

Font colors:

- Green: slide markers
- Red – Jesus’ words – ignore color
- Blue – scripture – ignore color, include underlines
- Section titles - ignore

Introduction

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Remembering

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- Monday is Memorial Day.
- It is a national day of remembering those who gave their lives serving in the military.
- We also honor those who served in the armed forces as well as remember our loved ones who are no longer with us.
- In summary, Monday is a day that we remember.

- However, is remembering something we do only once a year?
- Of course not.
- To survive in this world, there are tons of things to remember like “where did I put my keys”?
- There are so many things to remember that we are not conscious of the significant role that our memory plays throughout our existence.

Memory and Faith

- This includes the critical role that our memory plays in our faith.
- This includes why do we believe in God?
 - One reason we believe in God is because we have been taught about God.
 - However, to last, our belief in God must be reinforced based on our memory.
 - In other words, for us to continue to believe in God we remember our history with God.
 - We remember what God has done.
 - We remember that God has been faithful to us in the past.
 - Because we remember his faithfulness, we have a trusting relationship with him and believe that in the future, God will do what he has promised to do.
- Today, I want to look at seven aspects of our faith given in the Bible about remembering.

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1. Remembering God's Deeds
2. Remembering God's Law
3. Remembering The Importance of Personal Testimony
4. Our Communal Remembrance
5. The Danger of Forgetting God
6. Renewing Our Mind (our memory) Through Scripture
7. Help We Get Remembering God Through The Holy Spirit

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- By reviewing these things, we'll remember who God is and his significance for us
 - Which will deepen our faith.

Remembering God's Deeds

- Remembering what God has done is not just some idle observation.
- God tells us in the Bible to remember what he has done!
- In Deuteronomy 5, before God gives us the Ten Commandments, he reminds us of what he has done.
- In Deuteronomy 5:6 (NIV) is:
⁶“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.
- What God has done in the past, rescuing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, is a statement of God’s character, and God’s people are reminded of this again and again.
- God reminds of us this because he wants us to remember.
- By remembering what God has done, we remember he hears us, his power to act, the goodness of his actions, and his love for us.
 - Because of all of this, we should listen to him.
- A few verses later, God is even more specific about this.
- In Deuteronomy 5:15, when giving us the 7th commandment – to keep the Sabbath – he interjects:

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¹⁵Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

Therefore, the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. (Deuteronomy 5:15, NIV)

End Slide

- The point is that God has done great things and therefore we should obey him.

Remembering God's Law

- Remembering what God has done for us creates a relationship between us and God.
- But there is more to remember.
- Not only are we to remember what God has done but also what God has taught us.
- To maintain the two-sided relationship that God's actions created, we must do our part and learn how to behave.
- Because our relationship with God is linked to obedience, God gives the Ten Commandments only after reminding us of what he has done.
 - Then we are ready to learn how we should behave.
- Not only must we remember but it must be passed down to future generations.
- In Deuteronomy 6, God says in v. 6:

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⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, NIV)

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- These commands are to be all around us so we cannot help but remember them.
(pause)

The Importance of Personal Testimony

- Another dimension of our faith associated with remembering is the importance of personal testimony.
- Much of the Bible is one person sharing their testimony of what God has done with someone else.
- In fact, we are commanded to tell others what God has done.
- Psalm 105:1 says:

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¹Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done. (Psalm 105:1, NIV)

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- When we witness to others about God both we and others are encouraged.

Communal Remembrance

- Remembering what God has done is not only something that we do as an individual, pass down to our children, and tell others about but
 - like our faith in Christ, it is a communal activity.
- In fact, it is an important aspect of gathering for the worship of God.
- The Bible often speaks of communal gatherings for the purpose of remembering God's goodness and provisions.
- In the Old Testament, the Passover feast is a significant example, where Israelites gathered annually to remember their deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 12:14).
- As a Christian, the pinnacle of remembering is our celebration of the Lord's Supper.
- At the Last Supper, a communal meal, Jesus commanded us to remember. In 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 Paul writes:

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²³ ... The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."
(1 Corinthians 11:23–25, NIV)

Or

²³ I received a tradition from the Lord, which I also handed on to you: on the night on which he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread. ²⁴ After giving thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this to remember me."

²⁵ He did the same thing with the cup, after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Every time you drink it, do this to remember me." (1 Corinthians 11:23–25, CEB)

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- We celebrate the Lord's Supper not as an individual act but as a communal act with a body of believers in Jesus.
- It cements our beliefs both in what Jesus has already done for us and God's promise for our future of eternal life.
- Remembering what God has done is important from both an individual and a communal perspective.

Todd's Story of the Sacrifice of the Mass

- I have a memory of how God touched me in a communal worship service in my youth.
- As I think I've mentioned before, I grew up Roman Catholic.
- I attended the local catholic grade school.
- On the church grounds there was both a church and a school.
- At some point I got into the habit of leaving my home early for school and attending daily mass in the church.
- The service was about 7:00 am but I was an early riser.
- Why? I don't know. The Holy Spirit touched me to do this.
- Daily masses were fairly short at 30-40 minutes and the ritual of the service was very fixed.
- A mass is basically a celebration/reenactment of Jesus' death upon the cross.
- I remember that the Holy Spirit touched me during these services, and I gained a deep emotional appreciation of the sacrifice that Jesus made for me.
- I can't begin to describe the depth to which it touched me.
- This was a communal remembering of Jesus' sacrifice, and it had a great influence on me at the time.
- For me, individual prayer was not as influential as this communal act of faith.

