**Recalibrate Week 2 - Remember**

**Message Big Idea**: Through worship we remember who God is and who we are.

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 7:1-14, John 14:26

**NOTE**: Every person needs a stone that should be handed out as people arrive or placed on chairs. You also need markers available.

**OPTION**: Genius idea to have a Tile for the introduction.

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**Introduction: Prone to Forget**

We all have a tendency to forget things in our lives, right? Most of us forget things every single day. We don’t start the day intending to be forgetful, but it just happens to the best of us.

I 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, even latching the gate with her paw. *“Wow, that’s a pretty amazing dog. What’s her name?”* the Chicago guy 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?"* The Chicago guy responded, *"A rose?" "That's it!"* the farmer exclaimed. Then he 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. For example, most of us, at one point or another, have probably forgotten:

* Where we parked the car.
* Our password for a website.
* Or where we placed our keys.

There are actually products on the market intended to help us with our forgetfulness. How many of you have seen this *(picture)* “Tile” product? If you’re not familiar, you can place these little tags on your keys, your purse, on anything, really, and then you can use an app on your phone to find it. You just press a button on your phone and the tile starts to make noise.

*(Genius idea: Place a tile in a Bible and preplace it somewhere in one of the front rows. Tell people you can’t find your Bible, but not to fear…you put a tile on it! Then use your phone to make the tile ring and have a person bring it to you on stage.)*

What a helpful invention! The only thing I wonder is what happens when the item you misplace is your phone?

Now, it’s one thing to forget where I placed my keys, but it’s a totally different ballgame to forget…

* To pay a bill
* To let the dogs outside
* To feed the children

Or to forget…

* A spouse’s name
* An important event
* A best friend’s birthday

And, 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**

*(Series graphic)* If you’re anything like 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 in some way or another. 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 one thing that helps us recalibrate is worship.

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

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

So today, we want to hone in on this practice of “**Remembering**.”

**Word: I Samuel 7**

Forgetting is not something new; I bet your parents or grandparents forgot your name from time to time, especially in moments of frustration. My grandmother would often call me her dog’s name!

As long as people have been around, forgetting is something we have done. We can even go back to Old Testament times where we see that the people of God, the Israelites, often forgot who God is and who they were. In the Old Testament book of I Samuel, the people were constantly drifting away from God. They had begun to worship the false gods of their pagan neighbors. They had lost sight of their identity as the beloved people of the one true God.

Today we are going to look at one story from I Samuel 7 to see what we can learn about this practice of “**remembering**.” But before we jump into the text, let me give you a little context as to what is happening here.

Samuel was a prophet and leader in Israel, and in chapters 4-6 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 begin to come to their senses. Starting in 1 Samuel 7 verse two we read:

***“Then all the Israelites turned back to the Lord. So 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.’” -1 Samuel 7:2-3***

Sometime when I read these Old Testament stories, I wonder why the Israelites were so prone to forget. They had clearly lost their way and forgotten how God had repeatedly protected them and provided for them. Throughout their history he had led them to freedom from their oppressors time and time again. Why would they even pursue other gods or idols?

But before we throw them under the bus, don’t we do the same thing? 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 we forget who the one true God is, the idols we turn to may not be physical statues, but they are every bit as real.

* We turn to romantic relationships.
* We turn to career success.
* We turn to the recognition of people.
* We turn to the security of wealth.
* We turn to the rush of pleasure.

And so every day we need to remember…

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

This tendency to forget is not only true about the Israelites and true about us; it was also true about the very first followers of Jesus. Jesus’ closest friends were so easily distracted. Like the Israelites before them and all of us who follow, they often failed to remember who Jesus is and why he came. They longed to pursue many of the same idols you and I chase after.

