

Remember When? 1-17-10

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(the beginning of the message was cut off [speaking of ten shekels]...)

We don't need to think we don't need each other, we do, and if those people were thought worthy of punishment, how much more us who have been given God Himself manifested in the flesh and a New Covenant, a new and living way? Who came down Himself, showed us Himself and told us Himself, and walked among us - and to despise that in any respect and walk off on our own. To say, "I know what it says ... but ... do we really know?" and so and so forth to try to justify what they are doing or not doing. We're people too we can do the very same thing. One of the strong holds of the church is to assembly of the brethren to help keep that from happening. It can even happen when we assemble. So for sure don't forsake assembly because it's bound to happen then is the thought here. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. That's indicating to fall into His hands of punishment.

Hebrews 10:32-39 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if [any man] draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

Then he goes on with the next part of the book and explains what faith is.

The thoughts I had this morning and the last several days about this are - calling to remembrance the former days. I don't usually like to think about former days too much; I like to think about what's ahead, about going forward and pressing on, but it's necessary in our lives as Christians to remember where we were, what we were and what the Lord has brought us from and where we are now in light of that, and where we're headed because of some of those decisions in the past.

God has always been about remembering things. In the Old Testament there were many times He made symbol like the rainbow so He could remember His covenant with man. When the children of Israel crossed the Jordan, they set up stones and said when your children ask what these mean, tell them the story about coming out of Egypt and God saving you and bringing you through. It was a terrible crime to remove the old landmarks because they stood for something and they were for remembering. There are many things about remembering. In the New Testament we have different things about remembering. Remember when and why you did some of the things you did, do you remember why or when that you didn't want to walk the way of the world? Remember that decision and thinking what am I doing? You might not remember the exact words or thoughts, but you remember a time in your life when you decided, where am I going? What's this all about? What is life about? Everybody is going to die, going to do something; what am I doing? Remember some of those decisions? I remember some of those decisions; some were very hard decisions, this wasn't so much because I set on a course then and decided to do what was right. But right away, just like it says in Hebrews, *But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated ...* after that light came on and you said, "What am I doing?" ... *ye endured a great fight of afflictions.* It didn't say you endured that in getting the light, it said you endured it after that light, because then your path was beginning to be at odds with the world around you.

I remember well the decision to get rid of the television. It was easy then, just me and my wife and a one month old baby boy, but I remember some of the comments from other people; "What? You don't have television? What do you do for fun?" It was completely foreign to them. People would call up trying to sell me cable or a dish and I would tell them we don't have a television and they'd keep rattling on about television. I'd have to tell him again, I don't have a television and he'd hear it then and say oh ok thank you and hang up. They just can not comprehend that but that's not to unusual. What about when you decided as a sister to stand behind your husband instead of in front of him? When you decided a meek and quiet spirit was in the sight of the Lord a great price like it says in Peter? That set you at odds right there - probably with other women in your extended family and other people you knew. Remember, sisters, when you stopped dressing like men? (those of you that did) Remember the comments that were being made about you and toward you and you knew it was being said? Remember when you stopped adorning yourselves to try to get men to be attracted to you? Remember how ugly you felt at first? The reason I know those things is because my wife went through those too. Then to top it all off you put that thing on your head! And that was the last straw with your friends and some of those in your family. Those were monumental decisions. But you esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the pleasures of Egypt as Moses did.

Remember Brethren when you began to think seriously what your pastors were telling you? Remember when you felt like you were in a desert with no water spiritually? Remember when you decided to leave the church you grew up in knowing it would set you at odds with your family and friends and everything you knew? You felt like you were embarking on a dangerous journey and didn't know where it would lead you but you knew you had to do something? Remember the stability you forsook to do that? What about when you decided as a family or as a brothers and sisters to home school? That was another monumental decision too. You thought of all the wonderful things and how much better it will be. I mean if the teacher student ratio is narrowed down to basically 1:1 instead of 1:30, that has got to make them Einsteins by the time they're 10 right? That's what we thought ... well, we had to think again, it doesn't work that way. Now, we're in these things and have been doing these things for a long time.

