

# The Value in Obediently Taking Time to Remember

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[ 0 : 00 ] It's amazing when we take time and look at what Jesus did for us, it so moves us in our spirit and then thankfulness becomes the byproduct.

When we talk about how often to do it, do I have to do it? You see, when my focus is where it needs to be, it is such a blessing to take time to remember what Jesus did for me.

As we look at that, the byproduct of taking the time to remember will always produce thankfulness. Isn't that amazing? If I would just slow down and pause, the thing that is going to eventually fill my soul is thanksgiving, gratitude.

And that's a great thing to parents for you to teach your children when they're complaining about the meal, they're complaining about this, is to help them understand gratitude.

[ 1 : 04 ] And when they really get it, next thing you know, mom, we're sorry. We're so thankful for what we have. Gratitude is a byproduct.

And God wants that just to mark our lives, this thing called thanksgiving. But that's not where we find ourselves, even especially among believers today. So much is going on as we look at several different venues that if we had somebody record our conversations that we have with each other, it is so quick that our conversations and just thinking about our country for our mind to go on what is all broken in our country.

And there is a lot of things broken, isn't there? And things are getting worse, aren't they? But do you realize that if you ever go outside the United States, there's no place you can go where you'd rather be than in this country?

With all of us, and the realization is you didn't get to pick it. God picked it for you. You could have just as easily been born someplace else.

But God allowed and chose for you to live here. There's things that we enjoy with our country. All the essentials are available to us, food, clothing, shelter.

[ 2 : 32 ] We're allowed to practice to some degree religious freedom. We have protection. We have medical help.

We have surgical procedures that were unthought of any other place in the world. Capitalism to where you are rewarded for doing your work.

There's no other place in the world that is like this country. And I would just challenge you that you that are caught up so often in conversations.

And I have endeavored now to really practice this, that whenever I say something negative about something I don't like about this country, then to take the same amount of time and frame it in something that I'm thankful for about this country.

If you continue to dwell on what is wrong with this country, you're going to watch emotionally something take over you that you're not going to like.

[ 3 : 32 ] The tone of your voice, the things that come off your lips, you're all afterwards shocked that you even said them. And you ask yourself, how did I even get there?

It isn't necessarily that parts of that weren't true, but they weren't framed in a background of thanksgiving. And when it is, it doesn't mean we don't stand up for what is right and go against what is wrong, but it frames it so that what is going wrong with our life is not dictating my emotional well-being.

In fact, the Bible makes it very clear that our emotional well-being comes exclusively on what I allow my mind to dwell on. So today, we have Christians complaining about all kinds of things in the country, and all it has done is made them even more belligerent and more ugly even to be around when there's opportunities to share Christ.

And there won't even be people open to hear it. And so we need to ask ourselves, as I think about remembering, taking the time to remember, am I really thankful even for where I live in this country? And then we can look at a church. Am I thankful for the church? You know what? You come to church, and you can pinpoint all kinds of things that are wrong.

[ 5 : 03 ] If you stood up here, and you looked out, there's probably something you would find that irritated you about almost anybody here.

I don't like Butch's jokes. I don't get them. See? I know I'm about to get one as I see Butch approach me, and I know I'm not going to get it before I even try.

He gave me the punchline tonight, and I finally figured it out after I had the answer to start. But there's something that grates us and irritates us about that. So I wish the church would do more of this.

I wish the church would do that. And it's not long before all we can talk about, they didn't greet us, nobody talked to me, nobody cares.

All those things come to our mind, and then we allow our mind to dwell on it. And then we ask ourselves, why in the world do we even go back there? You look at our country.

[ 6 : 07 ] You look at our church. You look at your family. Man, you know your family better than anybody else, and there's all kinds of flaws in it. And you can pick and pick and pick at all the flaws that are with your mate.

You can pick all the flaws that are with the kids. The kids can turn around and pick all the flaws that are wrong with their parents. And if they get into a conversation where it's allowed to continue on, the young person wonders why they even stay at home.

The parents wonder why they do stay at home. All they ever do is cause trouble. You see, because that's all they're allowing their mind to feed upon. In a marriage, it's exactly the same thing.

We recite all the things that are wrong with our mate, and our mind buys into it. And then our mind plays it over and over again, and it cripples our mental health.

So as we think about that, the remedy to every one of those situations is gratitude. God is driving us with a communion service to be grateful people, to pause and take the time to remember as to why I am so thankful for what the Lord has done for me in placing me with that, even with all the problems that have gone on, maybe within a family.

[ 7 : 30 ] There could be divorce, there could be abuse, there could be all kinds of wrong things. But some of the wrong things that have happened at a home were the very things that brought somebody to Jesus.

Some of the wrong things in a home were very instrumental in young believers growing up in Christ way before their time. We look at a young person and say, How in the world did they get to be so grown up so quick?