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

And so over and over again, Jesus reminds them and us who he is. He says: *(Build a list with just the phrases in red) (Add ambient keys/pad during this moment)*

* ***"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 gate.” Whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture****. (John 10:9)*
* ***"I am the good shepherd.” The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep****. (John 10:11)*
* ***"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).*
* ***"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)*

Jesus reminds us who he is, and then all throughout the New Testament, God reminds us who we are. He says: *(Build a list)*

* ***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 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***
* ***You are loved. -1 John 4:10***

As a follower of Jesus, that is who I am and that is who you are! And I don’t know about you, but I need to remember that every single day, sometimes even every moment of every day! In fact, let’s change the pronouns on this list and declare our identity together this morning. *(change to new slide)* On the count of three, let’s say these aloud together as we remember. Ready? One, two, three…

* ***I am a child of God.***
* ***I am a friend of Jesus.***
* ***I am no longer a slave to sin.***
* ***I am accepted by Christ.***
* ***I am a new creation in Christ.***
* ***I am chosen, holy, and blameless before God.***
* ***I am loved.***

Here’s the truth, friends. Many of us have forgotten who we are. As we read through that list, some of us just read something we’ve forgotten or perhaps something we struggle to fully believe. As you look at that list, which one do you need to remember today? That you are a child? That you are a new? That you are loved?

*(1 Samuel 7:4-6)* When the people of Israel remembered who God is and who they were, they responded by getting rid of their idols. They cast aside everything that wasn’t truth. And then they fasted and confessed where they had gone wrong. They confessed what they had forgotten. Confession isn’t just about recounting our sins; it’s also about admitting what we have forgotten.

*(Band comes on stage)* So here’s what we’re going to do… When you came in today, you received a stone and a marker *(if you have markers on a table somewhere, just adjust the directions)*. Go ahead and pick up both of them.

I want you to take a look at this list again.

* ***CHILD - I am a child of God.***
* ***FRIEND - I am a friend of Jesus.***
* ***FREE - I am no longer a slave to sin.***
* ***ACCEPTED - I am accepted by Christ.***
* ***NEW - I am a new creation in Christ.***
* ***CHOSEN - I am chosen, holy, and blameless before God.***
* ***LOVED - I am loved.***

We’ve added a key word before each statement. Which one do you need to remember today? Which one are you prone to forget? I want you to write the keyword for that statement on the stone in your hand. When we have drifted, we can recalibrate by remembering who God is and who we are. So write on that stone what you need to remember as the band leads us in a time of remembering.

**Song Medley**

Choruses that remind us of our identity in Jesus.

**Ebenezer**

After Samuel and the Israelites had this time of remembering and confessing, their enemies, the Philistines attacked, but this time, God gave the Israelites the victory. In response to all that had just happened, Samuel did something significant.

***“Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us.’” -I Samuel 7:12***

Samuel wanted the community to remember what God had done so he memorialized this moment in their history by building a stone monument. He gave this monument 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.” The stone reminded the Israelites of this moment when they turned away from their idols and back toward the one true God…a time when their hearts were recalibrated to God.

I want to encourage you to take this stone home and place it somewhere where you will see it often. May it be a sort of memorial of what you experienced here this morning…to remind you of who God is and who you are.

**Communion**

*(Message leads right into Communion)* There is another way we memorialize who God is and who we are every week here at COMMUNITY. 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. Communion is a time for us to remember the cross and the empty tomb – the place where we are given ultimate victory.

We’re going to sing a song, and as we do the ushers are going to pass out the elements – the bread which represents Christ’s body broken for us and the juice which represents his blood shed for us. If you would like to remember with us in this time, I want to ask you to take the elements and hold on to them and in a moment I’ll return and we’ll receive them together.

**Song: Good, Good Father**

In this moment, we remember. We remember who Jesus is and what he has done. Let’s declare it as we recite his “I am” statements back to him aloud together. Jesus…

* ***You are the Bread of Life.***
* ***You are the Light of the World.***
* ***You are the Gate.***

Let’s remember who Jesus is as we receive the bread together. *(Receive bread)*

And, Jesus… say it with me…

* ***You are the Good Shepherd.***
* ***You are the Way, the Truth, and the Life.***
* ***You are the Vine.***

Let’s remember who Jesus is as we receive the cup together. *(Receive juice)*

One last declaration. Say it with me… Jesus…

* ***You are the Resurrection and the Life.***

Let’s pray.