

Wednesday, May 20

Psalm 105:5 *Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced.*

Recently Kerrie has been sorting through 30+ years of photographs, sorting them by year, and filing them neatly in boxes. As you would imagine, she's come across some photos that have brought smiles to our faces, some that have released tears of joy and sadness, and most that have rekindled memories. "Do you remember when . . .?"

There's something about memories and remembering that is deeply embedded in our DNA. It's also a very powerful spiritual element.

Whether it's because we're too busy, or we're getting older, or we have new expectations, each of us tends to forget the things God has done for us. One of the problems with forgetting is that we don't know that we've forgotten. We need reminders.

When Joshua led Israel to the Promised Land, they had to cross the Jordan River. God miraculously parted the waters, and they walked through on dry land. To create a memorial of this miracle, they took twelve stones from the middle of the riverbed and stacked them on the other side. Then we're told what the stones meant:

Joshua 4:6-7 *In the future your children will ask you, "What do these stones mean?" Then you can tell them, "They remind us that the Jordan River stopped flowing when the Ark of the LORD's Covenant went across." These stones will stand as a memorial among the people of Israel forever.*

The purpose of the stones was to shape the hearts and minds of future generations. The expectation was that the presence of the memorial would trigger a conversation among subsequent generations as to the meaning of the stones. And the response to the stones would be to remind them to keep on praising God.

Samuel used stones as a memorial when God's people wanted to remember His goodness and faithfulness. 1 Samuel 7:12 tells us that when God empowered the Israelites to defeat the Philistines, the prophet Samuel *took a stone and . . . named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far has the Lord helped us."*

All through Deuteronomy God warned His people *Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them* (Deuteronomy 4:9). But the Israelites didn't remember did they?

Physical reminders of God's faithfulness in our past can remind us to trust Him in our present - and with our future. What reminders from the past protect your heart, guide your steps, and occupy your mind? Perhaps that might be a good exercise to do while you journey through this coronavirus season.

In Luke 19:40 Jesus said, *If we keep quiet (and don't praise God), the stones will cry out.*

So, I wonder, is there any legitimate reason you and I would choose to remain silent, relinquishing to stones the joy of praising God for what He has done?

And here's the blessing for us: the great thing about our lives is that it's not about us and our ability to remember; it's about God's relentless love even when we're prone to forget. Don't forget that.