

THE DISCIPLINE OF REMEMBERING: REMEMBER!

(Joshua 4)

Series: "The Disciplines of a Godly Life" (Part 14)

- ...God made us in His likeness and His image. David said it so well in Psalm 139, "We are fearfully and wonderfully made." Indeed! Consider your amazing brain. It is so "wonderful" in that this electrical-chemical organ is the operational center of your body, and houses your soul. (That's the real you!!!)
- ...Your brain has the amazing ability to process thought, make true decisions, and remember by storing all. One study revealed that a person never forgets anything. Everything you ever learned and experienced is stored. You ask, "Why can't I remember?" Ours is not a memory problem, it's a retrieval issue. It's there, somewhere.
- ...It is so important to remember what the Lord has done for you! It is essential, enabling you to continue to walk forward through the dangers and difficulties of life. There was a day when God provided an aid to memory.

TWO OBSERVATIONS MOVING US TO INTENTIONALLY REMEMBER ALL GOD HAS DONE FOR US. For our pitiful tendency is to forget God's many blessings.

...Remember, God is faithful, He was in days long gone, He is today, and He will be in all your tomorrows!!!

I. The Lord Is Pleased When We Remember His Goodness To Us. (4:1-20)

- A. The 40 years of wandering aimlessly in the wilderness were finally over. The younger generation was now at the Jordan River ready to cross over into the Land of Promise.
 - ...Moses was now dead. The sin of unbelief had caused the loss of time and a whole generation.
 - 1. There were probably 1.5 million men, women, and children at the river.
 - ...The oldest were children 40 years earlier when their parents crossed the Red Sea.
 - 2. The river was at flood-stage, impossible to cross. No bridges or tunnels...
- B. Knowing our tendency to forget, God instructed Joshua to provide a memory aid as a public memorial for the miracle He had performed. (vv.3-7)
 - 1. God directed that 12 men take a rock from the riverbed to be part of the memorial.
 - ...One man from each tribe... showing that all of Israel was involved in this act.
 - 2. The chosen stones had watermarks on them, for they had been in the river's current for years. All of this is real history, not imaginary; it was a real miraculous river crossing. This was similar to their parents crossing of the Red Sea, 40 years earlier.
 - 3. The rocks were to be carried to Gilgal and then setup as a memorial of remembrance.
 - ...This sign, symbol, would remind God's people of His presence and blessing.
 - ...This would provide a teaching tool for parents to tell the story of the Lord's power and presence to their children. This is still God's plan, for moms and dads to tell the glory and wonder of Jesus to their children. (See Deuteronomy 6)
- C. Joshua went even further than what the Lord had commanded, as he erected a 2nd memorial in the river where the priests had stood holding the Ark of the Covenant. (v.9)
 - ...In Lake Geneva in Switzerland, there is a memorial in the lake that says: "When you see this weep." (A drought) Joshua's memorial was the opposite: When you see this rejoice!

II. The Results of Intentionally Remembering God's Care Are Many. (vv.21-24)

...Though there are many, only two are mentioned in this narrative.

- A. Encouragement: When we remember God's unseen hand of blessing in our former days, we draw strength, comfort, and confidence for today. (vv.21-23)
 1. The memorial reminded them of God's faithfulness to them and provided faith to trust Him now. They were now sleeping in a dangerous land, enemies everywhere.
...God had brought them this far, and would not abandon them.
...This is what David did when facing Goliath as he approached the giant.
 2. Even the future generations who had not crossed the river would be encouraged to diligently trust the Lord, having seen the visual reminders of His care.
- B. God is glorified: The continuing testimony of God's mighty power in stopping the mighty river would eventually be known by the whole world. (v. 24) (We are talking about it here today!!!)
...Wherever and whenever people would hear about this, God would be glorified.

SO WHAT? WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD THIS MAKE IN YOUR LIFE?

1. If you know Jesus as your Savior and Lord He is actively caring for you. He is working His good will in you by providing, caring, protecting, and enabling you to live for Christ. It is important for you to often reflect and remember specifically the things He has done for you.
2. Do whatever you must to help aid you in remembering God's blessings. Use a journal, prayer book, pictures and photographs, signs and symbols of all sorts, and any visual that prompts you to stop and recall God's unseen hand in your former days.
3. By remembering, your lips will sound forth with grateful thanksgiving and praise. As you remember such things, you will grow in your trust of God to carry you through the trials of today. He was faithful then, I will trust Him today.
4. Jesus commands all people everywhere to repent and believe upon Him as Savior and Lord. Have you done so? You must. Pray that God opens the eyes of your heart so that you see your great need of Jesus. Then call upon Him, He is "The friend of sinners," and He will save you from all your sin. Don't delay.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree that it seems to be our tendency to forget God's many acts of care and blessings of yesterday? What is the problem? Can you share even one thing the Lord did in your life, yet for all practical purposes you hardly think about it?
2. What kind of things can you think of that might provide an aid to remembering God's care? How specifically might they help?
3. Our Bible's provide many examples of things that prompt our memories. Can you name several of them? These may be objects or symbols that point to our Lord
4. What is the danger of forgetting to remember? Is danger too strong of a word? In a word, how does Psalm 106 point out the awful consequence of forgetting?