***Remembering the Saints - PH12-02

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:2-3***

We continue with the first chapter once more of Philippians. We have covered now in some detail the very first verse which contains some very major subjects. We have sought to introduce the author to you, and his associate Timothy. We have sought to present to you the significance of being a saint in the body of Christ, the church universal, and being a saint in a local church, the church at Philippi, and something about the organization of that, with its elder bishop pastor leadership and its deacon administrating assistance.

We are now going to complete the salutation and to take up Paul's greetings to these esteemed Philippian Christians who constitute this church that he loved very dearly. The book of Philippians is a very important book because it deals with the subject of personal inner happiness. This is a vital subject in the awesome days in which you and I are living. It has become clearly evident in the Mideast that Israel needs a protector. That has become evident, not only to all the world, but it has no doubt become very evident to the Jews themselves. The mentality of the Jew has been greatly moved toward this understanding and toward the reception to the idea of a protector. You all know how that fits into the prophetic plan of the Antichrist protector that the Jews will one day accept.

We live in a time of great economic crises in this nation. It's a time of madness within our government. It is a time when our intelligence sophisticated statesmen are feeding our enemies; are giving our wealth and our resources to those who intend to destroy us; and, who actually are looking into the eyes of a satanic delusion (the whole communist system) and viewing it as a friend. If there was ever a time that you and I need to know how to have inner happiness, it is in times such as we live now. Propagation of the gospel is in restraint because of what your national leaders are doing with this nation's wealth. We live in unbelievable times, and there is practically no sanity in the upper echelons of the United States government whatsoever.

The Council on Foreign Relations dominates our government. This is an organization which in effect is a secret organization. Most Americans know exactly what you mean when you say the John Birch Society. However, the people who make up the Council on Foreign Relations keep their society secret so most Americans look at you and say, "What's that?" These people have been the ones who have pushed all conservative viewpoint into the derogatory light. The Council on Foreign Relations is made up of people like our secretary of state and, as matter of fact, more high level administrators and policymakers than ever before in our history belong to this super organization. The goal of the Council on Foreign Relations is to bring the world together in a one world cooperative effort. That's why you're having all of this trade being promoted. It is being done through back door ways.

This is why our secretary of state used the word, "We must now come to *collective* cooperation. The communists also use the word "collective." The Council on Foreign Relations is made up of the great banking interests and the great moneyed foundations such as the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Foundation in this country. They are deliberately promoting a socialistic orientation to this nation because socialism is able to control people. That's the kind of a world we're living in. These are the kind of people we're dealing with. The Council on Foreign Relations knows that socialism can control people, and they are pushing it. Get alerted to the CFR.

With all of these things put together, happiness is going to become a very rare quality except for those who have been prepared by the Word of God for it. That's why we're studying the book of Philippians. You people who are indifferent and who are sometimes on again and off again in the study of this particular part of the Word of God are going to be the ones who, when the roof caves in, will be totally unprepared for the events of the day that may surround you.

**Grace**

In Philippians 1:2, we read, "Grace be unto you in peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Here we have the heritage of Christianity. The hallmark of Christianity is this word "grace." It looks like this in the Greek: "charis." This is a very precious word. Paul wishes for the Philippian Christians the grace of God. He wishes this "unto you" which means for their advantage. It's a dative of advantage grammatically. This grace refers to the work of God for man apart from man's ability or merit.

We have studied grace in some detail. We will not pursue that in this session, except to point out to you once more that it is what God does for us apart from anything we deserve or any abilities we have. This grace treatment depends entirely on what God is--not on what you and I are. God ignores all human good and all human merit. He doesn't seek any repayment for what He does for us in grace, or it would not be grace. God does the work of divine good for the sinner in securing for us both salvation and the spiritual life. The opposite of grace is legalism and religion which is man doing the work, and man getting the credit.

