Spiritual Reminders



2 Peter 1:12-15
1/25/09

Introduction: (v.13-14)

Like Peter, we have just <u>a brief opportunity</u> on earth to remind one another of God's Truth!

- **Spiritual reminders are vital for all of us!**

Why?

I. **Spiritual Reminders <u>SURE UP</u> Truth in our minds**
so that God's Word makes its full impact upon our lives (v.12)
(I will <u>not</u> be <u>negligent</u> to remind you so that you <u>totally comprehend</u> the truth)

II. **Spiritual Reminders <u>STIR UP</u> Truth in our minds**
so that God's Word does not become stagnant (v.13)
(I will be <u>right</u> to remind you so that you <u>stay awake</u> to the truth)

III. **Spiritual Reminders <u>STORE UP</u> Truth in our minds**
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"Any good teacher realizes the value of repetition. Research has shown that within an hour after hearing a spoken message, people forget up to ninety percent of it. Certainly God knew that when He said to Israel": (MacArthur commentary, p. 48)

America has forgotten God.

--His memory has been erased from the textbooks of the public schools.

--His name is no longer uttered in prayer from the lips of children and teachers in classrooms and auditoriums of the public schools in our land.

--The faith of our founding fathers and the righteous, Biblical principles that our country was founded upon have been deliberately eradicated from memory.

It is a gravely serious matter for a nation to forget God: *"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God"* (Ps. 9:17).

Hos. 4:6 - *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me; seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."*

"For you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the rock of your refuge" (Is. 17:10a).

Even believers tend to remember things that are better forgotten and to forget things that should be remembered (MacArthur) (cp. Rom. 7:15, 18-19; Heb. 12:5).

If we do not make deliberate efforts to retain God's Word in our hearts, all of us run the risk of gradually forgetting all that He is, all that He has done (in the past), all He will do (in the future), and all He can do (in the present).

How do we forget?

1) Negligence - We fail to take the steps necessary to remember:

   a. Daily reading of God's Word (in devotions)
   b. Frequent hearing of God's Word (in church)

2) Distractions - We become distracted by the world with its glitter, pomp, and pleasures

3) Business - We become so bus in lower-priority matters that we neglect the weightier matters

4) Wine & Women - (Prov.31:3-5)

The Bible is filled with examples and illustrations of means by which God's people were to remember their Lord, His Word, and His mighty acts in history:

1) The Song of the Law, taught to Israel by Moses (Deut. 31:19, 21 - *"Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. . . And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I sware.")*

2) The rock piles left as memorials (Josh. 4:7 - *"Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.")*

3) God's Law written on door posts and gates (Deut. 6:9 - *"And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.")*

Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

4) The Jewish holidays (Lev. 23)

5) The Lord's Supper (Lk. 22:19 - *"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given f or you: this do in remembrance of me.")*

2 Peter 3:1
This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

Philippians 3:1
Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.

Jude also sought to remind his readers of what they once knew - **Jude 1:5**
I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

v. 14
Peter knew that he would soon be meeting the Lord in Heaven. He would in a short time lay aside his earthly tent and exchange it for a heavenly dwelling place. Just as Paul wrote to the Corinthians when he said:

2 Corinthians 5:1-2
For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

"**tabernacle" -** tent – a metaphor for the body.

To the ancients, the idea of the body being likened unto a "tent" conveyed the thoughts of:

--Frailty (tents are easily damaged; unlike a more permanent structure, like a "building" – v. 1)

--Transiency (tents are easily moved, can be pitched here today and uprooted and transplanted tomorrow)

--Limitations (you can only do so much with a tent; it has its limits)

--Insecurity (tents are not completely safe, they can be easily harmed and ruined)

--Temporality (they only last so long; they must be replaced; tents are not permanent structures)

v. 13
"As long as" – How long did Peter have? Not very long. He would soon die as a martyr for the Lord.

How long do you and I have? We do not know. But while we are here god has a taskf or us. This job involves giving the truth of God's Word to those who don't have it, and continually reiterating God's truth to those who do have it, so that they fully understand it, live it, and never forget it.

v. 14

Now the way Peter would **"put off"** his **"tabernacle"** (tent) would be by martyrdom, just as Jesus explained to him in John 21:18 - Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not.

According to history, Peter would also be forcibly carried away and crucified as his Lord was, but would not consider himself worthy to be crucified exactly as his Lord, so he requested that he be crucified upside down.

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Why?

I. Spiritual Reminders <u>SURE UP</u> Truth in our minds
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"Wherefore" – A reference backt o the previous context whee Peter was encouraging his professing believer friends to examine their salvation, to make sure of their calling and election of god (v. 10). This was and is of infinite value due to the fact that no one will enter Christ's eternal kingdom (v. 11) who has not been genuinely called and elected.

This matter of self-examination regarding **"these things"** and this matter of trusting God's Holy Scriptures (v. 16-21) is of such importance that Peter says, "I cannot neglect to <u>remind</u> you" about it!

"I will not be negligent" - I will not be so unconcerned or careless about your souls so as to neglect my duty to <u>remind</u> you of God's precious truth! Giving spiritual reminders was Peter's continual intention.

"<u>Always</u> in remembrance" – Peter's goal in ministry was to <u>continuously</u> remind them of "these things." Reminding God's people was a <u>constant</u> practice of Peter and the other apostles.

