

“Remember”
Selected Scriptures
December 29, 2019

The human mind is an amazing creation. Even in a fallen world where things don't work as they should, the more we learn about how God made us, the more in awe of Him we should stand. The human mind far exceeds any storage capacity of any hard drive that we have today. Rough estimates suggest our minds are capable of storing 2.5 petabytes of data. That's 2 million 500 hundred thousand gigabytes. More research is showing that there is virtually no limit to the storage capacity of our minds.

I've always thought that at least one of the things *savants* show us is a glimpse of the amazing minds God has given us. While often faced with other difficulties, savants can remember things the average person can't even imagine. Perhaps you have known someone who can list the day of the week you were born almost instantly.

Others have amazing musical abilities, able to play the most complicated classical piano pieces after hearing them once. I'm pretty sure that ability passed me by. Here we see just a small picture of what our minds are capable of.

If you're like me, you're wondering why your brain doesn't seem to firing on all those cylinders. I mean, if the amount of information I can store in my mind is virtually limitless, why does it seem like I remember so few things? It's hard to remember what I had for lunch yesterday!

In a fallen world that is subjected to futility our minds do not work as they ought, especially when it comes to our memory. And yet the mind is central to the Christian life. Romans 12:2 tells us, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the *renewing of your mind*, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

One of the ways we renew our minds is by remembering. And God calls us again and again in Scripture to remember.

The sheer number of times God calls us to remember teaches us at least two things

- 1) It's importance
- 2) Our propensity to forget

Many of the problems we face are because we don't remember what we should. And one of the reasons we don't remember what we should is because we tend to forget. Remembering takes work. It doesn't just happen. And in our day an age with access to information instantly, we remember less and less. If the mind does not need to remember something, it doesn't. If you can google the answer, your brain says, “Why bother?”

As we stand at the beginning of a new year, I think it is important for us to heed God's admonition to remember. It's a perfect time to reflect on the last year and prepare for the next. The title of this message is “Remember.” That of course is a little vague. What should we remember? Everything? Some things? The most important thing we need to remember is God.

God calls us to remember in order to fuel our faith in Him. We're going to spend our time remembering three aspects of God:

- I. Who He Is**
- II. What He Has Done**
- III. What He Will Do**

The purpose of remembering these things is to fuel our faith in Him. This isn't just an intellectual exercise, like regurgitating information on an exam and then forgetting it as soon as you're done.

Remembering who God is fuels our faith in Him
Remembering what God has done fuels our faith in Him
Remembering what God will do fuels our faith in Him

So my aim this morning is to remind us of our great God, His great works, and His great promises. And as we remember these things, our faith in Him should increase.

I don't know what 2019 was like for all of you. It may have been a great year of great joy and blessing, but it may have been the hardest year you have ever faced. Either way, we need to remember who God is, what He has done, and what He will do.

I don't know what 2020 will be like for you. It may be that this year you walk through the valley of the shadow of death in a way you never have before. It may be a year of joys you have never experience before. But either way, we need to remember who God is, what He has done, and what He will do.

So let's begin by remembering who God is and let that fuel our faith in Him.

I. Remembering who God is fuels our faith in Him

Turn with me to Exodus 3. As you turn, we obviously cannot do an in depth look at who God is this morning. I just want to whet your appetite with some of His attributes to encourage you to let this year be the year you grow in your knowledge of our infinite God perhaps more than ever. If you don't set your mind on this high and lofty goal, you won't just stumble into a greater knowledge of God through His Word. It will have to be a priority for you.

In Exodus 3, we have, what I believe to be, one of the most fundamental revelations of who God is in all of Scripture. And what is important for us this morning is the connection it has to remembering who God is. Let's read Exodus 3:13-15.

"Then Moses said to God, 'Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?'" 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' " 15 God, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations."

God has just called Moses to go back to Egypt and tell Pharaoh to release the Israelites from slavery so they can go worship Him. So Moses asks God what he should say if they ask who has sent him.

So God reveals His name to Moses. In verse 14 God says His name is I AM. The word for “I am” comes from the Hebrew verb, “to be.” This is a word about existence, about being. When God says, “I AM,” He is saying, “I exist.”

That might sound simple, but I assure you it is a life altering reality. *If God exists, then everything changes!* If God exists, then *He* is the ultimate reality of the universe, and everything finds its source in Him.

