

## Just A Gentle Reminder

(2 Peter 1:12-15)

### INTRODUCTION:

1. More and more Tricia and I find ourselves employing the aid of the other, or our phone, or our computer, to remember things.
  - A. “Remind me to do such-and-such” or “write me a note to do...” or “set a reminder for...” etc.
  - B. We do this because we forget things more than we used to.
2. Of course, the question in our minds is whether such forgetfulness is a result of getting older?
  - A. Forgetfulness does seem to grow worse as we grow older. And, as I know so well, it is sometimes a symptom of disease.
  - B. However, there may be some other possible explanations for forgetfulness.
    - i. Sometimes we crowd our lives to the extent that we are like jugglers with too many objects in the air—we are bound to lose track of some of them!
    - ii. Too many concerns often means that we are not really thinking about what we are currently doing—we are already thinking about something down the road.
    - iii. So, our “forgetfulness” may be more a problem of focus.
3. It was in this area, the problem of focusing on the right things in our crowded lives, that caused the Holy Spirit through the apostle Peter to write of his desire to *remind* his readers of important things (2 Pet. 1:12-15 – “For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. <sup>13</sup> Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, <sup>14</sup> knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. <sup>15</sup> Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.”).

### BODY:

#### **I. The Preacher’s Dilemma:**

- A. Often the thought arises that “I’ve already preached about that,” or the problem of being perceived as preaching the “same old stuff.”
  1. This problem is especially true after preaching for the same group for several years. Most topics have been discussed.
    - a. There are only so many ways to discuss the topic of modesty, holiness, purity, etc.
    - b. There are only so many ways to talk about the plan of salvation, commitment, the church, etc.
  2. Sometimes preachers are tempted to forego sermons on Bible basics because we think that *everybody already knows those things*.
  3. Yet, I must remind myself and you that there are reasons for preaching “the same old stuff.”
    - a. There are new members who haven’t heard and need to be grounded.
    - b. There are young people who are just now coming to the point where past discussions are relevant in their lives.
    - c. All of us need to be reminded of these things, seeing we do live crowded lives and God’s truth and what it requires of us can easily get lost in the shuffle.
- B. So, Peter says he would continually remind his readers, “though you know and are established in the present truth” (2 Pet. 1:12)
  1. Why would Peter do this? Because he wanted to *stir up* his readers for their spiritual wellbeing (2 Pet. 3:1-7 – “Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), <sup>2</sup> that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, <sup>3</sup> knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, <sup>4</sup> and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since

the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”<sup>5</sup> For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water,<sup>6</sup> by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.<sup>7</sup> But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”).

2. Consider also the connection between Peter’s intent to remind them and the preceding material in chapter 1.
  - a. Peter has written about the way that his readers must live to gain entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ (1:10-11 – “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;<sup>11</sup> for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”).
  - b. He even mentions the fact that some would fail to add these Christian graces *because* they had *forgotten that they were cleansed from their old sins* (1:9).
3. Preaching on such topics as the necessity of water baptism for salvation, the uniqueness and identity of the Lord’s church, modesty, the object and basis of our hope, etc. is NOT because *many* here do not know these things, but because sometimes we need to be reminded!

## II. So, like Peter, I must not be negligent to remind you always (1:12):

- A. Peter was doing what God had instructed others to do—give reminders about the truth.
  1. Israelite parents were warned to remember and to remind their children of God’s wondrous acts.
    - a. Deuteronomy 4:9 – “Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren”
    - b. In a particularly relevant warning for us, they were warned not to let their blessings cause them to forget God (Deuteronomy 6:10-12 – “So it shall be, when the Lord your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build,<sup>11</sup> houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—when you have eaten and are full—<sup>12</sup> then beware, lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.”).
    - c. They were not to forget that remembering the Lord meant doing His will (Deut. 8:11 – “Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today”).
    - d. And, they were to remember that forgetting God meant their destruction (Deut. 8:19 – “Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the Lord your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish.”).
  2. God made provision for the children who came to the age of understanding to be instructed in the law by periodic readings (Deut. 31:9-13 – “So Moses wrote this law and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel.<sup>10</sup> And Moses commanded them, saying: “At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles,<sup>11</sup> when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.<sup>12</sup> Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the Lord your God and carefully observe all the words of this law,<sup>13</sup> and that their

children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.”).

3. The pot of manna and Aaron’s rod that budded were placed in the ark of the covenant to remind the Israelites of important events in the past (cite Exodus 16:32-35).
4. The function of the Passover was being a memorial, a means of teaching and reminding the young (Exodus 12:24-27 – “And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. <sup>25</sup> It will come to pass when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service. <sup>26</sup> And it shall be, when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ <sup>27</sup> that you shall say, It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’ ” So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.”).
5. Israel’s kings were to remind themselves of the law frequently (Deuteronomy 17:18-19 – “Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. <sup>19</sup> And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes”).

B. And, if you were to think that so much reminding is not necessary, think about this:

1. Despite all that God did, Israel forgot their past and their God (Judges 2:7-10 – “So the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord which He had done for Israel. <sup>8</sup> Now Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died when he was one hundred and ten years old. <sup>9</sup> And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. <sup>10</sup> When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel.”).
2. Despite God’s commandment to the kings to know Him and His will, this commandment, along with so many others, were evidently not obeyed in the lives of most of the kings.
  - a. Israel’s kings forgot God and served other gods.
  - b. It became so bad that as God had promised the people were destroyed or placed in captivity!

### III. So, as Peter says, “Yes, I think it is right” to remind you (1:13):

A. Being reminded is a significant part of our life as Christian.

1. We partake of the Lord’s Supper, which is a weekly reminder designed to stir us up, to cause us to remember the great sacrifice God has made to bring about our salvation.
2. Some denominations claim that partaking each week cheapens the experience or lowers the impact of the reminder.
3. Does the message of Christ grow dim and meaningless because we are reminded of it regularly, or does God intend for it to have the opposite effect? It is to cause us to appreciate it more, to not forget its significance!

B. Although we may be tempted to grow tired of hearing the “same old sermon topics”...

1. Some Christians are new in the faith and some simply haven’t applied themselves to understand the basics and thus must be taught the same things again! (Heb. 5:12–6:2 – “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. <sup>1</sup> Therefore, leaving the

discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”).

2. Some topics need to be re-preached because of their significance in separating true service to God from error.
  - a. The implication of divine silence
  - b. The need for authority in our service to God
  - c. Subjects like these are simply rejected or not understood or applied by the religious world, which means we are different, and that we are fighting a battle against the rest of the *religious world*. So, we must know why and be encouraged to continue the fight.
3. We must be reminded of even the most fundamental of principles, seeing how easily and often Christians abandon when faced with application in everyday life or some issue between brethren.

#### CONCLUSION:

1. The apostle Peter was not apologetic for reminding his readers of things they already knew. He was following God’s methodology.
2. Preachers today shouldn’t be apologetic either.
  - A. There is no excuse for a poor presentation of God’s truth; but we must remind saints of what they already know.
  - B. Those who truly love the truth don’t mind hearing it repeated (e.g., song – “Tell Me The Old, Old Story”).
3. As we come to the end of this lesson let me remind you that one of God’s most precious of promises to all who will come to Him is that He “will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more” (Heb. 8:12).

God wants to forgive and is willing to forget our sin. But He does so *conditionally* based on F-R-C-B...something the world has refused to learn or remember.

  - A. If you are a Christian, He does so based on your repentance, confession, and prayer for forgiveness.
  - B. What will you choose to do today?