Well, you probably wouldn't have liked the adversity that forged that. When you look at Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, as young people, they faced cutting off separation from parents, loved ones, most of all from any opportunity to get to know God.

But they continually allowed their mind to dwell on the Lord Jesus Christ. And it carried them right straight through all kinds of difficult times, where the most powerful man on earth would come and be saved as a result.

So as we look at this whole attitude that we are so spent, we are so busy getting caught up in all the cares of our life, that we don't even really have time.

[ 8 : 47 ] When you talk about people not coming to the Lord's Supper, most would just say we couldn't squeeze it into our schedule. We have so much to do. I want you to turn with me to a story that's given to us in Luke 17.

I hope there's more than just one or two Bibles here, because that's about all I hear. Luke 17, I'm going to read 11 through 19.

Please follow along with me. And it came to pass as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into the certain village, there met him 10 men that were lepers who stood afar off.

And they lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, go show yourself unto the priests.

And it came to pass that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back and with a loud voice glorified God and fell down on his face at his feet,

giving him thanks.

[10:08] And he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answered and said, were there not 10 cleansed? But where are the nine? They are not found that returned to give glory to God, except this stranger.

And he said unto him, arise, go your way. Your faith hath made thee well. This is a true story that's given to us here.

And what is happening, Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem. And to get in your mind a little piece of geography, Galilee is way up here. In the middle is Samaria, and at the bottom is Judea.

So for him from Galilee to go to Judea, to Jerusalem, he either has to go around Samaria, or he has to go right straight through it.

He chooses here once again to go straight through Samaria. It's not that Jesus doesn't know who he's going to encounter. And so as he gets to the border of Samaria, just keep in mind that the Jewish people hated the Samaritans.

[11:24] The Samaritans were literally part Jew and part Gentile. And through mixed marriages, they were considered the scorn of the Jewish people.

They were hated even worse than Gentiles. Jews placed themselves up here, and the rest of the world literally was supposed to go to hell. That's the mental framework.

And so as we look at this passage together, Jesus knows that he's going to encounter them, and they're going to be right on the border as he leaves Samaria to go into Judea on his way to Jerusalem.

Now, the one Samaritan and nine Jews, if they really felt that way, why in the world would all ten of them be together? A nice simple little cliché works.

Misery loves company. Leprosy was a fatal disease where your extremities literally rotted off. It was very, very putrid to even be around an individual.

[12:33] It was incurable, and it would ultimately kill you. So there was no hope of them living for very long at all. And since they all had it, they all hung out together, but they were outside the city.

They were not allowed to go inside the city. They couldn't be around anybody else. And if any person came close to them, they were to scream out, unclean, unclean, or go way around so that you won't even be close to us.

So these ten men, one being a Samaritan and nine being Jews, the fact that they were all there together, they all knew they were going to die.

Not only were they going to die, no matter what they were, Samaritan or Jew, none of them had access to their families, to their friends.

They were completely cut off. And leprosy was just a slow death. So that was their lot. And as we see in verses 13 and 14, they cry out and they lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

[13:54] As we think about this, remember, grace is getting something you don't deserve. Mercy is not getting what you do deserve. Now, all through this story, it's a beautiful picture of salvation.

They don't ask for grace. They ask for mercy. They know they are supposed to die with this disease. They expect to die with this disease with no thought of deserving to be healed because nobody had the power to heal this disease.

So they're not asking for grace. They're pleading with God for mercy. We deserve this. It's going to happen to us. God, if you don't step in, we're all going to die.

Now, it's interesting, as we look at how they address Jesus, that's also very important. And they said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

The word Master means chief commander. Isn't that interesting? What they are saying about Jesus is, we totally acknowledge that you have power over disease and death.

[15:14] You are the ultimate commander. And even though it's fatal for us, you control even death. And so we cry to the only person who does control death that can heal when no one else can for mercy.

It is so special all ten cried out. And notice very carefully, when do they get healed? All ten get healed as soon as they turn around to obey Jesus' command.

What does Jesus tell them to do? Go show themselves to the priest. For a person with leprosy, if by any chance he was ever cured, he had to go to a priest for the priest to authenticate that he was healed, the flesh being restored, before he could ever be among people again.

What do all ten acknowledge as they turn to go to the priest? You can't go to the priest if you still have leprosy, right? What are all ten doing?

As they turn, they are already putting their faith in him, even though it hasn't happened yet. Even though we aren't in heaven yet, we have placed our faith and trust in Christ that that is going to happen, that it's an absolute sure thing, and all ten turn to show themselves to a priest, and if they're healed, if they're not healed, they can't go there.

[ 17 : 05 ] All of them are stepping out and acknowledging the master commander has spoken. As soon as they demonstrated the faith to turn and go to the priest, all ten are healed.