Then, in verse 15, God says His name is the LORD, which your Bible has in all caps. Any time you see the word LORD in all caps, the Hebrew behind that word is Yahweh. So in verse 14 says God’s name is I AM and verse 15 says His name is Yahweh. What is interesting to note is that the name Yahweh, and the verb “to be” in the Hebrew language come from the same root. So the name Yahweh is communicating the same self-existence of God as the verb “to be” is in verse 14. But as far as a name goes, Yahweh is more personal than the verb “to be.”

The name Yahweh is incredibly common in the Old Testament. In fact, it occurs over 6 thousand 500 times! But this should not be a surprise to us because of what verse 15 says. “This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.” This is God’s name forever! This is who He has always been and will always be.

And every time you see the word LORD in all caps in your Bible, God is trying to remind you of who He is. All 6,500 times! That’s what “memorial name” means. A memorial is something you set up to remember something or someone. Other translations say, “this is how I am to be *remembered* from generation to generation.” God wants you to remember who He is.

He is trying to sum up who He is through the name Yahweh. He is the self-existing, **self-determined**, God of the universe. What does it mean to be self-determined? It means God is not dependent upon anyone or anything outside of Himself for His existence. Nothing outside of God determines who He is. *He is who He is!* This makes God truly one-of-a-kind. No other being is self-determined.

And this is precisely what we need to remember. We need to remember that we serve the only self-determined being in the universe. He has always been. He will always be.

The more we know this God, the God of the Bible, the God unlike any other being in the universe, our faith in Him grows. You can put your faith in this God. You can trust in this God. This God is bigger than anything we can imagine.

That God is the great I AM teaches us that we must come to Him on His terms, not our own. And this truth is so foundational, I’d like you to turn over to Hebrews 11 to look at it further. In Hebrews 11:6 we see this same attribute of God’s self-determined nature restated. Hebrews 11:6 says, “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”

Did you notice the similarity with Exodus 3? If you want to have faith that pleases God, you must believe that HE IS! That HE EXISTS! This verse uses the Greek equivalent of the verb “to be.” It is just in the third person instead of the first person. Exodus 3 says, “I AM.” Hebrew 11 says “HE IS.”

It is necessary to have a faith in God that is consistent with how He has revealed Himself in His Word.

You cannot have a relationship with the God of the Bible . . . you cannot have a faith that pleases Him, and believe in the God of your own imagination. God is God! You must come to Him on His terms, not on your own. You cannot take one aspect of Him and ignore another.

Hebrews 11:6 reminds us that in order to have a faith that pleases God, we must believe that He is who he says He is, and He does what He says He will do.

When I think about trying to remember who God is, this is as foundational as it gets. It is not the only thing we can say about who God is, but it is one of the most important. And I think there are amazing practical applications to this truth. Think of your life as a *solar system*. In our solar system, the sun is at the center. It is the driving object around which everything else revolves. This is how God needs to be in your life. The One who IS, He must be at the center of everything in our lives.

His self-determined existence stands at the center of how we got here, our purpose for living, our future, and everything that comes into our lives. The fact that God is independent of everyone and everything has implications on your marriage, your kids, your job, your finances, your suffering, and your time. Because God IS, we don't have the right to live our lives however we want. We must submit to the sovereign God of the universe. If we can remember this, we will be on the right path for 2020.

But this is not the only thing we can say about who God is. Remembering who God is essentially a study of His attributes. While we can't do an in-depth study of His attributes today, we can quickly remind ourselves of some of God's attributes.

We need to remember that our God is **holy**. Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4:8 say God is holy, holy holy! The holiness of God is His most repeated attribute in Scripture. Exodus 15:11 says, "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD [here we see the name Yahweh again]? Who is like You, *majestic in holiness*, awesome in praises, working wonders?"

Psalms 145:3 says, "Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable." God's greatness, His holiness, is unsearchable. We will never come to the end of it.

Remembering God's holiness is directly related to the way we view *ourselves*, our *sin*, and our *salvation*.

Ourselves - A high view of God's holiness results in a low view of ourselves. When Isaiah saw this holy God in Isaiah 6, what was His response? "Woe is me, for I am ruined!" He didn't say, "Wow, this is amazing! I am so glad I get to be here to witness such an amazing spectacle. Thank you, God!" No, God's holiness exposed His utter sinfulness. For as we saw last week in Genesis 3, God's holiness is not good news for sinners. It is a fearful thing!