Grace is being treated in love apart from our conduct or what we deserve. The greatest expression of the grace of God toward us which Paul wishes for these Philippian Christians is God taking you and me as sinners, and transforming us into the image of His Son (Galatians 4:19, Romans 8:28-29). We are positionally like Jesus Christ now through salvation. We are experientially like Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are going to be physically like Jesus Christ through the resurrection from the dead. Salvation is always by grace. It's on this system of something that God does for us. It is the only way a person can go to heaven. That's what Ephesian 8-9, Galatians 2:16, and Titus 3:5 mean. There is no merit in our believing this. It is simply the merit of God who provided it.

**Reconciliation**

Salvation by grace involves two concepts. It involves, first of all, the concept of reconciliation. If you are interested in pursuing this doctrine in further detail, get one of the earlier audio recordings in the Basic Bible doctrine series. I'll just point out to you that 2 Corinthians 5:18 speaks about reconciliation, and this is the human aspect of salvation. It is that God has made man savable. Jesus Christ in His death on the cross did the greatest thing possible for us. He secured peace with God for us (Ephesians 2:14-18). For you and me as sinners to come to a place where we're at peace with God so that you could walk out of here and be struck down by a car and have no fear about what was going to happen to your soul, because you would go straight to heaven--this is something fantastic. You and I are, as sinners, in the presence of heaven, nothing but scum when it comes to the shores of Heaven. We're the flotsam that has been tossed up on the seashore.

I walked on Matagorda Island a few weeks ago, and all up and down that beautiful island, there was the debris of what I thought were huge beetle bugs at first. Then when I got close to them, I realized that they were globs of oil that had floated in from sea and had contaminated that beach. That's what you and I are on the shores of heaven--the flotsam in the debris. Yet, God has done something to us that transformed that dirty sticky oily trash that we are, and made us into a thing of beauty. You better think about it that way, and you'll get a feel of what grace is all about. God continues this grace now by doing for us much more than He did when He reconciled us to himself (Romans 8: 32).

**Propitiation**

There's another factor involved in this grace salvation, and that's propitiation. You may also study that on one of the earlier audio recordings. Propitiation is spoken of in 1 John 2:1-2. This is the Godward aspect of salvation. God's holiness has been satisfied. That means that His righteousness has been met, and His justice has been met. God the Father can love a sinner. He can give him eternal life and still be consistent with His own essence relative to His righteousness and justice. The penalty is paid. Sin is no longer the issue. Only what you do with Jesus Christ is the issue.

God's attitude, therefore, at this moment, since He is treating us in grace, is one of simply waiting to shower every blessing upon you that you that you need. Whatever you need in life right now, I want to tell you that God is ready to give it to you. Whatever shortcoming or whatever weakness you're struggling with, God is ready to solve it. Whatever doubts you have; whatever indifference you have; or, whatever crises and distortions your life has experienced, God is ready to straighten it out. He is literally sitting in heaven ready to pour forth upon you all the solutions and all the blessings you need. That's what grace means. Grace is not just something that happened back there when we trusted in Him for salvation. Grace is His waiting to meet your needs.

Therefore, you say, "I've got plenty of needs. What is He waiting for? What is it that keeps Him from doing this?" Isaiah 30:18-19 tells about Him sitting there just waiting to bless. One of the things that holds it up is carnality--being out of fellowship. This is one of the greatest operational hazards of the Christian life. A Christian goes spiritually berserk. It can happen very rapidly from a high state of spiritual discernment and understanding. You don't know that you're crazy. When you're off your rocker, you don't know it. Just like in the physical realm, a person who is insane does not know he's insane. His values are deranged; his choices are offbeat; and, he doesn't know it. That's what happens to us spiritually. We go crazy. We go spiritually insane and we don't know it. Then we begin to make false choices, false moves, and false decisions. You better know what the steps are to spiritual insanity, and I'll tell you it starts right here with negative volition and unconfessed sin. Carnality keeps God from being able to solve and to bless your problems.