Now you have to understand these ten men, if anybody deserved to be healed, it would be a Jew. This Samaritan, man, he got in on the coattails, and they're thinking, I can go home to my family. I can go with my friends. All I have to do is get to the priest to be declared clean, and I'm a free person. So eagerly rushing ahead to think about what comes next in their life, but not the Samaritan.

As they turned to go to the priest, they were healed. The Samaritan turns around and goes back and falls on his face before the Lord and gives him worth, giving him praise and honor for what he has just done on his life.

Now as we think about what he does, it's not surprising that the Samaritan would be the one. You see, all through Scripture, Peter, it is often the person who has grieved God the deepest that turns around to love him the deepest.

[ 18 : 46 ] Think about the people that after Jesus arose from the grave, who all did he see? Mary Magdalene, a prostitute. I mean, look at all the people he could have seen, but that's who he went to see.

Peter, who had just denied him three times, who just felt totally unfit ever to do any, and the Lord visits him one-on-one. And then another unique individual, his half-brother James, and you have to understand, Jesus' brothers all thought he was nuts.

They thought he was crazy. James will become the pastor of the church at Jerusalem. As you think about that, all of them, things they had said, things they had done, had grieved God deeper.

But it's when we have experienced that, the sad reality is, it seems like we have to go through an experience like that before we ever really grow to appreciate what he did for us.

The sad reality is that if you were saved as a young person, and you grow up, most young people do grow up, the tendency to take Christ for granted is very, very real.

[ 20 : 08 ] If you have thought that you lived a pretty good life, you will have a tough time ever being grateful or thankful.

That's why God has to command us to do it, because it's not our nature. It wasn't the nature of a Jew to be grateful or thankful, because they thought they deserved it.

Or at least they weren't as bad as, you know, the guy that turned around and went back. We need to ask ourselves why even coming to a Lord's Supper is burdensome to us.

Why do we feel, and then when we hear that he commanded us to, well, you know, I'm just going to have a little sin and I go tonight. you just need to know that it was those little sins that you do that nailed Christ to the cross.

And until we look at sin from God's vantage point, we'll never appreciate what he did for us. And Christ is trying to get us to remember and think back to that.

[ 21 : 15 ] But the Jews, they didn't return. Because they were Jews. And so often, those who have been saved for most of their life have a tough time coming to terms with the Lord's Supper and other things because to them, it's just not all that important.

And so oftentimes in church, it's tacked onto a service so that you don't even know you're taking it until after you took it during an offertory or something. But we try to center the entire service around it because if God commanded it, he's got to have a great reason for it.

As we look at this story, you can see the whole plan of salvation unfold for you. All ten didn't deserve it. They needed Christ's mercy.

All ten responded by faith. But only the one that was least qualified, according to them, went back and glorified the Lord, giving him all the praise for what just happened.

Why? Because he was considered the least of the entire group. And that's a mindset as we think about ourselves. God be merciful to me, a sinner, is what he's looking to hear from us because that's who we are and that's how God extended mercy to each of us.

[ 22 : 45 ] And so, as we look at this individual, notice Jesus asks a puzzling question in verses 17 through 19.

Jesus says, wasn't there ten individuals who had leprosy? Where are the other nine? You know, there was over 350 people here this morning.

There's probably less than 100 here tonight. it's not out of context at all for the Lord to say, where are the others?

Why didn't they come back to remember what I did for them and for them to have a thankful expression to complying with this command?

Three quick applications. First of all, the Lord's Supper properly observed is all about his church setting aside consistent and regular times to remember until we see him face to face.

[ 23 : 53 ] God instituted the Lord's Supper through a local body of believers. It is up to the leadership to determine how often it is to be done.

We do it once a quarter here just so that it doesn't get to be so rote that it doesn't mean anything to you. And so we do it once a quarter where there's a real emphasis of being right with the Lord and taking the time through the course of day to come prepared, remembering all the many facets that we are so grateful and thankful for.

it's a blessing to the Lord and I want to take you to Psalm 107 so that you can start picking up the heart of God when you're here tonight.

Psalm 107 several verses. Verse 8 Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

Verse 8 says, Oh that people who call and claim the name of Christ, oh that they would take time to praise me.

[ 25 : 24 ] Now, remember when something's repeated again, it's repeated for emphasis. So go with me to verse 15. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

He says, God is saying, oh that mankind would do this. And then verse 21, oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

And verse 31, oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. If we have properly prepared, we have taken the time to blot out everything else and remembered back the record of what Jesus did to demonstrate his love toward us.

We get a chance also as we prepare our hearts to think, whether it's our country, whether it's a church, whether it's our family, whether it's even our health, to thank the Lord.

It was interesting, I was doing some research and John MacArthur was talking about a hospital call he just went on a couple weeks ago.

[ 26 : 46 ] Some of you know the story of Johnny Erickson Dada. She not only is a quadriplegic, but she's gone through cancer and several other things.

