**Recalibrate - Week 2 – Remember** - **Good**

**Introduction: Prone to Forget**

We all have a tendency to forget things in our life, right? Most of us forget things every single day. And we probably wouldn't say that we start the day intending to be forgetful, but it just happens to the best of us, doesn't it?

I just recently heard a story of a guy from Chicago going to visit some family on their family farm. He wasn’t there very long and the relative, who was also a farmer gave a loud whistle and suddenly his dog came running towards him and then immediately began herding the cattle into the corral, and then latched the gate with her paw. *“Wow, that’s a pretty amazing dog. What her name?”* The family member asked. The forgetful farmer thought a minute, and then asked, *"What do you call that red flower that smells good and has thorns on the stem?"* Need clarification that the Chicago guy is saying this… *"A rose?" "That's it!"* The farmer turned to his wife and said, *"Hey Rose, what do we call this dog?"*

We all forget things. Some things that don't mean much and then some things that have significantly more ramifications, like that one! For example, most of us, at one point or another, have probably forgotten:

* Where we parked a car
* Some lyrics to a song
* This one doesn’t match Why we went to Target, but then walked out with 12 extra things
* A password
* That *thing* that we walked into the room to get

Introduce tile invention. Have an interactive moment where you find something you lost (Bible)

It’s one thing to forget all that but it’s a totally different ballgame to forget…

* A spouses name
* To pay a bill
* To feed the children
* A birthday/anniversary
* To let the dogs outside

~~When I was younger, I would love to go to Wal-Mart with my mom. I didn't care for the shopping part, but she would go and shop and I would go to the TV aisle. I was easily entertained as a child! I loved the TV aisle because there would be different shows and games on every set. And I just remember being so enamored by all the TVs. But we had a rule that I had to stay in that exact aisle until she came and got me.~~

~~This one particular time I remember waiting in the TV aisle an exceptionally long amount of time. It seemed like forever, but my mom wasn't coming to get me. So I decided to go and look for her. I went up and down every aisle in the store and it turned out that she left me! She forgot her child! Her favorite child! Now before you all judge my mom…a lot of parents have probably done this at one time or another, am I right?!~~

~~But the point is that we are all prone to forget things, even the really, really important and valuable things in life. Take out this sentence. But I don't think the list of things that we forget ends with forgetting where we left a child.~~ I think we are also prone to forget who we are in relation to God. This is a big one for many of us. And so today we want to spend the next several minutes discovering how the act of worship helps us remember who God is and who we are.

**Series Recap**

I know for me, as I go through the crazy twists and turns of my days and weeks, it’s easy for me to drift off course spiritually. We all probably do that. We can easily forget the truths that we know in our heads and we can wander from God and end up in places that we never intended to be.

Last week we talked about how a compass is always pointing us to true north. And spiritually speaking, sometimes we need to **recalibrate** ourselves so that we can be pointed in the right direction towards God.

And in this series, we are learning more about what it means to worship. Because…

* Worship points us back to Jesus.
* Worship recalibrates our hearts to God.
* Worship helps us remember who God is and who we are

Need better transition statement. But even as common as forgetting can be, today we don't want to spend all our time talking about forgetting, we want to hone in on this practice of “**remembering**.”

**Word: I Samuel 7**

Need to get to the primary text sooner. Too much background.

Again, forgetting things is not something new; I bet your parents forgot your name from time to time, especially in those moments of frustration! My grandmother would often call me her dog’s name!

As long as people have been around, forgetting is something that we have all done. We can even go back to Old Testament times where we see that the people of God often forgetting when it came to their relationship with him. In the Old Testament book of I Samuel the people were constantly drifting away from God.

Today we are going to look at one story from I Samuel to see what we can learn about this practice of “**remembering**.”

Before we jump into I Samuel 7, let me give you a little context as to what is happening here. Samuel was a prophet and leader in Israel. And in chapters 4-7 of the first book of Samuel he describes a series of battles that take place between long time enemies, the Israelites and the Philistines.

After a crippling defeat at the hands of the Philistines, the Israelites came up with a strategy that if they brought the “ark of the covenant” with them to battle, they would be guaranteed victory. For them, describe this – what was it? the ark was this seems slightly off the literal housed the very presence and power of God. But not only did that strategy NOT work, the prized “ark of the covenant” was stolen by their enemies and taken to their pagan temples.

God did not look on this kindly, so when the Philistines placed the ark next to the their idol of Dagon, God kept knocking that idol over until it’s head finally broke off! All this crazy stuff started happening and it freaked… ~~Then God sent plagues of tumors to the Philistines (Yikes – is this a distraction without more explanation?).~~ This freaked them out so much that they immediately returned the ark BACK to the Israelites out of fear for God. The Nation of Israel turned back to God and the battle continued.

This is where we pick up the story in I Samuel 7 verse 1 where we read:

***“Then all the Israelites turned back to the Lord. 3So Samuel spoke to all the Israelites. He said, “Do you really want to return to the Lord with all your hearts? If you do, get rid of your false gods. Get rid of your statues of female gods that are named Ashtoreth. Commit yourselves to the Lord. Serve him only. Then he will save you from the power of the Philistines.”Maybe describe this last verse instead of quoting it. Maybe this verse needs to come later as resolution after the following paragraphs? 4So the Israelites put away their statues of gods that were named Baal. They put away their statues of female gods that were named Ashtoreth. They served the Lord only.”*** *(I Samuel 7:1-4)*

The Nation of Israel was under attack, but they also had clearly lost their way and forgotten how God had repeatedly protected them and provided for them. Their memory was short and they failed to remember how throughout their history he had led them to freedom from their oppressors. They even began to pursue other gods or idols.

