

Remember To Forget

Introduction:

- A. Gen.41:51– “51 And Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh: For, [said he], **God hath made me forget** all my toil, and all my father’s house.”
- B. Some things should be forgotten.
- C. Having considered last week some things we must Not Forget to Remember, this week let us look at the other side of the coin and consider some things we must Remember to Forget.

I. Past Mistakes.

- A. The example of Paul.
 - 1. Paul’s life before Christ was filled with serious blunders and mistakes – 1 Tim.1:13-15.
 - 2. With such tragic and awful mistakes and sins in his past, how could Paul continue on?
 - 3. Forgetting was the key to Paul’s success as a Christian – Phil.3:13,14.
- B. God forgives and forgets our sins and remembers them no more – Heb.8:12; 10:17.
 - 1. If God is willing to forget and remember my sins no more, certainly I can forget them and put them behind me so that their memory does not haunt and hinder me for the rest of my life.

II. Past Troubles.

- A. To many allow their past troubles and difficulties to drown them in despair.
 - 1. How many times do we waste our lives by dredging up past troubles?
- B. We need to remember to forget our past troubles
 - 1. Joseph could have wasted his life dwelling on all the troubles he suffered – Gen.41:51.
- C. God’s blessings today are the means to forgetting our problems of yesterday – Eccl.5:18-20.
 - 1. cf. Jn.16:21; Isa.65:16,17.
- D. Realizing God’s rich blessings He has showered on us and that past troubles helped to make us better servants of the Lord, let us remember to forget those troubles of the past.

III. Past Hurts.

- A. Christians are to be forgiving – Eph.4:32.
 - 1. If God forgives and “remembers no more” we should forgive in like manner as His dear children – Heb.8:12; 10:17; Eph.5:1.
 - 2. To forgive some things requires that they be dropped from the Christian’s memory.
- B. “The remedy for wrongs is to forget them” – Publilius Syrus.
 - 1. “A retentive memory may be a good thing, but the ability to forget is the true token of greatness” – Elbert Hubbard.
 - 2. Some will not forget past hurts or offences.
- C. How to remember to forget.
 - 1. When people hurt us and then apologize, we may say that we forgive them, but often we let our mind continue to chew on past insults.
 - 2. In 1 Corinthians 13:5, Paul declared that love “*thinks no evil.*”
 - a. He was using an accountant’s term that described the recording of figures in a book.
 - b. Love does the opposite – it doesn’t keep a record of wrongs.
 - 3. If you want to remember something, you go over it again and again and again in your mind.
 - a. If we want to remember something we must force ourselves to think about it over and over again.
 - b. But love deliberately and consciously lets go of past hurts and gives them to God.
- D. The Blessings of Forgiving and Forgetting.
 - 1. Forgive and forget.
 - a. Easier said than done, right?

- b. Now studies are showing forgiveness is good medicine.
- c. People who forgive:
 - 1) Benefit from better immune functioning and lower blood pressure.
 - 2) Have better mental health than people who do not forgive.
 - 3) Feel better physically.
 - 4) Have lower amounts of anger and fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression.
 - 5) Maintain more satisfying and long-lasting relationships.
- 2. Further benefits.
 - a. Forgiveness deals with our emotional response toward an offender.
 - b. Forgiveness offers a chance at reconciliation.
 - c. The alternative to forgiveness is, in the end, a ceaseless process of hurt, bitterness, anger, resentment and self-destruction.

IV. Past Victories.

- A. Perhaps one of the most surprising things we should forget is past victories.
 - 1. Paul spoke of his past successes and achievements – Phil.3:4-8.
 - 2. He explained he had to put these past attainments behind him and forget them – Phil.3:13,14.
 - 3. Why?
 - a. Because he could not boast or rely upon what he was or what he had done in the past to do what he needed to do in the present and gain the reward of heaven in the future.
- B. There are many who are resting on their laurels busy remembering their past glories.
 - 1. If you keep looking back, you can't make spiritual progress – Lk.9:62.
 - 2. In Philippians 3 the apostle Paul chose to forget his past, with its success.
 - a. What mattered to him most was keeping his eyes on the goal of gaining Christ's approval.
 - 3. That kind of mindset is one sure mark of Christian maturity.
 - a. It's what God is working to develop in our lives – Phil.3:13-15.
 - b. We can't forget our past, of course, but we don't have to live in it.

Conclusion:

- A. Do you remember to forget your past mistakes, your past troubles, your past hurts, your past victories?