

# Scripture and the Past

## The Importance of the Past

1. The World puts major emphasis on our past. (Example: Childhood and behavior)
2. Evangelical church sometimes discounts the past.
3. Both extremes of dwelling on the past and discounting the past are wrong.

## Biblical Theology About the Past

1. God created time; he created us with the ability to remember things.
2. God continually leaves us memorials to remember his faithfulness.
  - Noah and the flood (Genesis 9:11-17)
  - Jacob and Laban (Genesis 31:44-55)
  - Passover (Exodus 12:1-27)
  - Entrance into the Promised Land (Joshua 4:1-9)
  - Lord's Supper (Matt. 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

## The Purpose of Memorials

1. As a sign of a treaty, promise, or covenant.
2. To remember the faithfulness of God.
3. As a tool to train and teach the next generation.
4. To leave a legacy. An inheritance, *"something that has come from a predecessor or the past, to receive from one's ancestors."*

## God Uses our Own Past to Remind Us of His Faithfulness

1. Our past can give us courage: David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17:31-37)
2. Our past can remind us that God is faithful in the face of trials: Job (Job 2:9,10)
3. Our past can remind us we have been forgiven, therefore we need to forgive: Parable of The Wicked Servant (Matt. 18:23-35)
4. Our past reminds us not to be proud for what God gives us: Israel entering the Promised Land. (Deut. 9:6,7)

## Dead Memorials: When we Forget the Past

1. Deut. 32:18, *"You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you **forgot** the God who gave you birth."*
2. Judges 3:7, *"The Israelites did evil in the sight of the Lord: they **forgot** the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs."*
3. 1 Samuel 12:9, *"But they **forgot** the Lord their God; so he sold them into the hand of Sisera, the commander of the army of Hazor, and into the hands of the Philistines and the king of Moab, who fought against them."*
4. Hosea 2:13, *"I will punish her for the days she burned incense to the Baals; she decked herself with rings and jewelry, and went after her lovers, but me she **forgot**," declares the Lord."*
5. Hosea 13:6, *"When I fed them, they were satisfied they became proud; then they **forgot** me."*

## Biblical Principles on Handling the Past

1. God wants us to ask him about our past and present (Example: Habakkuk)
2. Unwise choices in the past will negatively impact the present. Unwise choices in the present will negatively impact the future. (Gal. 6:7)
3. He who covers sin today, it will be bad for them in the future. (Prov. 28:13)
4. Look to the past, for hope for the future. (Psalm 42:4-6)
5. Handle the problems of today, today. Do not let them become part of your past. (Eph. 4:25-27)
6. If I don't handle sin properly in the present, it becomes part of my past, and affects my future. (Prov. 26:11)
7. Our only option is to deal with life today. (Matt. 6:34)

<b>ORGANIZING THE PAST</b>		
	<b>INNOCENT</b>	<b>GUILTY</b>
<b>WELL</b>	<p><b>The Innocent Past when you responded well requires: Authentic Suffering</b></p> <p><b>You were sinned against; but you responded well.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Face it honestly (Psalm 73:2)</li> <li>2. Face it biblically (Psalm 73:17)</li> <li>3. Face it hopefully (2 Cor. 1:3)</li> <li>4. Face it missionally (2 Cor. 1:4)</li> </ol> <p><b>Example: Paul's Thorn in the flesh.</b></p>	<p><b>The Guilty Past when you responded well requires: Joyful Remembrance</b></p> <p><b>You sinned but handled it quickly.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When you do not feel forgiven, choose to believe God's promises. (1 John 1:9)</li> <li>2. When you continually rehearse your failures, learn not to wallow in the sins of the past. (Jeremiah 33:8,9)</li> </ol> <p><b>Example: Zaccheus</b></p>
<b>POORLY</b>	<p><b>The Innocent Past when you responded poorly requires: Humble Analysis</b></p> <p><b>You were sinned against; but you handled it poorly.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did you return evil for evil? (Rom. 12)</li> <li>2. Did you develop bitterness toward God? (Ruth)</li> <li>3. Did you develop an unbiblical view of people? (Matt. 22:37-40)</li> <li>4. Did you develop an unbiblical view of yourself? (Rom. 12:3)</li> <li>5. Should you confront the abuser? (Matt. 18:15-18)</li> <li>6. If you confronted your abuser, and he requested forgiveness, have you granted it? (Eph. 4:32)</li> </ol> <p><b>Example: Naomi (Ruth)</b></p>	<p><b>The Guilty Past when you responded poorly requires: Honest Self Confrontation</b></p> <p><b>You sinned and responded poorly with additional sin.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Realize that everyone has sin in their past. (1 John 18-10)</li> <li>2. Understand the key question is – How did you respond after the event? (2 Sam. 11:3-4)</li> <li>3. Beware of significant consequences for not dealing with sin quickly. (Prov. 13:15)</li> <li>4. Rejoice because there is hope for those who sin. (Psalms 32:1-7)</li> </ol> <p><b>Example: Achan (Joshua)</b></p>

*(Chart from Stephen Viars: "Putting Your Past in Its Place")*

