

*"A Remembrance
of Me"*

by

Alfred P. Gibbs

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“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it and said: ‘Take, eat, this is My body which is given for you: this do for a remembrance of Me’. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying: ‘This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it for a remembrance of Me’” (1 Cor. 11: 23-25).

IN THESE WORDS THE APOSTLE PAUL, by the Spirit’s inspiration, passes on to us the special revelation which the ascended and glorified Son of God had given him concerning the ordinance of the Lord’s supper. Paul had not been present on that fateful eve when the Lord first instituted it; hence the Saviour had *directly* communicated to His devoted servant, the circumstances, order, significance and purpose of the Lord’s supper.

We shall not concern ourselves, at this time, with the significance of the loaf and the cup; but concentrate on that twice repeated phrase: “This do for a

remembrance of Me." From these words we are impressed with the heart's desire of our blessed Lord to be remembered by His blood-bought people. But there is a great deal more than this implied by this statement. As the Son of God looked down the corridor of the ages yet unborn, He saw how much *we would need* this constant remembrance of Himself in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup. Well He knew how fickle we would prove, what short memories we would have, and that

"No infant's changing pleasure
Is like our wandering mind."

In view of this, He instituted this simple ordinance and explained its purpose: "*This do for a remembrance of Me.*" From that time on, companies of believers, large and small, have gathered together in His name alone and, in Scriptural simplicity, have sought to carry out the request of the One, "Whom, having not seen they love."

The purpose, therefore, that brings the Lord's people together on the Lord's day to partake of the Lord's supper is not to preach the gospel to the unsaved; or to hear a learned exposition of Scripture from some gifted preacher; or to listen to the well modulated and harmonious voices of a finely trained choir; or to have the great need of the mission field brought to our attention; or even to engage in the

holy act of intercession in prayer for others. The sole purpose of the Lord's supper is to provide an opportunity for the Lord's people to concentrate their hearts' affection and their minds' remembrance on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since the remembrance of Christ is the purpose of the Lord's supper, it follows that anything that distracts the mind from this object must be excluded. Many Christians have bemoaned the fact that their minds have often wandered during the meeting and, instead of fulfilling the request of their Lord to remember Him, they have allowed their thoughts to roam the fields of fancy. Thus the Lord has been robbed of His portion, and they have missed the blessedness that comes from occupation with Him.

The concentration of one's mind on a single subject for any length of time is not easy, but it can be accomplished by diligent practice. It calls for a constant exercise of *the will*, by which wandering thoughts are arrested and brought back to the purpose of the gathering and the subject that should occupy the mind. Sometimes young believers ask: “What should be my thoughts as I sit at the table, and how can I best control these thoughts to the glory of the Lord Jesus during the entire period of the meeting?”

We will suggest seven things that may well occupy the minds of each believer as, in obedience to his

Lord, he gathers with his fellow-Christians around a table, on which has been placed a loaf of bread, and a cup containing the fruit of the vine, the Lord's own appointed emblems of His body and blood, forceful reminder of the cost by which his eternal redemption has been secured.

First, REMEMBER HIS NAME. In Ps. 20: 7 David declared: “Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will *remember the name* of the Lord our God.” Concentration on the names of our Lord is bound to produce worship. A name, in Scripture, predicates character. “*I am Jehovah, that is My name, and My glory will I not give to another!*” (Isa. 42: 8). Well sang the poet:

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!”

Think of Him as *Jesus*, the name given at His birth. It means Jehovah-Saviour. “Thou shalt call His name Jesus, because He shall save” (Matt. 1: 21). What thoughts this should stir in the Christian's breast! Think of Him as the *Christ*, or the anointed One of God, who so perfectly translated the will of His Father into terms of absolute obedience, even unto death. Think of Him as the *Lord*, whom God hath highly exalted and given a name above every name. Think of Him as the One called *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of*

Eternity and the *Prince of Peace* (Isa. 9: 6). Think of Him as the *Logos*, the *Word*. Language has been well described as "the incarnation of thought." Just as our thoughts are expressed to others in words, so Christ, as the living Word, has revealed God, in all the glory of His Being and the full perfection of His attributes.

"Thou art the everlasting Word,
The Father's only Son,
God manifest, God seen and heard,
And heaven's beloved One!"

Truly His name "is as ointment poured forth" (Song of Sol. 1: 3). As we remember His name and all that it unfolds to us of His infinite worth and exquisite loveliness there shall rise, from our hearts, the sweet incense of worship which is so pleasing to the Father (John 4: 23).

Second, REMEMBER HIS WORKS. In 1 Chron. 15: 25 to 16: 3 there is a description of David's removal of the ark of the Lord from the house of Obededom to a tent he had specially prepared for it. As the ark, the symbol of God's presence with His people, was set in the midst of the tent, the people of God lifted up their voices with praise. On that day David delivered a psalm into the hands of Asaph to commemorate the glad occasion. In this psalm these words occur: "*Remember His marvelous works that*

He hath done!" (1 Chron. 16: 12). Well might the Christian, as he gathers with his fellow-believers, with the Lord in the midst (Matt. 18: 20), heed the words of "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam. 23: 2).

Think of His marvelous works in *creation*, for all things were created by and for the Son of God (Col. 1: 16). The vast universe, of which this earth forms but a speck, came into being because "He spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast" (Ps. 33: 9). As the great "Master Workman" (Prov. 8: 30), He created man in His own image, breathed into the clay He had formed the breath of life, and man became a living soul (Gen. 2). But all these works of creation fade into utter insignificance in comparison with the mighty work of *redemption* which He accomplished, at the infinite cost of the sacrifice of Himself.

