

## **In Memory Of. . .**

What comes to your mind when you hear a conversation containing the above words? I got to thinking about this when hearing a person talking about the memory of their father. How about the words, remembrance, thankfulness, and anticipation?

This time of the year we often go back to childhood memories of Christmas. I think of days long ago where the whole family was together on the farm. We would go out find a real tree to cut down and decorate. Days of seeing packages under the tree, waking up Christmas morning, and unwrapping those packages. But mostly I long for those days with love ones who are now gone. Those memories are an important part of me and I won't give them up for anything.

There is also the feeling of thankfulness. Being thankful for the above memories. We usually don't long for bad memories but some make us realize how blessed we were. Most people don't grow up in both the city and on a farm but my siblings and I did. Those memories of us going out on the back hill to sleigh ride, or mom's cakes, or of chocolate gravy. Folks who grew up without chocolate gravy don't know what they missed. These "in memory of" feelings can be bittersweet. The longing for those days gone by and being thankful for those memories can be complicated.

Then the phrase "in memory of" can also look to the future in anticipation. We look forward to being with those who have passed away. Frankly, I don't know how atheists and other non-religious people deal with death. They have no hope for their love ones or themselves. In their minds, death is the end of the road. But for those who believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and the resurrection of the dead, there can be anticipation. Such is what Peter mentions in his writing. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by

the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:3-5) We can look forward to being with the faithful saints, with our love one's who lived and died "in the Lord."

Remembrance, thankfulness, and anticipation all come together as we remember His birth, life, and death. We are thankful for His love and willingness to die for each of us. We also anticipate the Day when Jesus returns to take the faithful with Him in the air to meet the Father.

I hope this upcoming year will bring good memories to your mind, blessings to be thankful for, and one in which you can look forward to the return of Christ.-- Dennis Tucker