



## Introduction:

*Webster's* defines "remember" as "to have or keep an idea in your mind of something or someone from the past; to think of again; to cause to come back into your mind; to keep in your mind; to not forget." As a believer, it is vital that we remember Jesus Christ and what He did for us through His crosswork.

Without Christ, there would be nothing life changing or significant to remember. Being part of the body of Christ, we also must remember the victories that we see in the lives of others and being thankful to God for working in their hearts (1 Thessalonians 1:9). To remember is to reflect. In this passage, the apostle Paul is reflecting. He is reflecting on his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the people in Philippi that he led to the Lord. Through his reflection we learn some of the greatest principles for life, as well as learning why believers must understand the value in a godly remembrance.

## The Focus:

- **Every believer must understand the value in a godly remembrance. Why?**
  - **Because remembrance encourages thankfulness and joy.**
  - **Because remembrance promotes fellowship.**
  - **Because remembrance keeps you focused on Jesus Christ.**

In his opening to the Philippians, Paul was brought to remembrance, and as a result of this remembrance he was filled with thankfulness and joy. "Thankfulness" means "to be grateful; to express gratitude." "Joy" means "cheerfulness and calm delight." Every time Paul thought about the Philippian believers, he was filled with thankfulness and joy. One thing to keep in mind is that when Paul wrote this letter, he was in prison. In the midst of tough circumstances, Paul was able to express thankfulness and joy. This was all possible by the memory he had of his fellow believers. Truthfully, not all memories are wonderful and pleasant, but when they are processed through a biblical perspective, they can bring joy and comfort (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3). As you remember the good that God has accomplished through you and those around you, let those memories fill you with thankfulness and joy.

Paul's thoughts as he wrote this letter were definitely focused on Christ and those that he had led to the Lord. One such remembrance was the fellowship Paul enjoyed with the believers in Philippi. "*Fellowship*" means "partnership; social interaction; community or association." Our memories promote within us a desire for fellowship. Paul served and suffered with the believers at Philippi. That's why small groups are so vital to your life. Every believer needs godly fellowship with other believers. The Christian life is one that is to be lived in unity, encouraging each other (Romans 12:10-13; 15:5-6; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 4:1-3, 12-16). You must keep in memory the good times spent with others and the great victory that Jesus Christ has won for you.

Paul was encouraged by the faith found in the Philippian church, but his primary focus was always brought back to Jesus Christ. As Paul reflected on the faithfulness of his fellow believers, he desired to encourage them with the confidence he had in Christ. As you reflect back upon the great victories and wonderful times with believers, it helps to keep your focus on the awesomeness of who Christ is and what He accomplished for you and me (Ephesians 3:19-21). Never forget the amazing sacrifice Jesus made for you. Never lose sight of the amazing demonstration of grace and love Jesus displayed for the world those many years ago (Hebrews 12:2). The world can be a distracting place, but allow a godly remembrance to keep you focused on Christ. When you reflect on Christ, remember the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for you – the sacrifice He didn't deserve, but willingly chose so that you can have the greatest freedom of all (Galatians 5:1).

### **Response to the Sermon:**

In the text, the word "*remembrance*" is connected with prayer (Philippians 1:3-4). Outside of your close friends and family, who do you know well enough to talk to God about? Are you sufficiently connected to a small group so that you can be praying for others? Paul's relationship with the believers at Philippi was centered on Christ and the gospel (Philippians 1:5, 7). Paul's love for these believers was because of the partnership they now enjoyed because of their faith in the gospel (Philippians 1:5). Are you actively engaging with people by sharing the gospel? As a believer, we can become cold to the things of God, but if we are actively seeing lives changed by the gospel, we will have much to be thankful for, which in turn will bring us great joy (Philippians 1:3-4).

### **Bible Study Thoughts & Questions:**

Another epistle Paul wrote where he was thankful for the faith of those who were formerly steeped in paganism is 1 Thessalonians. Paul remembered how God had convicted them of their idolatry and how they repented of their sin and immediately began living a life that demonstrated change to the world (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3, 9).

How are you preparing yourself to be ready to engage with people about the gospel of Jesus Christ on a daily basis (1 Thessalonians 1:5)?

What does it take to be ready (Philippians 1:6; Ephesians 6:10-20; 1 Thessalonians 1:5)?

### **Application Questions:**

A godly remembrance encourages us to be thankful, producing joy. It promotes fellowship, and it keeps us focused on Jesus Christ. The common connection between Paul and the believers was their faith in the gospel and their relationship with Christ (Philippians 1:5-6).

What encouraged Paul (and will encourage you) to keep serving others by declaring the gospel (Philippians 1:4-6)?

As believers grow in their faith, who has a major role in seeing a believer mature in their faith (Philippians 1:6)?

As a believer, what is part of the maturity process (Philippians 1:29)?

**Prayer:**

- Pray that you would remember who you were before you knew Christ and who He has made you (Ephesians 2:11-18; 2 Corinthians 5:17).
- Pray that you would boldly tell others the good news of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16; Philippians 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20).
- Pray for those who have trusted Christ and be thankful for what God has accomplished in and through them (Philippians 1:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3, 5-9).