If grace cannot be poured out upon us, it's because you are forcing God to discipline you. Instead of blessing, He has to discipline. Forgiveness by confession frees us from discipline and enables God to do what He's ready to do. That's grace. That's why you're eternally secure. You didn't earn salvation, and you can't retain it (Titus 3:4-5). We continue to stand in the protective custody forever of the grace of God (Romans 5:2). That's why you will never become another dirty blob of oil on the beautiful beach at gorgeous Matagorda Island. You will be what He has transformed you into--a thing of beauty.

This grace is related to your daily life. We call this sanctification. It's involved in your prayer life (Hebrews 4:16). That's why you can pray, because of His grace. That's why you can approach Him. It's involved in your sufferings (2 Corinthians 12:9-10, 1 Peter 2:19-20). God enables you through His grace to take you through the suffering point, and you will take it in stride. This is your manner of life (2 Timothy 2:1). Your spiritual maturity is based upon your growing in the grace of God (2 Peter 3:18). This is the way you meet every failure and the way you meet the successes of your life.

If it wasn't for the grace of God, you wouldn't be able to get a sizable increase in salary without it tearing you to shreds spiritually. This is one of the things that makes Christians go spiritually insane--materialism. They get offbeat, and they begin degenerating on money and material things. This has an effect upon the mentality of the soul. If it wasn't for the grace of God, you couldn't come into a sizable amount of money and still remain spiritually stable and sane. Many a Christian has been a wonderful marvelous fantastic person as a child of God and as a servant of the Lord when He didn't have much. Then when he came into a sizable chunk of money, because he was not functioning and stabilized on the grace of God, he just cracked up spiritually. He went down the tubes. You know them, and I know them. The grace-oriented believer understands that every day of life that you have, every day that you wake up in the morning and discover that you're not in heaven, is a day by the grace of God given to you once more. We take life one day at a time.

This grace of course is the reason you can produce divine good in your service as a Christian (1 Corinthians 15:10, 2 Corinthians 9:8, Hebrews 12:22). One of the hardest jobs a pastor has is trying to deal with people in the congregation who are not grace-oriented and therefore are producing human good in their enthusiasms. They'll come charging up with all kinds of zealous enthusiastic wonderful marvelous ideas of one thing and another, and he has a hard time trying to take the sheep without bruising him too much and directing him away from the human good production that he has been trapped into. Why? Because he does not understand the grace of God, and therefore he lacks the perspective.

The Bible says that the greatest hazard to your Christian life is to be disoriented to the grace of God (2 Corinthians 6:1, Galatians 5:5, Hebrews 12:15). If you are out of temporal fellowship, you're operating on the old sin nature. If you are negative to true Bible doctrine, you will suck into your soul all kinds of false human viewpoint and false doctrine. Your spiritual maturity structure will break down and you will go off your rocker spiritually. You will not know up from down. When you come back to your senses and you come back to your sanity, you will be like Nebuchadnezzar of old after he came back from his physical insanity. You will look back upon yourself. You will be awed by how you have fallen, and you will look up and you will say, "You are indeed the God of all the universe. In your gracious hands I reside. Outside of those great hands, there is no hope for me."

The Christian who is oriented to the grace of God has an attitude of grace toward other Christians. No one is to earn or deserve grace treatment from you any more than you and I have earned it from God. Your Christian character depends on what you think, not on the appearance and the outside. So don't feel hurt in this ministry if we are sometimes not impressed with the fact that you're a sharp dresser, or with the fact that you're a lilting personality. We've got plenty of lilting personalities around here. If we squash them, they cut in two, and we have two lilting personalities. Therefore, we have a way of reproducing them, but we're not impressed with that. All of these outward factors don't mean a thing with a God. Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks upon the heart.