And yet we also saw that the good news of the gospel was promised all the way back in Genesis 3:15. God promised a seed who would deliver us from our sins. And on Christmas Eve we were reminded Jesus is that seed. He came, fully God and fully man, lived a perfect life, and died in the place of all sinners who put their faith in Him. Thus, providing a way for us to be in the presence of God's holiness forever.

God's blazing holiness will consume everyone for all eternity. For those who are not in Christ, they will be condemned by His holiness forever because they have fallen short of glorifying Him as they ought.

But for those who have been washed by the blood of the Lamb, for those who are in Christ, His holiness will be their all-consuming joy for all eternity.

The more we meditate on His holiness, the less we meditate on ourselves.

Sin - The greater view we have of God's holiness, the more awful our sin becomes to us. This is where I think we are often fighting the wrong battle when it comes to our sin. We try and fight at the point of temptation. We focus on the sin, but we find ourselves failing. *We need to remember God's holiness to fight sin.* We need a zeal for God's holiness that makes sin seem utterly repulsive.

Sin is tempting. It wouldn't be hard to resist if this were not the case. But God's holiness far exceeds any of the fleeting pleasures sin has to offer. Think about things like sexual temptation. This can feel all-consuming. Now think about God's majestic holiness. If you are focusing on His holiness, how can you profane His name with such lesser pleasures? How can the temporary pleasures of sin compare to an eternity with God, in whose presence is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore?

Let the light of God's blazing holiness root out any darkness of sin in you and vanquish it with a joy that will forever outweigh the fleeting pleasures of sin. Because the more we remember God's holiness, the more aware we are of our sin.

Salvation – When we think about ourselves and our sin in comparison to God's holiness, our salvation takes on a whole new wonder.

Is it not amazing that God sent His only Son to die for us, sinners and enemies of God? Is it not amazing that Christ would humble himself and veil his glory in human flesh for our benefit? Is it not amazing that the lofty One whose name is Holy would die for the unholy, in order to make us holy?

I guarantee that none of us in this room have a big enough view of God's holiness. And I can guarantee that because God is *infinitely* holy. It will take eternity to exhaust His holiness. We need to remember God's holiness.

We also need to remember that our God all-powerful. He is God **Almighty**. Revelation 1:8, says "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'" *There is nothing He has purposed to do that He cannot do.* He is never frustrated. He never wills that which He cannot accomplish. Isaiah 14:27 says "For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?"

Psalms 115:3 "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases." That is very different than you and I is it not? There are all sorts of things I can will that I cannot accomplish.

God spoke the universe into being. Is it difficult for the Lord to give Abraham a son though he was old, and Sarah was barren? Is it difficult for God to part the sea or the Jordan river? Is it hard for God to stop the sun in its tracks? Is it hard for God to heal the sick, give

sight to the blind, make the lame walk and the mute speak? Is it difficult for God to save sinners? We just heard from Jesus in the book of Mark that when it comes to salvation, with man it is impossible. But with God all things are possible!

We have such a small view of God's power. We need to remember that God lacks no power in your life right now to accomplish that which is pleasing in His sight. No matter the difficulty you face, He is able to deliver. We need to remember our God is all-powerful.

We need to remember God's **omniscience** and His **omnipresence**. God knows everything and is everywhere present. In our attempt to understand God, we often think of Him being able to "look into the future," see what will happen, and because of that, know all things. This is not why God knows all things. God knows all things because He *decreed* all things. Isaiah 46:9–10, "*Remember the former things long past, [we see another call to remember who God is], for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure.'*"

And God's decree happened before time began. God is **timeless** and **eternal**. Time is His creation. He is not bound by it. *This means that for God, all things are eternally present to Him.* Think about that. God perfectly sees the flood, the birth of Christ, the fall of Rome, World War 1, today, and every event in the future, all at once.

David says in Psalm 139:7–10, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me."

God knows all things and is everywhere present. And yet have you ever cried out, "God, where are you?" Or, "God, don't you know?" This is when our theology is really tested. Does the omniscient God of the universe know what you are going through? Of course He does. Has the omnipresent God of the universe missed you, or passed over you, unaware of where you are? Of course not. Does it feel like that sometimes? You bet! The psalms in particular show this very struggle. Psalm 13:1 says, "How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?"