Remember Brethren when you decided to let your beard grow? Why you did that and what for? People ask me why I have a beard and I say well apparently God wanted me to have one because he made men to have one. I'm not all fired up to be a Grizzly Adams looking type fellow or anything and I'm not that much an outdoors man, I just want to be what God wants me to be, it's that simple. Remember when you didn't take a certain job because of the Lord and the influence it might have put you in or might keep you from the family you decided to raise for God? Remember when you decided to stop being a rebel without a cause and started being a rebel with one? Remember when you decided to let God decide the size of your home (your family), and not the world? Remember when you were convinced that others needed to hear the truth and you knew that you must do something about it and you started to preach, or teach or exhort or hold signs or pass out tracks or talked to people about their eternal soul? Remember when you were interested in Brother David's trips and felt a little disappointed not to be able to take him or pick him up at the airport because you wanted to be so involved? Where are we now in these things?

But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock ... Part of that great fight of afflictions was because you, yourself, were made a gazingstock. In other words, a gazingstock is something to gaze at, something to be jeered at, something to be thought as set aside or different ... *both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.* The other of it is that became companions of them who were used that way; "Oh you go to *that* church?" Or, "Yeah, I know *those* people." That's a real encouragement. The Lord is bringing us to remember some things here. He's telling these Hebrews saying, "Listen these Judaizers are coming to you and trying to get you to believe that you've got to keep the law of Moses to be saved and keep the old as well as new covenants [trying to live in two covenants], but I'm telling you that if you try to do that you can not please God." You need to remember where you stood with Christ and in light of that keep that same vision. Not to say go back to when you were a baby in Christ but at least that same desire.

We talked to a man on the street Friday night who said that he didn't know when he got saved but he knew he surrendered to God. He said he surrendered to God and told Him he would do anything, *anything* He asked. But in the course of the conversation, that lasted at least an hour I'd say, it became very clear that he still wanted to do what he wanted to do and if he once ever had that desire to give up anything for God, he didn't have it as much now as he did then at least, and he was still walking in ways that he himself knew was wrong. We can do the same thing. Paul said in one place if we build up again that which we destroyed we make ourselves a transgressor. If we have destroyed things in our lives that God hated and we hate them because of that, we dare not build them again.

Who are our Judaizers today? Largely, the church world around us, or the Evangelicals. In Revelation, Jesus said of the Jews who rejected Him again that they say, *'they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan;'* two times He said that in Revelation. That's pretty strong isn't it? Paul said he is not a Jew that is one outwardly but is one inwardly. It's the same with being a Christian. That's not a Christian who just goes to church and does a few things he thinks is holy. But a Christian is one who has permeated his very soul, being and heart, and has a purpose to live and do the will of God. Call to remembrance the former days and why we did what we did, and do we still have that purpose? Granted we've learned a lot of things since then. We've learned a lot more things to do or not to do and we've hopefully grown up in the Lord some, but our purpose or desire to please God and to be found of Him holy, without spot of this world on us or wickedness of any kind, should still be our purpose and that heart cry desire of our life to live for Him.

In the Old Testament they had those stones and when their children would see them they'd ask their fathers what do these mean? Our stones today are, "Daddy why do we take communion? What does baptism mean?" Which we're all involved in by the way; it isn't just the one being baptized. It's a remembrance for every one of us when someone is baptized to put off the old man and his deeds and be raised to newness of life. "Mamma, why do you wear a dress? Why do you dress this way when everybody around you, even Grandma and aunts and uncles, dress just any way they want? Why do we do this?" "Daddy why did you let that man cheat you out of all that money?" These are stones. These are points of remembrance. These are things, not so that we can remember how good we are, but because they set us apart from the world around us as a point of remembrance. The things we do as Christians here set us apart; and we are not set apart for the simple reason of being set apart, but we are set apart *because* we follow the Lord; it is a product of that. We don't assemble ourselves together just to be taught right doctrines, although we are. As a

matter of fact most of those should be taught at home. We come to church to exhort one another and to provoke one another to love and good works ... and we want to abound. Listen to what Paul says here ...