Now, learn that. That's how grace operates. Therefore, you treat people on the basis of the inward qualities. You act according to the inward qualities that are in you. When somebody offends you, treat him in grace. Forgive him without expecting him to apologize or to admit he was wrong. There are plenty of people in the world that go around with this grotesque quality of demanding their rights and standing up to people who offend them. A Christian who has matured spiritually and who has spiritual sanity will be able to take the worst kind of abuse from the scummiest kind of people in the most derogatory ways, and he will stand stable. He will treat them in the grace of God, knowing what pathetic figures they are. If you understand what God has done for you in grace, then it will not be so hard for you to treat other people the same way.

**Peace**

This is what the apostle Paul included in his salutation, that which he bids for these people, the wonderful marvelous grace of God with all that connotes. And along with it, another thing that comes from grace is that he also bids them the peace of God. The peace of God is the Greek word "eirena." "Eirena" is the product of grace. We have peace as a result of grace. Many times in the Bible we have this, "Grace in peace." It is never the other way around. It is never, "Peace and grace." It always has to be grace, and then peace because peace comes from grace. Peace means tranquility, and what it connotes is a position of happiness; of spiritual wholeness; and, of inner stability. Grace abused will destroy your peace. Therefore, you will not be happy.

**The Abuse of Grace**

If at this moment you can look into your soul and you can say, "You know, I'm an unhappy person. I am not really a happy person." The reason you are not a happy person is because you have abused the grace of God, and therefore you do not have peace within your soul. You have abused the grace of God in a number of ways. Perhaps you have abused it by the fact that you have not availed yourself of instruction in the Word of God. You have abused the Word of God in the fact that it teaches you certain techniques of the Christian way of life. You either are not aware of those techniques, or if you are, you're not using them. That's abusing the grace of God. If you do not use the techniques of the Christian life, that will destroy your peace. You are not exercising the grace toward other people that God has exercised to you. You're shot through with mental attitude sins. These include sins of the mind: of hatred; of envy; of covetousness; of an unforgiving spirit; or, of greed, and that has destroyed your peace.

If you are an unhappy person, that means you don't have peace. If you are unhappy, it means that you have violated the grace of God. If you're on the beam with the grace of God, you will be happy. So while possessing this inner peace, we are functioning under the grace of God. This does not mean that you will always outwardly have a smooth relationship. Romans 12:18 recognizes the fact that you may have an inner peace while you are in outward conflict even sometimes with people.

**Two Aspects of Peace**

There are two aspects of peace. There is peace *with* God which we find in Romans 5:1 which refers to your position of justification. We get into that through John 3:16. Then we have the peace *of* God which is in Philippians 4:7. That's your daily walk, or your experience. You get into that with 1 John 1:9. There are two ways to enter peace: with God; and, of God. The peace with God is salvation. The peace of God is sanctification. That's your walk. You have both of those at your disposal from the grace of God.

Now the source of this heritage, Paul says, is from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. The word "from" is the little Greek word "apo." "Apo" indicates the origin of grace and peace. It is God our Father. Christians have a family relationship which is not possessed by unbelievers. God is their Father. As Father, He is the author of the grace plan, and He delights to provide His children and His family with grace and the peace that flows from it.

Also this comes from our Lord Jesus Christ. Here's his name: The Greek word for Lord is "kurios." "Kurios" refers to the deity of Christ. The deity of Jesus Christ, which is summed up in this word, was the same word which was used by the pagans for their Caesars. One of the disciples of the apostle John was a man named Polycarp. Polycarp died as a martyr because he refused to say, "Lord Caesar," because the word "Lord" connoted deity, and they were trying to force him to admit that Caesar was God. Rather than do it, he was willing to die. The word "Lord" was very precious to the New Testament saints.

His name is also Jesus, which in Greek is "iesous." "Iesous" is His humanity. It refers to His human side of His being. God the Son set aside His glory, all of His position, in order to reach us. Therefore, "Lord Jesus" connotes His God man relationship. We call that the hypostatic union.

