

THE WISDOM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FORGETFULNESS

Paul said, "...forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." Phil. 3:13

GLASGOW, KENTUCKY.....SUNDAY MORNING, January 14, 1968)

INTRODUCTION: Last Sunday night I spoke to those present on the SINFULNESS OF FORGETTING.

Does it seem a little strange, if not paradoxical altogether, when I speak to you this morning on the subject of: THE WISDOM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FORGETFULNESS.

THE SINFULNESS OF FORGETTING: Examples:

1. The rich man of Luke 16:19-31 who forgot:
 1. The poor man at his gate.
 2. That his brothers needed to be saved as well as himself.
2. Our failure to remember the words of Jesus in Acts 20:35 where Paul quoted him as saying:
 1. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Not many people believe that but it is so).
3. The woman who forgot her baby:
 1. She had been up the street for a short visit with her neighbor.
 2. Returned to find her house in flames. She had time to remove a few things that were precious to her. She looked around her to see the older children standing beside her as they watched the home burn. All of a sudden the mother cried out:
 1. "I forgot my baby!" The little baby had been asleep in its crib upstairs.
 2. Many today have provided well in material matters for their children but they have failed to remember the importance of saving their children for God.

But consider:

THE WISDOM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FORGETFULNESS

1. Seeing then that there is the sin of forgetfulness against which God warns us and which he condemns and punishes...does it seem strange then that we come this morning to consider the:
2. THE WISDOM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FORGETFULNESS:

1. "forgetting the things which are behind," Paul said. We learn much from Paul's own experience about the power of memory...the power of recall. Consider:

2. Consider THE POWER OF RECALL IN MEMORY:

1. The power to recall of memory was a lash to the rich man to whom Abraham said, "Son, remember!"
 2. That was the word that kindled such a fire in his soul as rivers of water could not quench.
 3. It is the power of memory-recall that drives men to confess their crimes, and often to take their own lives.
3. Cain slew his brother staining the earth with blood. Gen. 4:12,13
 1. It was the power of recall, or memory of murdering his brother and God's word that he should be a fugitive and vagabond upon the face of the earth that caused Cain to cry out "...My punishment is great than I can bear."
 4. Because of his memory and through the power of recall:
 1. King Charles 11 with pomp and pageantry ordered Oliver Cromwell's bones exhumed.
 2. Ordered his skeleton hanged between two thieves at Tyburn.
 3. Cromwell's skull dangled upon a pole above Westminster Hall through the rain of twelve summers and the snow of twelve winters. Why all this?:
 1. Because the mind of Charles 11 went back down memory lane to dig up out of a mental graveyard intolerance and hatred for even the memory of Cromwell.

3. FORGETTING THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND

Phil. 3:13; "And reaching forth to those things which are before.

1. "Forgetting those things which are behind," is a hard thing to do because:

1. Memory is our faculty for bringing back the past.
2. Memory peoples the present with people of the past.
3. Memory walks in the silent city of bygones.
4. James vance said, "Treat memory kindly, it becomes a guardian angel. Treat it ill, it becomes a demon spirit, mocking you with fiendish glee."

2. Three reason for "forgetting those things behind."

1. PAST FAILURES: Apt to weaken us. 2. PAST ATTAINTMENTS: food for complacency and vain confidence. 3. PAST CIRCUMSTANCES: Sorrows are not without remedy. Joy not prefect.

JESS HALL, MINISTER

100 MAPLEWOOD PLACE
GLASGOW, KENTUCKY

RESIDENCE: 651-5409

CHURCH: 651-5001

Church of Christ

SOUTH GREEN STREET GLASGOW, KENTUCKY 42141

3. CONCERNING THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND

PHIL. 3:13 "AND LET US FORGET THE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND"

1. Because the things of the past are behind us, we should not dwell on them, but rather on the things of the future.

2. The things of the past are behind us, and we should not dwell on them, but rather on the things of the future.

3. The things of the past are behind us, and we should not dwell on them, but rather on the things of the future.

4. Because of the things of the past, we should not dwell on them, but rather on the things of the future.

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THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

1. The ministry of the church is to be a witness to the world.

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