Philippians 1:1-11 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: Even as it is meet for me [or fit] to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

That's a real blessing. The goal here is that we may abound yet more and more. So it is good for us to look back because often times we forget. There's a reason God made seven days in a week; He knew we would need to be encouraged often. Fifty-two times a year we come together on the Lord's day usually - unless something keeps us from it - and in the middle of the week often as well. The Lord's day especially was set aside from the very beginning of the church because it was on that day that God created the world and banished darkness. It was on that day that Christ rose from the dead; and we now come together and exhort one another and speak to one another as it talks about in Malachi. They that fear the Lord.

Back on the thought of all the things we set out to do and some of these things I mentioned ...

Galatians 6:4-8 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

It's just that simple.

Galatians 6:9-10 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Be not weary in well doing.

Be not weary in being non-resistant in business dealings.

Be not weary having to make dresses because you want to dress modestly.

Be not weary of supporting your husband.

Be not weary of loving your wife.

Be not weary of remembering your purpose and the cause you're standing for now.

Be not weary of trying to teach your children the basic principals of life, reading, writing and arithmetic

...because you're going to reap if you faint not.

That little two letter word, if, is a big word in our language, but it's so tempting isn't it? Just to get tired. Tired wears on us doesn't it? Take heart Brother, the Lord has been this way for us and He is still for us.

"Ho, my comrades! see the signal waving in the sky; reinforcements now appearing, victory is nigh." (#846)

We don't know when the Lord is coming or when we are going to Him. But however long it'll be it's not going to be very long.

1 Peter 4:1-3 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

Understand that young people? Our lives before may have been filled with doing what the world around us does, and sometimes I think you find that intriguing that your parents listened to certain music when they were young or went out on dates or drove expensive cars or went to ball games or whatever else they/we did, but never forget and always keep this in your young minds as you grow that your parents left those things with a purpose, and part of that purpose included you.

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wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

You say, "Well, they didn't do that bad" or "I'm not going to do that bad!" But the thing about it is these things are a general outline of what the world is living for right now.

Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

"Why doesn't she put some make-up on she looks like she's half dead? Why can't she get her hair fixed, that's horrible. She must not care about herself anymore."

Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

They think it is strange, Brethren, that you're not infatuated with sports anymore, that you're not involved in all the passing frivolous things of this world anymore – "What do you do for fun?" Well, first of all, there's no where we are commanded to have fun but we find a little anyway don't we? We seem too ... even though we are 'so drab', praise the Lord. Our joy now is found by doing the will of God and it endures, it lasts and it's real. It doesn't have to be replaced by some other gadget in the near future.

Remember. Bring to remembrance the former days and don't forget why and when we did the things we did and with that in mind let's keep going and look ahead. Go to the Lord. What are you going to do when you're an old man walking around with a 5-year-old son or daughter and everyone thinks you're it's grandfather? You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to praise the Lord and rejoice for the son of my old age just like the prophets of old did. I'm not going to be ashamed. Ashamed of what? Because the Lord has blessed my home again? Ashamed because I can't just run to the latest events in the cities or another state to enjoy all the pleasures of this life because I have responsibilities to take care of? Let them have it. They can have it. I'm not interested in that and it doesn't even appeal to me anymore. Praise the Lord.

Let's not forget Brethren why we've done what we've done. I know you haven't and I haven't either but we tend to a little bit about the purpose we had when we started this journey. Hold to Christ like we did then. It's important for us to call to remembrance - it's good for us. Don't be swindled. They want to affect you because you might affect them; but what they really want to do is bring you out of the light so that they might look good. What I mean is the Evangelicals around you say, "That is ridiculous! I'm saved! You don't have to do that to be a Christian!" They want to persuade you so they aren't affected. Paul talks about the Judaizers doing the same thing; it's so close - they talk about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit ... and it's so close. Just like the Jews – there was a lot of similarities, but there is a vast difference between following Christ and following this world.

God bless His word.