Also, He is Christ, and that is "christos." "Christos" is the name referring to His role as the Jewish Messiah. He is the God man in His commission to the Jewish people. So the Lord Jesus Christ is the mediator of the grace and peace which God the Father has provided. He has executed the Father's plan by going to the cross. He has enabled us to enter the Father's plan through the act of faith in Him. The Holy Spirit is not mentioned in the salutation probably because the work of the Holy Spirit is always in the background (John 16:14) directing toward the Son and toward the Father.

In verse 4, the apostle Paul says, "Always in every prayer of mine for you all, making requests with joy." Now that is something really fantastic and wonderful that somebody can say, "Every time I think of you, I think of you with great joy." The word "thank" is "eucharisto." From this we get our English word "Eucharist" which refers to the thanksgiving service of the Lord's Supper. "Eucharisto" means to thank. It is present tense which means he constantly does it. It is active so he elects or he chooses to "thank my God," he says, because God belongs to Paul through the personal relationship of the new birth into the family of God. God the Father is the source of all the commendable things that have come to the Philippian church. God uses human agents, but remember to direct your thanksgiving to God, and not to the agents (Ephesians 5:20).

Paul has had about 10 years of very wonderful relationships with this church at Philippi. Therefore, he says. "I thank God upon," and the word "upon" is "epi." It really means here "on the basis of." "I thank God on the basis of my remembrance." The word "remembrance" is the word "mneia." "Mneia" simply refers to memory. Paul's memory of the Philippian Christians was one of thanksgiving. This is "my whole remembrance." It is not just individual situations, but the thing as a whole. He says, "When I think of the Philippian church, I think of something that makes me want to stop and look up to heaven and say, "God, I thank you for the Philippian Christians." His memories, in other words, of this church were fragrant. He thought about the fragrant past memories of his dealings with this church and their present experience to him.

Remember that this letter was the result of pastor Epaphroditus bringing a third offering from the Philippian church to Paul while he was in prison in Rome. Then here's his present experience with this church that he ties with past fragrant memories, and he can't help finding his heart welling up in thanksgiving to God. You and I, certainly in our experience, look back upon many believers for whom we can direct thanksgiving to the Father in heaven. We look back upon these believers, and as we recall them to mind; as we recall their service; and, as we recall their fellowship and their devotion, it is the source of thanksgiving. For others, we may recall them with a source of sadness.

**Memory**

Therefore, let's look at what the Bible has to say about memory. Your memories are what much of our lives are made up of. It would be well to learn some things about your memories. There are some things you should do with your memories and some things you should avoid doing. You can bring happiness into your life with memories, or you can bring grief into your life.

1. Memory of the Lord is a part of **worship** (Psalm 145:7-10, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25). It is doctrine that gives us the knowledge of the Lord. Experience provides us with relationships with the Lord. These include experiences such as prayer, worship, and trials. When we bring the doctrine of what we know about God and our experiences together, they form a fragrant memory which causes us to worship the Lord. It is our memory from doctrine and how God has dealt with us that causes us to turn to worship Him. Therefore, our memory of the Lord is part of our worship. You can immediately see that your worship is going to be stifled if you have not learned the Word of God so that you have that as the base to which to attach your experiences, and to be able to interpret those experiences properly.

Worship involves 3 things:

* + Worship involves remembering the Lord from doctrine (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).
	+ Worship involves learning doctrine through this grace system of perception that He has provided. You are worshiping God now if you are sitting there and taking in the things that are being explained to you. You may be entering into an understanding of this passage and what is behind these great words like grace and peace. This is what has caused Paul to rise up in such thanksgiving to God for these people. Learning doctrine is an act of worship.
	+ Also, we worship God through the practices of our priesthood: our giving; our praising; the use of our spiritual gifts; and, so on.

Worshiping involves remembering the Lord from doctrine; learning doctrine through the grace system; and, practicing our priesthood.

