN

After your group has gathered, open by discussing these questions:

How does your family celebrate Memorial Day?

Does anyone know the history of Memorial Day?

What is the purpose of Memorial Day?

Can you think of any Memorial Day-type events in the Bible, events and actions to commemorate sacrifice and work done on behalf of others?

DIGGING IN

Share:

For believers, the idea of commemoration should come natural to us. It’s written into the DNA of our faith. Many of Israel’s instituted actions were to be done as a memorial for what God had done in their past: Passover, Joshua’s 12 stones, Samuel’s Ebenezer.

Invite students to read from their Bibles the passages noted on their student pages. As they read, have them note the following:

1. What is to be remembered?
2. What action is to trigger the remembrance?



TAKING IT INWARD

After students have read the passages, use these questions to process what they found.

What types of things were being remembered?

What are some of the different actions used to trigger the remembrances?

Why do you think these memorials were instituted?

What can we do today to institute our own memorials?

The following exercise will help your students create a personal memorial to trigger remembrance and gratitude for what God has done in their lives.

Reflect for a few minutes on your faith journey. What has God done for you in your journey?

Which of these traits or works of God have you experienced? By the way, this is a short list. Feel free to add your own.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Redemption</i> | <i>Grace</i> |
| <i>Forgiveness</i> | <i>Mercy</i> |
| <i>Restoration</i> | <i>Unconditional love</i> |

What memorial can you institute that will remind you of what God has done for you?

Here are some examples:

- 1. Actual altar:** A place in your home where you can simply kneel, sit, recline in solitude and remember what God has done.
- 2. Physical reminder (“a sign”):** a bracelet, a stone, a refrigerator magnet, a picture of a rainbow for your e-device wallpaper—something that is reminiscent of the key traits and works of God in your life. Of course, an actual rainbow is a good reminder, too.
- 3. Communion:** Jesus gave us an act of commemoration when He repurposed the Passover meal, saying “Do this in remembrance of me” to remember the sacrifice He made for us.
- 4. Behavior:** Changed behavior may be the best altar—behavior that causes those around us to ask “why”? Why do you strive for sexual purity? Why do you give up a weekend morning of extra sleep to go to church? Why don’t you complain like all the other workers?

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

- Invite students to get hyper-practical in establishing a memorial that reminds them of what God has done for them.
- Invite them to pick from the examples you just shared, or create something entirely different.

Optional: Making a Memorial

Set out several cans of Play-Doh and invite students to grab different colors to make an “altar” that can serve as a reminder of God’s work in their lives. Give students a few minutes to create and then ask them to share about their altars, and how they will use it as a reminder of God’s work.



DIGGING IN

Exodus 12:12-14

1. What is to be remembered?
2. What action is to trigger the remembrance?

Joshua 4:5-7

1. What is to be remembered?
2. What action is to trigger the remembrance?

Exodus 13:7-10

1. What is to be remembered?
2. What action is to trigger the remembrance?

Luke 22:14-20

1. What is to be remembered?
2. What action is to trigger the remembrance?

Leviticus 23:23-25

1. What is to be remembered?
2. What action is to trigger the remembrance?

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

My Memorial: