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2020

Forgetting, Or Just Not Remembering? (outline)

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Recommended Citation

Rediger, Milo A., "Forgetting, Or Just Not Remembering? (outline)" (2020). *Milo Rediger Writings & Addresses*. 23.

<https://pillars.taylor.edu/rediger-writings/23>

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FORGETTING, OR JUST NOT REMEMBERING?

We all have trouble remembering what we should.

We blame a poor memory. But memory isn't an organ;

Remembering is a process we do poorly or well--and can improve.

Forgetting is something quite different.

Has it occurred to you that only God can forget what should not be remembered?

Try it and see.

You say, "I can forgive, but I can't forget." And it's true; you can't.

Try forgetting your own sins. This is a godly function--and how fortunate for us that it is. Only God is able to forget.

God enables us to forget what we shouldn't remember. Gen. 41:51

Joseph called his firstborn Manasseh, because "God has made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house." He could not have forgotten his father's unfairness, the favoritism that caused his toilsome trouble with brothers.

God forgets our sins.

Jer. 31:34 I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Heb. 8:12 Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

He promises to forgive our sins when we confess them, and when He forgives, He forgets.

He forgets what would continue to plague us in memory.

The secret is in the phrase "in Christ." We could not satisfy God by keeping the law, even if we could come closer to it than we actually can.

Only Christ satisfies God, and we can be "in Christ"--and only so can we please God.

It is part of our finiteness to remember what we ought to forget and fail to recall what we ought to remember.

It is part of His infinity to forget what should not be remembered, and to remember without fail what should not be forgotten.

What are these two lists, and how are we to deal with the problem?

Things to remember are:

God - Deut. 6:12 - Beware lest you forget the Lord.

His works - Psa. 106:13 - They soon forgot His works.

His covenant - Deut. 4:23 - Take heed, lest you forget. . .

Widows, orphans, poor - Heb. 13:16 - But to do good forget not.

Things to be forgotten are:

1. Our sins - Heb. 8:12 - Their sins will I remember no more.

2. Those things which are behind - Phil. 3:13 - forgetting those things which are behind--This is essential to looking and moving forward.

3. Resentments, grudges, unfair treatment - Gen. 41:51

4. Failures and successes -

If remembered, these become obstacles of discouragement or of pride.

If forgotten, they become stepping-stones to growth and progress.

How do I do these two "unnatural" things? Each must find his own way and work it out in his relationship with Jesus Christ.

Mine is very simple. Not easy, but simple. It is a checkpoint type rule; I call it the 3-way test.

Seek - Col. 3:1 - "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." O my, how many things that automatically eliminates.

Set - Col. 3:2 - "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." How this confirms and expands the first list! It leaves us with what Paul told us to think on--things that are

1. true
2. honest
3. just
4. pure
5. lovely
6. of good report

Phil. 4:8

So this still leaves us with a long list, adequate for full-time thinking.
(can even include a good woman, see #5)

Submit - Jas. 4:7 - "Submit yourself to God; Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

Often I fail in my attempt to apply and follow this formula. But it provides good guidelines, enough to keep me busy the rest of my natural life.

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