This is precisely when we must remember who God is. We cannot let our emotions dictate who God is. Let God's revelation of Himself carry you through these times of difficulty. Hebrews 13:5 reminds us that God will never leave us. He will never forsake us. So next time you wonder if God knows or God sees, instead of saying, "God, where are you?" Say, "God, thank you for never leaving or forsaking me."

We need to remember God's omniscience and omnipresence.

This is but a small representation of who God is. We didn't even mention His righteousness, goodness, love, and mercy, and many other attributes. I'm just trying to encourage you to know our great God more and how important it is in your daily life to remember who He is.

What are some practical ways you can know God better this year? Where do we learn about who God is? In His Word! God must reveal Himself to us if we are going to know Him. And the only place He has revealed the details of His character is in His Word. Read God's Word. Study God's Word. Meditate on God's Word

But don't just do these things to do them...have as your aim *knowing* God. You could do a study on God's attributes. I'm sure one of the reasons I was drawn to teach on this today is because our women's study has been going through the Fundamentals of the Faith and one of the chapters focuses on God's attributes. So as I walk through that study with them, I have had the opportunity to study through God's attributes again. And I am once again blown away at how great God is.

I am also blown away how easy it is to forget about Him. Unless I am actively meditating on God's greatness, it seems in my daily life that He seems to get smaller. By default, our view of God does not just grow on its own. It takes time and energy and effort.

Read God's Word and highlight who He is. You will find that you have a highlighted Bible! Get involved in a study with others on God's attributes. Listen to sermons about God. Read books about God. Throw away all the wasted time on pop-culture and current events and get to know the God of the universe better this year! There is no greater pursuit!

Remember who God is. And as you remember our great God, let that fuel your faith in Him.

The second aspect of God we need to remember is what He has done...

II. Remembering what God has done fuels your faith in Him.

Turn with me to Psalm 105. This is a Psalm dedicated to exactly what we are talking about today—remembering. In this Psalm the writer calls Israel to remember what God has done. Let's read verses 1–5.

“Oh give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples. 2 Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; speak of all His wonders. 3 Glory in His holy name; Let the heart of those who seek the Lord be glad. 4 Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face continually. 5 *Remember His wonders which He has done, His marvels and the judgments uttered by His mouth.*”

Verse 5 is key here. “*Remember His wonders which He has done, His marvels and the judgments uttered by His mouth.*” What wonders has He done? What judgments has He uttered? The next 40 verses describe some of those wonders.

In verses 6–24 he remembers God's covenant to Abraham and His mighty works to build a nation through Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. He remembers how God brought them to Egypt and made them a great nation. In verses 25–38 he remembers how God delivered Israel from Egypt through signs and wonders, leaving Egypt desolate. In verses 39–45 he remembers how God miraculously provided for them in the wilderness and ultimately brought them into the Promised Land.

This Psalm is dedicated to remembering what God has done. And it is designed to fuel our faith in God. Because when we remember what God has done, we are encouraged by His wonderful acts. *When we see what God has done in the past, we are reminded to trust Him for the future.*

There are **two** different ways Scripture encourages us to remember what God has done. *We need to remember what He has done in history in the events we did not directly experience, and we need to remember what He has done in our own personal lives.*

Psalm 105 is all about remembering what God has done in the past. He is calling a generation of Israelites to remember what God did in the past that they did not personally experience.

The Bible is a big book. Did you ever wonder why God preserved so much of history, particularly in the Old Testament through narrative? I mean, why did God see fit to describe so many events in history? He did it to show us that He is the sovereign God of the universe. He wants us to remember that! He wants us to remember His mighty works of old.

Why did God place the story of David and Goliath in Scripture? It was to show us His mighty works so that we would trust in Him. The unfolding of human history is about God. Not Abraham, not Israel, not David, not the apostles, not you and me. But God!

Better yet, why did God include genealogies in the Bible? In the book of Genesis, it says 10 times, “These are the generations of...” 10 genealogies. And when you open up your new testament, Matthew begins with, “The record of the genealogy of Jesus the messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” Why? Because human history is the unfolding of what God has done! *Every name in those genealogies is a display of the sovereign God of the universe fulfilling His plan.*

God has left us a detailed record of what has happened before we were ever on the scene to remind us of His wondrous works. He wants us to remember that He is perfectly in control of history...*everything* in history so that we remember He is perfectly in control of our lives in the present, and perfectly in control of the future. And this is designed to fuel our faith in Him. Even in the most difficult circumstances. Or perhaps we should say, *particularly in the most difficult circumstances.*

Remember Lamentations 3, that great passage about God’s faithfulness. The context of this passage is the horrific destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. In the midst of such pain and suffering, Lamentations 3:21–23 says, “This I *recall to my mind*, therefore I have hope. 22 The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.”