"These things" - a repeated phrase in this context (v. 8, 9, 10, 12, 15), and a specific reference to the virtues and characteristics which ought to be added to our "faith" (v. 5-7).

"Though ye <u>know</u> them" - They needed reminders even though they had already come to know (*oida*) certain truths. Even people of great spiritual understanding need reminders. There are so many facets of a truth and so many aangles and perspectives of seeing it that reminders are necessary.

ILLUS: the hymn "Tell Me the Old, Old Story"

This is why God's people need to keep coming to church. To be reminded of God's great truth (in the Gospel) and God's great truths regarding every other aspect of life and eternity. This is why we must not forsake the assembly of the saints (Heb. 10:25).

Reminders are also needed by those who are already **"established"** (settled, firmly grounded, or solidly anchored) in the truth. They now have **"the present truth"** – is the truth which is available now and the truth which can be personally understood and fully grasped presently.

Repetition is the "mother of learning."

How many of us totally understand a deep concept the very first time we hear it?

A god teacher is one who can restate a truth or message using different words and ways so as to make as striking and as permanent an impact as possible upon the hearer.

The necessity of repetition in preaching/teaching is evident by the fact that God often repeats Himself for emphasis. For example: Deuteronomy is the <u>second</u> giving of the Law; 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, and 1 & 2 Chronicles have many repeated historical accounts and facts so that the reader will have a deeper impression made upon his mind and heart by hearing it twice. Repeated words or phrases like "his mercy endureth forever" (Psalm 136) drives home the point most effectively. Having four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John) not only gives the support of two or three witnesses to validate the accounts and details, but also reemphasizes vital truth.

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"Yea, I think it <u>meet</u>" - But I consider it <u>right</u> to remind you.

Giving spiritual reminders of God's truth is the <u>right</u> thing to do. It is righteous activity to repetitively provoke one another unto love and good works.

It is righteous activity to remind each other of the importance of sanctification (sexual purity).

It is righteous activity to remind each other of the need to spread the Gospel and make disciples.

"Stir you up" (*diegeiro*) – to wake out of sleep; the preposition in compound is perfective – meaning to stir up or wake up <u>thoroughly</u>! (Rogers, p. 582).

We often got o sleep on some things or we get distracted to the point that some truths are not fresh with us. At times like this we neeed to be stirred up.

Good preaching will stir up the lukewarm Christian!

Vain repetition is <u>not</u> necessary in our prayer life (Matthew 6:7), because God is not hard of hearing nor forgetful as we are. But our meaningful repetition of hearing His voice by reading our Bibles repeatedly or by hearing a lesson or doctrine by God's man repeatedly is necessary, because we do not always "get it" the first time nor do we always remember what we at one time understood.

Or it may be, as here, that we need to be re-awakened to something we already heard in our past.

"A Memorial Message from Deuteronomy!"

1. **NEVER FORGET the <u>BONDAGE</u> you were chained to before God redeemed you** (Deut. 5:15; 15:15; 24:18, 22)

   Deut. 5:15 -*"And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day."*

2. **NEVER FORGET the <u>PROVIDER</u> by becoming preoccupied with His abundant <u>provision</u>** (Deut. 6:10-12; 8:7-11a)

   Deut. 6:12 -*"Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."*

3. **NEVER FORGET God's <u>PAST VICTORIES</u>; they will encourage you in future battles** (Deut. 7:17-19)

   Deut. 7:18 -*"Thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt."*

4. **NEVER FORGET the <u>LESSONS</u> God taught you through life's difficult experiences** (Deut. 8:2-5; 9:7)

   Deut. 8:2 -*"And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness; to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no."*

5. **NEVER FORGET God's <u>PRECEPTS</u> which you learned from His Word, the Scriptures** (Deut. 8:11)

   Deut. 8:11 -*"Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day."*

6. **NEVER FORGET God's <u>ENABLING STRENGTH</u> which empowered you to achieve what good you have in life** (Deut. 8:12-18)

   Deut. 8:18 -*"But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."*

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"Endeavor" – to give due diligence; to expend great volitional effort; to thoughtfully give careful attention to reminded them of God's message.

"That ye may be able after my decease" - "Here he speaks of making provision for them after his death" (Mayor, cited by Rogers, p. 583).

Of infinite more value than providing material wealth and finances to our children is to leave behind a legacy of truth that they can then pass on to their families for generations to come.

You remind this generation, and they will remind theirs (and by God's grace this pattern can continue to flow deep into the future!)

"<u>Always</u> in remembrance" - throughout all occasions in life, God's truth can be retained and recalled when someone invested the time and effort to be in the reminding business.

Dear parent, do not be discouraged by thinking that your parental admonitions are in vain. Though you may have to repeat a lesson over and over, it will pay off in the end. In the end that child ". . . will not depart from it."

Conclusion:

NEVER FORGET God's <u>PRECEPTS</u> which you learned from His Word, the Scriptures (Deut. 8:11)

SEE: Psalm 119:16, 83, 93, 109, 141, 153, 176.

<u>How to NOT FORGET God's Word</u>:

1) <u>Hide it</u> in your heart systematically (memorize Scripture)

Psalm 119:11 - *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*

2) <u>Meditate</u> on it continually

Joshua 1:8 - *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."*

3) <u>Obey it</u> intently

James 1:25 - *"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."*

4) <u>Sing</u> it joyfully

Colossians 3:16 - *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*

5) <u>Teach</u> it diligently

Deuteronomy 6:7 - *"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."*