But she was back in the hospital and John MacArthur who was in very poor health went to visit her. And John MacArthur said he just greeted, Johnny just greeted him with the biggest smile.

when all these health issues were stacked up against her for most of her life. And all she could do is praise the Lord for how God has grown her through all these mishaps.

And John MacArthur left there so convicted that even with his minimal health issues, Johnny really understood God's goodness, even in those kind of physical times.

Oh, that mankind would praise the Lord for the situations that are happening in our lives and for where it is we live and where it is we go to church and who our family is.

[ 28 : 00 ] We need remembering time. Secondly, the Lord's supper properly observed stems from the heartfelt experience of Christ's mercy.

we got to get into our minds that we don't deserve to get saved. God did not get a blessing when you accepted Christ. Sometimes we think that God really got something when I gave my life to Christ.

There was nothing about us that God needs. God commended his love toward us. Romans 5 8. While we were ugly sinners, God demonstrated his love toward us.

The very first thing that we got to do is realistically look at ourselves and just look at how, you know, just thinking about my salvation.

A mom who insisted that I go to this VBS of this church I wasn't familiar with because the church we attended didn't have a VBS and I didn't like it and I caused all kinds of problems on the way there,

but it was the very place that I accepted Christ.

[ 29 : 18 ] I look back and if you look back, if you've lived very long at all, you're going to watch all the different things God has done in your life that brought you to today.

And we need time to remember that with a humble attitude that we're not here because we deserve to be here, we are here all because he loved me.

And we can't understand that. Because our friendships are built upon people who do things for us and we do things back. We had nothing to do for Christ, we had nothing to offer Christ.

but creator God did that just for me. That humbles me. And as I am humbled, I now begin to be thankful for each of those various different topics that are going on in my life.

And then as we think about Christ's mercy, we have to understand then for the vast majority of even the people that were here who sat on the word, heard the fact that it is a command to do, why they were not compelled to come back.

[ 30 : 33 ] That explains why God is not moving as he would like to move in this community. God says, oh, that they would just praise me for what I'm doing in their life.

love. The last, the Lord's Supper properly observed is what unveils my gratitude quotient. We call it the GQ.

Whenever we feel like, okay, that's just one of the commands, I guess I better do it from now on out. 1 John 5, 3 says this, for this is the love of God that we keep his commandments.

And here's the powerful phrase, and his commandments are not burdensome. If you understand at all what Jesus did, then you're eager to pause, remember, and observe the Lord's Supper together. You're eager to do it. When is the next time I want to be part of it? See, is it a command? Yes. But my attitude tells me everything about my love.

[ 31 : 53 ] You know, when children go out and slam the door and mumble and grumble and talk under their breath, they're really displaying a lack, we'd say respect, but it's really a lack of love that they haven't learned yet.

And they'll grow up, if that's not channeled, to be blending in with the rest of our world of ungratefulness. And as we look at mental health today, the biggest thing that contributes to poor mental health is the lack of gratitude.

There's a healing that takes place. And that in itself alone ought to make me eager to be obedient to his command. It benefits me, but it benefits him.

that's what he did for me. I can't wait to observe it. It was Ben Franklin who said, when your heart is right, your feet are swift.

When I am right with the Lord inside here, I can't wait to do what he's asked me to do. Let's pray. Father, thank you again for our time in the word.

[ 33 : 08 ] Lord, we again have been challenged to be obedient to you, but to be obedient to you in a way that is not resentful, obedient to you in a way that is joyful, excitement, exuberance.

we so look forward to this intimate time. We so look forward to taking time and just thinking back of all the different things we're grateful for.

I got to spend time with my one son and his family, and I look back, and I see how you guided each one of them.

I am so grateful for not only in many ways blessing Jane and I, but how you are blessing our lives continually with our grown children and grandchildren as they choose to walk with you.

Father, the people around us are pressing us to look up and say, thank you, Lord. You've bailed me out so many times.

[ 34 : 29 ] You fixed what I have broken. You blessed me in spite of my disobedience. And all I can do is praise you and thank you for your goodness to me.

And Father, as we commune now with your supper, I pray that Father, gratitude would flood our souls even now. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[ 38 : 01 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

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[ 43 : 01 ] Amen. Amen.

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[ 47 : 02 ] Amen. Amen.

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Amen. Amen.

[ 52 : 01 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Another step toward Christ. So there's positive in all this.

[ 55 : 45 ] And so what God is saying, you do that in remembrance of me. It's a blessing to him, but it's also a blessing to every one of us. So when he commands us to do it, remember all of his commands are for good.

And then third, how long do I have to do it? I want to tone that like a legalist would. So, you know, a couple of times after you're saved, maybe, or, you know, maybe once a year.

No, he says, do it until I come back. And you know what? He hasn't come back yet, right?