1. Memory produces **happiness** (Proverbs 10:7). Right now you can probably think of some person, and when you think of that person, a joy leaps up in your heart. That person is a source of happiness. You can think of some situation or some event in life that causes you to leap with happiness within your soul. Memory produces happiness.
2. It is important to begin building memories while **young**. You are going to enter happiness more completely if you start it when you are young (Ecclesiastes 12:1ff). In the days of your youth, start remembering certain things such as God and his dealings with you. Start building up a backlog of memories. Start building up a file of memories within your soul. Over the years, the older you get, you'll be drawing upon those memories. Those memories will come together to provide happiness in your life.
3. **Alcohol** relates to memory. Proverbs 31:4-5 tell us that alcohol causes rulers to forget their responsibilities. Therefore people who are in positions of elected leadership are forbidden by the Word of God ever to drink alcohol. The president of the United States violates Bible doctrine every time he raises his champagne glass to toast. Every time a member of Congress drinks at a Washington cocktail party, he is violating the Word of God.

You wonder why we're on the road of madness in this government. Could you imagine what it would be like in Washington if we had a president who was oriented to Bible doctrine? Could you imagine what it would be like if the president had somebody close at hand who was oriented to Bible doctrine? I'm not talking about just some popular figure who is a personality boy in the religious world and doesn't really know much about doctrine. I'm talking about someone who could give him perspective and direction concerning what God thinks about nations; national movements; poverty; free enterprise; privacy; and, everything else down the line. Could you imagine what would happen if with one fell swoop we could dismiss all the people who are in Congress; throw them out of office; and, fill the place with Bible doctrine oriented Christians?

Could you imagine a presidential cabinet of men who are steeped in doctrine and have that frame of reference in their dealings as they sit across and look at leaders of other countries who are smiling while clenching their iron fists behind their back? It would revolutionize, but it will never happen because Satan also knows what trouble that would cause him. He will never allow it. Anybody of that nature who would seek to rise to that position would be destroyed by Satan before he ever could get to that office. A doctrinally oriented man at this stage in the angelic conflict will never be able to enter public office of any influential position. Satan would destroy him in one way or another in the process because Satan could not afford to allow that.

Alcohol affects the memory of rulers, so the Bible says they are not to use it. It also causes those under pressure to forget their troubles. Proverbs 31:6-7 tells you about the fact that alcohol also causes people to forget their troubles, as some of you perhaps have learned.

1. Memory has **regrets** beyond death for unbelievers (Luke 16:25). One of the great miseries of being in hell is going to be able to remember all the times that somebody tried to explain the gospel to you, and all the times that you rejected it and turned your back on it. In some ways, there will no doubt be some remembrance on the part of believers of all the opportunities that they have squandered and the rewards that they have lost. They will not find grief over that memory. Their thinking will be so oriented to God that they will see the justice of their loss, but they will no doubt remember what might have been. For the unbeliever, his memory of the loss of salvation in opportunities that had been presented to him will be a source of great misery.
2. Memory is associated with **the communicator of Bible doctrine** (Hebrews 13:7-17). How is memory associated with the one who teaches you the Word of God? Well this of course means the pastor. You remember him in several ways:
	* One is by attending Bible class when he is giving instruction.
	* You remember him by helping him carry out the church ministries; coming up with solutions; and, carrying through without strapping him down with it.
	* You sustain him in prayer because you know that if you are being fired upon in the angelic conflict, which you are, that he is getting the biggest of the guns. He is getting it from the demons; he is getting it from the Christians associated with the demon society who are within the membership; and, he is getting it from all sides--the unbelievers too. Therefore, you sustain him in prayer.
	* You provide for his material needs. You do not pride yourself on seeing how slick you can be in teaching him to be frugal.
	* You cut down his critics, and you refuse to listen to their hangups. If somebody comes up and criticizes the pastor, you go right down their throat. Pretty soon they'll spot you and they'll say, "No, that person is not one for me to spew my vengeance to."