But before we throw them under the bus, don’t we do the same? Don’t we often fail to remember who God is and what he has done for us? How quickly I lose sight of the fact that when I didn’t have a chance in the world, God loved me and gave me hope and purpose and a future.

And much like the Nation of Israel I start chasing after other stuff thinking that’s how I can find fulfillment or that somehow something or someone other than God himself will get me through whatever it is I am going through. I forget that he loves me more than anyone will ever love me. That he would rather die than live without me. And that he gives me more than I could ever ask for – unconditional love, forgiveness, acceptance, and a community of people who will get me through anything life brings my way.

When I forget who the one true God is, the idols I turn to may not be physical statues, but they are every bit as real. Give a few examples here…

And so every day I need to remember…

* Who it is I worship.
* Who it is I follow.
* And in whose presence I so long to be found.

This was not only true about the Nation of Israel and true about us, it was true about the very first followers of Jesus. His very closest followers were so easily distracted. Like the Israelites before them and all of us who follow, they often failed to remember who Jesus was and why he came. They longed to pursue many of the same idols you and I chase after: move these up idols like relationships, security, success, and recognition.

And so Jesus reminds us as he reminded them. Here is who I am:

* ***"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty****. (John 6:35)*
* ***"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*** *(John 8:12)*
* ***"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep****. (John 10:11)*
* ***"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.”*** *(John 11:25–26)*
* ***"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*** *(John 14:6)*
* ***"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*** *(John 15:5)*

*Add 7th I am statement.*

And God also reminds of who we are . . . He says:

* ***You are a child of God.*** *(John 1:12)*
* ***You are a friend of Jesus.*** *(John 15:15)*
* ***You are no longer a slave to sin.*** *(Romans 6:6)*
* ***You are free from sin and death.*** *(Romans 8:2)*
* ***You are accepted by Christ.*** *(Romans 15:7)*
* ***You are a new creation in Christ.*** *(2 Corinthians 5:17)*
* ***You are chosen, holy, and blameless before God.*** *(Ephesians 1:4)*

That is who I am and that is who you are! And I don’t know about you, but I need those reminders every single day, sometimes even every moment of every day!

Description of them putting away their idols with v. 4 on screen here. When the Nation of Israel remembered who God is and their desperate need for him, they came together to fast and confess.

***Use NIV “When the people had come together at Mizpah, they went to the well and got water. They poured it out in front of the Lord. On that day they didn’t eat any food. They admitted they had sinned. They said, ‘We’ve sinned against the Lord.’” (I Samuel 7:6)***

When we recognize we have drifted, we can recalibrate by remembering who God is and who we are, but we also need to confess to whatever we’ve believed or done that has taken us off course, putting our hope in something or someone other than Jesus.

**Creative Moment: Time of Remembering and Confessing**

* Possibly begin with songs about who God is and who we are
* Lead us into a time of confession (Possible song for this: “Jesus is Calling”) Need some instruction about confessing and the things we need to confess… Needs New Testament reference to confession.
* We need to get specific here with the confession – name some stuff that people may need to confess . . .
* Bring back “recalibrate” and “worship” into this. How remembering and confessing is a part of this.

**Conclusion: Ebenezer**

There was something else the Nation of Israel did during this time of recalibrating that I believe is significant. Let’s take another look…

***“Then Samuel got a big stone. He set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer. He said, “’The Lord has helped us every step of the way.’”*** *(I Samuel 7:12)*

This victory was noteworthy for the Nation of Israel. And Samuel memorialized it by building a stone monument "between Mizpah and Shen," apparently the place where their enemies were driven back. He gave this monument or altar the name “Ebenezer” which is where Charles Dickens came up with the name for the main character in The Christmas Carol . . . I’m kidding. But that’s what I always think of.

This name “Ebenezer” is made up of two Hebrew words: 'eben,' which means stone, and 'ezer,' which means help or helper. So Ebenezer means “stone of help” or “stone of the Helper” a name frequently applied to God.

This stone reminded the Nation of Israel of this moment when they turned away from their idols and back toward the one true God who helped them by giving them victory over their enemies.

Go right into Communion.

**Communion Idea**

Better transition.

Communion is a time to recalibrate - to remember. The apostle Paul wrote these words:

***“The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' 25In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' 26For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."*** *(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)*

Communion is a sort of Ebenezer. It is a memorial to the one who is our true helper. The one who showed us his total and complete love by giving up his life for us. As we move from a time of **confession** to a time of **communion**, let’s remember this moment. Let’s see this time as a weekly opportunity to go back to the cross and empty tomb – the place where we are given ultimate victory.

When you come forward you will eat the bread and drink the cup. You can also pick up a stone and on that can we do this? stone is the word “helper.” Take that stone with you. Put it in your pocket or place it somewhere as a daily reminder of who you are and who God is and the victory that he can bring to you.