We just sang this. Great is your faithfulness! What is this passage doing? What is that song doing? They are helping us remember! Remember what? What God has done. It is remembering His lovingkindness to Israel from generation to generation. It is remembering that God’s compassions which have never failed in all of history to this point and are new every morning. It is remembering God’s great faithfulness.

This is why God has called us to remember. We need to remember all that God has done so we have an accurate view of our lives today. Why is this so important? Why does God call us to remember so often? Just turn over one Psalm to Psalm 106 and look at verse, 7. “Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders; They did not remember Your abundant

kindnesses, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.” When we don’t remember, we fall into sin.

We need to be diligent to remember. Listen to what Romans 15:4 says, “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” And again 1 Corinthians 10:11, “Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”

Learn from those who have gone before you. Are you the kind of person who has to learn things the hard way yourself? Did you know you don’t actually have to learn that way? God didn’t intend for you to repeat the mistakes of others. He left you His Word so that you would remember what He has done and live your life in light of these truths. It is important to remember what God has done in history and in the lives of others, but *we need to remember what God has done in our own personal lives.*

I would encourage you before the new year begins to make a list of all God has done in the last year in your life. The blessings, the trials, the joys, the sorrows...everything that God has used in your life to conform you to the image of His Son.

I don’t know about your year but remembering what God has done in 2019 is very easy for Ali and I, because of the sheer amount of life changes we experienced. We remember how God brought us to and through seminary. We remember having no idea what was going to happen after seminary. We remember finding the job posting for Cornerstone on Easter Sunday. We remember how God brought us here to Cornerstone Community Church.

Not everything in this year of transition has been easy. But it has been so sweet to remember how over so many years, God has been preparing us to be right here, right now. We could have never imagined all that He was doing over the years to bring us to this point in time. But remembering what God has done in our lives fuels our faith in Him for the future.

Weather your year has been full of blessings, or blessings through trials, there is always one great work of God we can remember, and that is His great work of salvation in our lives for those who have put their faith in Him. Ephesians 2:12 says, “Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”

No matter what happened this last year, and no matter what happens in 2020, remember that if you are in Christ, you are no longer separated from God and His covenant promise. Remember that you are no longer without hope and without God in the world. Remember God’s mighty act of saving you! Remember all that Christ has done on your behalf. Remember the suffering and pain that He experienced so that you can stand before a righteous God not guilty. Remember that because He was condemned, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Remember that you are now at peace with God. Remember that you are His beloved son or daughter.

Remembering who God is should fuel our faith in Him. Remembering what God has done should fuel our faith in Him. But there is one more aspect of God we need to remember to fuel our faith in Him. We need to remember what God will do.

As we transition from what God has done to what God will do, I am reminded of a great line from “***Come Thou Fount.***” It says, “Here I raise my Ebenezer, here by Thy great help I’ve come. And I hope by Thy good pleasure safely to arrive at home.”

That term Ebenezer means “stone of help.” It was an alter set up to remind the Israelites of what God had done. When we look back and remember what God has done, we should be humbled to see that it is only by His grace that we are here. And as we look forward to what hope we have to finish the race and enter into the joy of our Master, our faith is not in ourselves, but in what God will do.

So let’s turn to Philippians 3 and fuel our faith in God by remembering what He will do.

III. Remembering What God Will Do Fuels Our Faith in Him

Philippians 3:12–16, “Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and *reaching forward* to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.”

This is a great passage about fixing our hope on what God will do in the future. We’re dropping into the middle of this passage, so let’s quickly get up to speed on how Paul got to verses 12–16. In verses 1–6 Paul is describing his former way of life. He lists all his “accomplishments” that he thought would save him. Then in verses 7–11, he comes to the recognition that he could never be saved by his own righteousness, but only by the righteousness of Christ. He says in verse 9, “And may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.” In verse 11 he says his hope is attaining the resurrection from the dead.

That’s where verses 12–16 pick up. Verse 12 says, not that I have already obtained *it*. What is “*it*”? Attaining the resurrection from the dead in verse 11. *We’re not just saved from our sin; we are saved to a glorious resurrection where we will be with Christ for all eternity.* But we haven’t obtained that yet. We haven’t arrived in glory yet. And so Paul fixes his gaze on what God will do in the future, namely, bringing to completion that which He began in us.