Forgetting God

- The Bible also warns against forgetting God and His commands.
- We can all suffer to a greater or lesser degree from “What have you done for me lately” when thinking of God.
- God’s action can have a profound impact upon us in the moment but over time we can forget.
- I’m reminded of the parable of the sower and the seed that fell upon the rocky soil.

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³Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. (Matthew 13:3–7, NIV)

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- As you may recall, (Matthew 13:3–7) “A farmer went out to sow his seed. ...⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root.”
- We are like this when we do not remember. We forget what God has done for us and our faith withers.

- In v. 7 “[Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants.](#)”
- In this case our memory is not strong enough and is pushed out by other gods that the world around us offers – popularity, entertainment, reputation, and/or money.
- Unless God takes root in our lives, our faith can wither.
- The best defense against the temptation to not obeying God is remembering.
- We must remember that when we don’t obey, when we choose our own way, it doesn’t always work out the best for us.
- We must be reminded of how good our life has been when we remember God’s law and obey it.

(pause)

- As we can see, if we neglect our roots, our memories, we can be doomed.
- Throughout Israel's history, there were times when the people of Israel forgot God's ways and suffered the consequences.
- God warns the Israelites and us about this in Deuteronomy 8:10-17:

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¹⁰[When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. ¹¹Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.](#)

¹²[Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, ¹³and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, ¹⁴then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ... ¹⁷You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.”](#) (Deuteronomy 8:10-17, NIV)

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- This passage in Deuteronomy could have been written for me.
- If I forget what God has done and the blessings that he has given me, I give myself credit.
- My heart becomes proud with how smart I have become.
- I begin to believe that I am the master of my own destiny and that I can accomplish anything that I want.
- I need no one else because I am self sufficient.

(pause)

- God continues with a warning in v. 18:

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¹⁸ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

¹⁹ If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. (Deuteronomy 8:18-19, NIV)

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- Not only will my pride destroy my relationship with God and my memory of how much I need God, but it will be my death before God.
- My faith will die.

- I saw this happen with my faith.
- As I grew older and more independent as I went to college, the prediction of Deuteronomy 8 became true.
- The closeness that I felt as a child in daily mass did not last.
- I forgot.
- As I've shared before, in college, I fell away from an active faith.
- I had forgotten how our God spoke to me and touched me.
- My roots had begun to shrivel over time.
- However, thank God, I didn't stay there forever.
- God continued to reach out to me, and I realized what it was like to not be rooted in God.

Renewed Mind

- If our memory begins to fade, and if the roots of our faith begin to shrivel, as happened in my case,
 - we must remember what we were taught and what we experienced of God's goodness.
- In the New Testament, believers are called to renew their minds, which involves remembering and meditating on truths found in Scripture.
- Otherwise, we can slip into conforming to the culture around us, the secular culture which does not conform to God's will.
- We must renew our memory of what God has done for us and his promises of what he will do for us if we leave behind our will and instead conform to his will.
- Paul tells us in Romans 12:2:

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²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2, NIV)

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- If our roots are so far gone, or if the roots of our faith have never been very deep we must renew our mind with the word of God which Paul says in Phil 4:8 is:

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⁸Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:8, NIV)

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- If we remember these things, we will be renewed.

The Holy Spirit as Remembrance:

- If our roots have shriveled and we feel our faith slip away, we may feel as if we are not up to the task of restoring it.
- The good news is that Jesus promised the Holy Spirit who will help believers remember His teachings and bring them to mind when needed.
- Jesus says in John 14:25-27:

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²⁵ "All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:25-27, NIV)

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- And I would add remember.
- We have help.
- The Holy Spirit will both teach us and remind us of what God said and did.
- God knows that we are weak and need help.
- We should not be ashamed of this but let our shame slip away and be replaced the confidence that because of our relationship with God, that he will help us.
- With God's help, our memory will be made whole.
 - Then we will remember all of what God has done for us,
 - Why we should believe and live in God's will,
 - And we will live in Christ.

Conclusion

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- I hope that this brief study of the importance of remembering for our faith will build your faith.
- I pray that we all embrace remembering this weekend.
- We should remember those who came before us, but it is critical for our faith and our salvation that we remember what God has done for us and who God is for us throughout the rest of our lives.
- Join me in prayer:
 - Dear Jesus,
 - You have given us so much.
 - You are a God of history who made promises to our ancestors and then fulfills those promises.
 - Because you have fulfilled your past promises, we can trust you and be in a relationship with you.
 - Because of your love for us, we can obey your commands to us which strengthen our relationship with you.
 - Thank you for your love and your trust worthiness.
 - Lord, we confess that at times we forget.
 - When this happens, you do not abandon us but send the Holy Spirit to renew our minds.
 - Then the roots of our faith can become renewed, and we can flourish in your love.
 - Thank you for the gift of your patience and your grace.
- We are yours, now and forever.
- Amen.