

The Honor of a Good Name

Dr. Paul Kim

National Chaplain, KWVA

Proverbs 22:1 says: "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold." Every person, school, organization, and entity has a name. We try hard to live up to a name. In the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, the meaning of a name was intimately tied to the person's identity.

The name of America stands for the people, ideals, and history of the nation. As citizens, we honor the name of America by recognizing its symbols, such as the Constitution and the flag. We remember the spiritual legacy of the Pilgrims who landed on our shores 400 years ago in Plymouth, Massachusetts in order to exercise the freedom of religious worship.

At the Korean War Veterans Association, we value the history behind our name. It is our duty to remember the legacy of those who served our nation bravely. Our name is synonymous with the mission to promote, preserve, and pass down the memory of our nation's veterans.

We strive to remember each hero by name. We are to honor those who sacrificially gave up their lives in the Korean War (1950-53) as well as those who continue to serve for Korea's security. Many of their honorable names are permanently etched into various Korean War Memorials such as the one at the Navy Yard in Boston. We eagerly anticipate the commemoration of the Wall of Remembrance at the Korean War Veterans Memorial in our nation's capital next summer.

But the name above all names is that of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Korean War is officially still ongoing as there's only a shaky truce in place. The Eighth U.S. Army has been in Korea ever since in order to maintain this fragile peace. No human effort, however, can attain peace forever. Only in the name of Jesus can we have true peace. In the Bible, the Lord Jesus declared to his disciples saying, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:27). Jesus was born into this world as the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), to take our sins away by His death on the cross.

Jesus has promised to return to rule the world by establishing His everlasting kingdom. The names of past kingdoms have come and gone, many already forgotten. But the name of Jesus remains forever. Apostle Paul encouraged us in his epistle (Philippians 2:10-11), "So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." We are to abide in the honorable name of Jesus and to worship Him until He calls our names unto Himself. He desires to know each one of us by name through having a personal saving relationship with Him.

You might have worked all your life in order to have your name be honorable in the sight of your family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. In American military history there are only a handful of names that surpass the reputation and status of Generals Douglas MacArthur and Dwight D. Eisenhower. I have had the privilege of visiting their worthwhile memorials, the MacArthur Museum and Eisenhower Presidential Library. While we strive to be men of honor like them, in the end what is the most important? It is that our name is written in the Book of Life. What good is an honorable name if you end your life eternally separated from the God of creation? "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15). In order to avoid the eternal lake of fire, you need to turn to the Good News of salvation through repentance of your sin and embrace the saving name of Jesus Christ.