With the language of a runner who competes in the equivalent of the Olympic games, Paul says when he thinks about the future, he has a singular focus. In verse 13 he says he does one thing, which comes in two parts. *He forgets what lies behind and he reaches forward to what lies ahead.* Now I should point out that in a message on remembering, we have a text that tells us to forget! Which is it? Do we remember or do we forget? The answer

is yes! We remember God and we forget ourselves. We remember God! Not our former lives. Not our efforts. Not our accolades. Not our strength. Not our works. Not our plans for the future. No! We remember who *God* is, what *He* has done, and what *He* will do.

God doesn't call us to remember everything. In fact, He calls us to forget some things. Question number 5 on your sermon outline says, "In what ways are you remembering the wrong things? What hurts, disappointments, failures, self-efforts, etc. are you holding on to?" There are some things we need to forget. Do you want to know how to self-destruct the Christian life? Focus on yourself. Do you want to know how to fail to remember who God is and what He has done in 2019 and all the years before? Focus on yourself. Do you want to know how to set yourself up for failure in 2020? Focus on yourself. But if you want to live 2020 for the glory of Christ, you need to remember what God will do. We can't look at all of God's precious promises this morning. This message is again designed to encourage you to get in God's Word and see for yourself who He is, what He has done, and what He will do.

But right here in the book of Philippians is one of the sweetest promises of what God will do. Turn back to chapter 1 of Philippians and look at Philippians 1:6, "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." This is one of the greatest promises in the Bible. Who began the good work in you? Who opened your eyes to your need for a savior? Who turned you off the path of destruction and put you on the path of righteousness? Who delivered you from the domain of darkness and transferred you to the kingdom of His beloved Son? *God did!*

And what is going to keep that good work going in you? What is going to keep you dependent upon your savior? What is going to keep you on the path of righteousness? What is going to ensure you make it to the kingdom of Christ? *God is!*

This is what fuels our faith in God. *God finishes what He starts. He doesn't mostly save...He saves to the uttermost. He doesn't save for a time...He saves forever* (Hebrews 7:25, "Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them"). *He doesn't save you and leave you...He saves you and keeps you* (Jude 24, "Now to Him who is able to *keep* you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy"). Herein lies our hope for the future. We remember that God will bring to completion that which He began in us. He is the author and perfecter of our faith!

Or we could look at 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass." This is what God will do. Through every *joy* this year, every *trial*, every *tear*, and every *circumstance*, God will use these things to sanctify you entirely. He will use them to conform you to the image of His Son. *He is faithful. He will surely do it!*

He hasn't just promised the end result, but the means to that end. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." What will God do? He will cause all

things to work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.

I'm not saying there won't be times where you have no idea how God is doing this. There are times in our lives where the only thing we have to hold on to is the promises of God. It won't feel like they are true. It may not look like they are true. But they are true. And you need to anchor your soul in these promises, fueling your faith in God so you are ready stand through the storms of life. Not on your own strength, but on who He is and His promises.

And now I hope that you are beginning to see why God calls us to remember Him so often in Scripture. When we remember who our great and marvelous God is, His great and marvelous works throughout history and in our own lives, and His great and marvelous plans for the future, we anchor our faith in the only God of the universe.

But when we forget, we find ourselves in the plight of Christian and Hopeful in Pilgrim's Progress. In that great story, on their way to the Celestial city, Christian and Faithful depart from the path and end up in Doubting Castle. The owner and guard of this castle was Giant Despair. He captures them and throws in a dark dungeon. After days of misery and despair Christian comes to his senses and says,

What a fool! What a fool I am to lie here in this stinking dungeon when I might walk free on the highway to glory! I have a key I my bosom called Promise which I am sure will open any door in Doubting Castle.

[Hopeful said] *That is certainly good news, my brother. Get out your key and try it.*

Then Christian took the key of Promise and pushed it into the lock of the dungeon door. The bolt fell back and the door came open.

How often are we like poor Christian because we don't remember. The truth is right in front of us and don't even remember we have the key! How often are we like Israel, forgetting the marvelous works of the Lord? I am simply here today to remind all of us, that we have the key right *here*. Let that not be true of us this year! Let us live our lives so that all glory will go to Christ, fueling our faith in Him by remembering who God is, what He has done, and what He will do.