"When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary;
O Lamb of God, my Sacrifice,
I must remember Thee!"

This work He came to do, lived to accomplish and died to consummate (Luke 2: 49; John 4: 34; 19: 30). The believer, as he remembers this marvelous work, can now thankfully exclaim: "Thou hast made me glad through Thy work!" (Ps. 92: 4).

Third, REMEMBER HIS LOVE. “We will be glad and rejoice in Thee, we will remember Thy love more than wine” (Song of Sol. 1:4). As the believer concentrates on “that love of Christ, that passeth knowledge” (Eph. 3:19), he will soon find himself beyond his depth and be lost in wonder and praise, as his soul is flooded with precious thoughts of that “love, so amazing, so Divine.” The evident proof of His love is seen in the emblems upon the table—His body given, His blood shed. As the soul contemplates that love, all cold formality must surely melt, and there will rise, from our hearts, an appreciation of His love. The deeps of His love will call to the deeps of our being and we shall respond: “We love Him because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). We could remember many things about His love: That it is *immeasurable* (Eph. 3:18); *incomprehensible* (Eph. 3:19); *eternal* (Jer. 31:3); *inseparable* (Rom. 8:35-39); and *unquenchable* (Song of Sol. 8:7). Yes, there will surely be plenty to occupy our thoughts as we dwell on this theme.

Fourth, REMEMBER HIS AFFLICTION (Lam. 3:19). Here Christ speaks prophetically through the lips of Jeremiah and says: “Remember My affliction and My misery, the wormwood and the gall.” Here the soul stands on holy ground, and the hush of eternity falls upon the believer’s spirit as he con-

templates the awful sufferings of the Son of God, by which his salvation has been accomplished. The Saviour draws near and whispers, as it were: "Remember, that I became the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Remember, that I suffered the contradiction of sinners against Myself and endured the cross and despised the shame. Remember, that all the floodgates of the wrath of God were opened, in unparalleled fury, upon My unprotected head, as I hung upon the cross bearing all your sins in My body. Remember, I was forsaken of My God in that alone, dark and mysterious hour and that I drank, all alone, the awful cup of suffering to its last dark dregs and I did it all for you. Remember My affliction and My misery, the wormwood and the gall."

Now look at the 20th verse of Lamentations 3. This is the response of the believer to this plea. Filled with reverential awe he replies: "My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is bowed within me." Each child of God would do well to remember the fearful cost of his redemption to the blessed Lord Jesus, who loved him and gave Himself for him.

Fifth, REMEMBER HIS EXALTATION. Paul could triumphantly exclaim: "Remember that Jesus Christ . . . was raised from the dead, according to my gospel"! (2 Tim. 2: 8). We gather, not only to

remember the Man of Calvary, but the risen Lord in glory. He who once suffered is now exalted, and lives in the power of an endless life, crowned with glory and honor. He is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and has been given a Name which is above every name! Thus we remember Him as the glorified Son of God, “the Head over all things to the Church,” and the One who now lives for us as our Great High Priest with God. We can truthfully sing:

“Rise, my soul, behold 'tis Jesus!
 Jesus fills thy wondering eyes;
 See Him there, in glory seated,
 Where thy sins no more can rise!”

“Gazing on the Lord in glory,
 While our hearts in worship bow;
 There we read the wondrous story
 Of the cross, its shame and woe.”

As we enter into the holiest through that new and living way and, by faith, apprehend the glorious fact that Christ is there for us, our hearts will be lifted above the sordid things of this world and be

“Shut in with Him, far, far above
 The restless world that wars below.”

Sixth, REMEMBER HIS MERCIES. The apostle Paul exhorted the saints at Ephesus thus:

"Remember that ye being in *time past* Gentiles in the flesh . . . that at *that time* ye were without Christ . . . having no hope and without God in the world. But *now*, in Christ Jesus, ye, who were sometimes far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2: 11-13). It is a good thing to remember the *black past* of our unsaved days and the *bright present* of our blessedness in Christ and recall that the great change has come about entirely because of the superabounding, sovereign grace of God as seen in the gift of His beloved Son. Surely no believer can remain unmoved as he recalls that happy day when he trusted Christ as his Saviour and knew the joy of sins forgiven and of peace with God. Yes, we do well to remember the mercies of the Lord and say with David: "Great are Thy tender mercies, O Lord!" (Ps. 119: 156).

Lastly, REMEMBER HIS WORDS. In His farewell speech to the elders of the church at Ephesus, Paul said: "Ye ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive!'" (Acts 20; 35). As we sit in His presence at the table we would do well to remember His words. This involves the reading and study of the Scriptures which is incumbent upon all Christians. Much poverty of soul and coldness of spirit is due to the fact that the word of Christ is not "dwelling in us richly"

(Col. 3: 16). As we call to mind some of the words of the Saviour and meditate upon them, our hearts will be warmed as were the two disciples on the Emmaus highway (Luke 24: 32). As we think of His words of gracious invitation, of assuring love, of satisfying consolation and of glorious anticipation, and muse upon them, “the fire will burn” in our souls, and our “tongues will become the pens of ready writers” (Ps. 39: 3; 45: 1).

May the Lord be pleased to “stir up our pure souls by way of remembrance,” so that when we come together to break the loaf and drink of the cup, we may fulfill the purpose He had in instituting the supper: “This do for a remembrance of Me.”

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