Also, you will perhaps remember your pastor in a way that you don't want to remember him. This could be like a man who meets his right woman, or the woman who meets her right man, once you have come into contact, you will never again forget that person. Whether you happen to marry that person, or whether you have married that person; divorced that person; and gone someplace else, you will never forget your right person. So, too, you will never forget your right pastor no matter where you go. You may have been in touch with your right pastor, and your negative volition may lead you off away someplace else, but you will never forget your halcyon days in the Word of God. That's what you will discover that they were, the longer you are out there wandering around. There will be very little progress for you when you are wandering apart from your right pastor, unfortunately. (We are speaking in human terms. Perhaps we should say, "fortunately"--who are we to criticize God?)

The way this is set up, when you drift off from the pastor that God has designed to get through to you, because he knows how to belt you and how to get you vibrating where you need vibrating, you will never be able to find your spiritual development apart from him. You might not like him, and you might not like his life, which is none of your business. It's only God's business. You might not like his personality, which is none of your business, but God's business. Your only concern is his message and your response to the truth of that message. That's all that concerns you. If you drift off from that, the way God has set it up, you have moved on from your number one spot. This does not mean that he will not teach you and direct you, but it will always be a number two spot. Your halcyon days are past. Memory is associated with a communicator of the Word.

1. **Judging and maligning others** destroys good memory (Job 13:2-15). Read that, because it's very fascinating. You'll find that Job's friends which were once on the beam; really true friends; and, great companions to him, had their thinking turned to ashes. That's the way the Bible describes it. They were turned to ashes. They forgot what they should have remembered, and they began slandering and judging Job. When they began slandering and judging him, their memories turned to ashes. Their minds were distorted as a result of this, literally, right there in that book. Job is a rather long book for the little bit of information that they needed to give Job and to deal with Job. However, what you have in Job is a book where, right before your eyes, you progressively see three men who go spiritually insane. Their minds, through their maligning and attacking of their friend Job, were destroyed in their spiritual outlook. Their spiritual maturity structure was destroyed, so they turned to false persons and false issues.
2. **Doctrine** must be a part of one's memory storage (2 Peter 1:12-13). You cannot use what you do not know.
3. Memory can provide **both misery and happiness** (Lamentations 3:17-24). Most people, unfortunately, forget how wonderful an association is until they lose it. Then they remember how wonderful that association was. Then they look back and they long for the times they once knew in spiritual things; the spiritual camaraderie; and, the sheer unadulterated exhilarating joy of responding to the Word of God and entering into it with other believers. When we lose it, that's when we remember it. Therefore, that provides us with memories.

In Lamentations 3:21-24, we have Jeremiah who was under a lot of abuse from the Jews because they wouldn't listen to his warnings to them concerning the military disasters that were to come upon the nation. However, Jeremiah takes doctrine from his memory, and he places it along with the misery that was being dealt to him by the people of God. As a result, in the heart (the mentality) of Jeremiah was created happiness. So memory can give you misery or it can give you happiness.

1. Memory is designed to orient you to the **grace** of God (Psalm 103:2). We remember how God has dealt with us. We remember what we deserve.
2. Memory is important as a function of **the grace system of perception** (Psalm 119:16, 83, 93, 109, 141, 153, 175, Proverbs 4:5). Memory is a function of your learning and entering into the Word of God. It is an important function of the grace system of perception.

There is no doubt much more, as you read through the Word of God, that you will discover about memory. However, here are some basics to give you an idea of how important it is what you remember and what you don't remember. There are some things you should not remember. There are some things that you, by all means, should remember. How you handle your memory can bring you great joy because you have peace of soul, and therefore you have happiness; or, it can bring you great misery.

The apostle Paul had a group of memories here that were fragrant. As he applied them from the past experience that he had with the Philippian Christians to his present experience with them, it was a matter of such satisfaction that he could raise his heart and thanksgiving to God for them. May this be true of you and me, that as people remember us, it will be a source of great thanksgiving upon every remembrance that people have of us. May you and I, as we function under the grace system so that we are glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ, become a fragrant memory to everybody whose path you cross. That can be true.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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