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Commanded to Remember

Text: 2 Timothy 2:1-13, 14a; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26



Memory. It is an asset to be treasured. There are certain items we should either commit to memory OR make sure we have written down.

Birthdays. Anniversaries. Names.

**Illus.**

Two elderly couples have their weekly meet up at a table in their local park.

They take a seat, the ladies chat with one another across the table, as do the men.

Fred asks Harold, "Are you still going to that memory clinic?"

Harold says "Yes, it's been helping my memory a lot, I recommend you come along to our next session".

"What do they do there?" asks Fred.

"They teach us to remember things through word association" replies Harold.

Fred says "I might have to give it a try. What's the name of the clinic?"

Harold pauses for a while, trying to remember.

He says "Ummm, ahh, hang on... um... what's the name of that beautiful flower, the one that has thorns?"

Fred says, "That'd be a rose, Harold”.

Harold says, “that’s right, Rose”. He then turns to his wife and says "Rose, what's the name of that clinic I go to?"

**Sometimes we *cannot*  remember. Worse: sometimes we *will not*  remember.**

Pastor Timothy has been left in Ephesus to shepherd the believers there (1 Timothy 1:3). Paul **remembers** Timothy’s *faith* (2 Timothy 1:5) and Timothy’s *formation* (2 Timothy 1:5b-6).

Paul not only *remembers* Timothy but urges *Timothy* to remember what is expected of *Timothy*! (2 Timothy 2:8, 14).

In Paul’s letter to believers in Corinth, in that passage often read at a communion service, Paul quotes Jesus:

“Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; **do this in remembrance of Me”.**In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. **This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”** (1 Corinthians 11:24-25)

Remember=Greek, *mnemoneuo* (mnay-mon-yoo’-o)- to rehearse, make mention, be mindful.

Why is this command in Paul’s letter to Timothy?

Why am I bringing this to you today? Do we all need to be reminded to be mindful? Please ask me why I am bringing this to you.

Please ask me.

I’m glad you asked.

I thought I’d give you two or three reasons, but I have only one.

We are commanded to remember because spiritual amnesia, especially regarding the person and work of Jesus the Christ, is real.*...*and common...and dangerous.

This tendency to forget was prevalent in both Old Testament times and New.

Psalm 78:1-7, esp. 7

Joshua 4:1-6, 21; esp. 6, 21

The more formally educated we become, the more material success we achieve, the more obstacles we overcome, the prouder we seem to get.

Paul says, “remember”.

One of His last nights on the earth during his earthly ministry, our Lord instructed His disciples to remember Him. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Jesus knew that as His followers went along, it would be easy...and common, for them to forget! One of the Holy Spirit’s ministries in the believer’s life is that He will remind us of what Jesus said and taught

John 14:26

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things,* ***and bring to your remembrance all things that I have said to you.***

What are the blessings of remembering? When the women who loved Jesus went to anoint His body after his burial remembered, all was changed for them (Luke 24:6, 8)!

 To fail to remember was to disregard God’s covenant. It was also to invite God’s judgement. We invite calamity in on ourselves when we forget God. (Jeremiah 3:21; 13:25; 18:15)

In the scriptures, remembering is not confined to the past. Paul urges the believers in Colosse to, in the present, remember his chains (Colossians 4:18)

We can even remember, or be reminded of, our future (Hebrews 11:22).

An old couple was realizing they were losing their memory.

They decided they would go to a doctor to see about the problem.

The doctor said “Well, there isn’t very much I can do, but you could try one thing.”

“What’s that?” They said.

“You could try writing everything down, so if you ever forgot something, you would have a reference.”

The old couple took this into consideration, though the old man was skeptical.

One day, the couple was sitting on their front porch.

The old man said to his wife,

“You know, I feel like some ice cream. I’m going to go get some.”

“Get me some too.” The woman said. “Vanilla with chocolate sprinkles.”

The man headed in, but the old woman called him before he could fully enter the house and said “Wait, don’t you think you should do what our doctor said and write this down?”

“Bah, I’ll be fine!” he said.

15 minutes later the man returned to his wife with a plate of bacon and eggs.

“Ugh!” the woman said. “I can’t believe this! I told you to write this down, but you refused!”

“What did I forget?” He said.

The woman, angrily, yelled to his face.

“You forgot the toast!”

Thankfully, God doesn’t forget. God remembers His covenant- Psalm 105:8; 106:45; 111:5.

In response, the people of God are **commanded to remember**-

Psalm 78:35

*Then they remembered that God was their rock, and the Most High God their Redeemer.*

It has been said, “God gives...and *for*gives. Humans get and *for*get.”

**Illus.**

Early Saturday morning, November 12, 1986, Jamie Estep was traveling from her home in Stillwater, Oklahoma to work the morning shift at the restaurant by the interstate. As she rounded the last curve before she would turn onto the frontage road, a car in her lane speeding at over 90 miles per hour came toward her. Jamie swerved her car but could not avoid the oncoming vehicle. She was struck on the driver's side. The young, vivacious teenager, with bright blue eyes and even a brighter future, was killed instantly. The driver of the speeding vehicle, Lukas Jones, was going home from an all-night party with his friends. He was drunk. While thrown from his car at the point of impact, he walked away from the accident with only scrapes, bruises, and a broken arm.

Lukas was not a bad 17-year-old. In fact, he was an honor-roll student and a member of the band. He, on this night, simply had too many beers and should not have been driving a car. He made a tragic mistake.

At his trial, witnesses testified of Lukas's achievements in the classroom, his service to the community, his kind heart, his church involvement. The prosecuting attorney reminded the court that while all of these facts about Lukas may be true, he, nevertheless, drove a car that exceeded the speed limit while intoxicated and took the life of an innocent victim. Punishment was needed.

The court waited in anticipation for the judge's verdict in the case. When the judge spoke from his bench, he said to a remorseful Lukas Jones, "Lukas, as the witnesses have testified, you are a decent young man. And from your own statement, I realize that you are truly sorry for the crime you have committed. I want to believe that, as you say, you will never touch alcohol again.

"But," and there was a long pause, "a young, innocent girl is dead because of your irresponsibility. And nothing you can do will bring her back. Her friends and family mourn her loss. I, therefore, sentence you to two years in the juvenile center. Since you have already spent sixteen months, the balance of your time will be eight months." A gasp came over the courtroom from Jamie's family thinking the sentence was not severe enough. "And," the judge went on, "for the rest of your natural life, every year on November 12, you are to go to the scene where you plowed into Jamie's car and think about your actions. Son, I don't want you to ever forget what you have done. I want you to recall your poor judgment, the life that was taken, and your part in that."

Paul tells Timothy to remember Jesus and to remind the saints in Ephesus to do the same. Every time we approach the Lord’s table, we are compelled to remember. We are not commanded, like Lukas Jones was, to go to the scene of the crime every year and recall what happened there. Instead, we are to daily call to remembrance the life and the death of Christ, who loved and loves us.

We are commanded to remember because spiritual amnesia, especially regarding the person and work of Jesus the Christ, is real.*...*and common...and dangerous.

Remember that!

Amen