

Remember, remember

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Date: 16 November 2014

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[0 : 00] Heavenly Father, we do thank you for your word. We ask now for your help in paying attention to it, that we might live in light of it, we ask for Jesus' sake.

Amen. Well, one Sunday, Michelle and I arrived home from church. This was a number of years ago, not from this church, another church.

We started to get the lunch ready for our visitors who were coming over. And we couldn't help but think that there was something missing.

At the time, we had two cars and so we had driven home separately so that she took the children and I went and picked up some bread rolls for lunch. And so I said to Michelle, I've got the rolls for lunch, you've got the salad, we've got the two kids, at which point Michelle turned to me and said, hang on, we've got three kids.

I'd left my son at church. I'd not remembered to bring home my own son. And so I raced back to church and luckily there he was. Some people were still there with their boys and so they were playing together in the big hall.

[1 : 11] So I wandered into the hall very casually and said, oh, Tim, it's time to go home now. As if nothing had happened. Except Tim, when he came across to me, he said, I couldn't find you.

I thought you'd left without me. At which point I paused and went, I think I've got a lolly in the car. But I'll change the subject.

But we all forget things in life, don't we? Maybe not children. But we forget, I don't know, people's names. We forget things we said we would do or wouldn't do.

We forget even what we may have learnt at church last week. For example, I wonder how many of you here can remember what last week's Bible talk was about. I won't ask for a show of hands.

Now, if you forget some things, it may not matter a whole lot, depending on what it is. So, for example, if you forget to grab an extra packet of chips on your way to someone's place, it might be a little bit embarrassing, but it doesn't matter a whole lot.

[2 : 17] But if you forget your kids, well, I suppose that matters a bit more. And if you forget to read your Bibles or if you forget to make every effort to grow as Christians, as Peter said last week, well, that actually matters most, according to Peter.

Have a look at verses 12 to 14 in your Bibles there. He says, So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.

And I think it is right to refresh or remind your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know I will soon put it aside as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

And I will make every effort to see that after my departure, you will always be able to remember these things. The word remember comes up three times in that paragraph. Three times, Peter says he wants to remind them, to refresh their memory.

In fact, verse 12 says he wants to always remind them, even though they know these things already and are firmly established in the truth already.

[3 : 27] And in verse 13, he will keep reminding them as long as he lives. Though, verse 14 says that won't be long. You see, Peter knows he will soon die.

And we're not sure of the circumstances, only that Peter knows that it's certain. And just as an aside, by the way, notice how he speaks about his death.

Do you notice that? In the end of verse 13, he talks about putting aside the tent of his body. Now, I think this is a great description, because a tent is not meant to be a permanent home.

You're not meant to camp in a tent your whole life. And the fact that Peter calls his body a tent tells us that he doesn't think of this life as a permanent home.

He's thinking of the next life, where he will receive a permanent body that will live forever. And I think this is a good reminder for us, that this life is not meant to be a permanent home.

[4 : 29] We're to enjoy the things that God has given us, yes. But we're not to put down roots so deep that we end up living for this world and forget to make every effort to live for Jesus and the world to come.

But that's just an aside. And Peter is saying, I'm going to die soon. And his dying wish, as it were, is that his readers might remember these things.

But what are these things? Well, verse 12 starts with the word, so, or literally, therefore. And that word points us back to what he's talked about last week.

And so I think these things in verse 12 that he wants them to remember are the things we've looked at last week in verses 3 to 11. Do you remember what they were last week, if you're here?

Just have a look back for a moment at verse 3. Do you remember Peter said that in verse 3, God has given them everything and us everything we need for life and godliness, including, verse 4, great and precious promises, so that we might participate in the divine nature, not to be God, but to be like his character, to be godly.

[5 : 46] Then he said in verse 5, for this reason, you know, since God has given you everything you need to grow in godliness, to be like God, participate in the divine nature, then make every effort to do that, to grow in godliness, to add to your faith those qualities listed in verses 5 to 7.

And then, verse 8, it means they won't be ineffective or unfruitful, unproductive servants of Christ. And verse 10 and 11, they won't fall from their secure position, but persevere and receive a rich welcome into the kingdom of heaven.

You see, while it is true that God will carry us to heaven, it is also true that we must persevere as Christians. God works in us to persevere as Christians, and so Peter wants them to remember these things, remember to grow by God's grace, by the things he's given us, like his promises, like the spirit, like the Bible.

Grow using these things he's given us, so that we can confirm our calling, verse 10, so that we won't fall, but rather receive a rich welcome into the kingdom of heaven.

Now, I gave you some examples of what that all looked like last week, but let me just tell you a quick story about a guy called Chris, who was involved in one of my former churches in Bible study.

[7 : 15] He wasn't in my Bible study group, but he was going to Bible study, he'd just become a Christian, and, you know, it was great, it was very encouraging. He was coming to church regularly, going to Bible study regularly, and then he got a job in a bank, I won't say which bank, but not that bank, and over time, you know, he stopped making every effort to grow, he stopped making every effort to read his Bible, he stopped making every effort to go to Bible study, he stopped making every effort to go to church, and now he has stopped calling himself a Christian altogether.

Peter doesn't want to see this happen to his readers, and so he says, remember these things, remember to make every effort to grow, because it's by growing that you're prevented from falling. You see, for Peter, eternity is at stake, and so verse 12, he will always remind them of these things. Eternity is at stake, of course I'm always going to remind you of these things.

The need to keep growing as Christians, even though they know it, and are firmly established in the truth. In fact, when I first came to Holy Trinity, I was fairly nervous, because this church has a history of solid Bible teaching, which means, generally speaking, lots of people here know lots about the Bible.

In fact, compared to many churches, there are many here, who have either studied at Bible college, or are studying at Bible college. It felt like every second person I ran into, was doing a course at Ridley or something.

[8 : 51] And so I was tempted to think, that I needed to come up with something new, because you already knew so much already. I needed a fresh approach, perhaps, to stay relevant.

But my job is not to come up with something new, no, it's to remind you of what you already know, because we forget. That's what Peter is doing here. That's what we need to do for each other, if we want each other to keep growing as Christians, and persevere to the end.

That's not the only reason Peter wants them to remember to grow as Christians. They're also to remember to grow, because Jesus' return is certain, which is point to verse 16. Verse 16 actually starts with the word for, or because.

And so Peter wants them to grow, to remember these things, because, verse 16, we did not follow cleverly invented stories, when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Here Peter says that he was telling the truth, about Jesus' power and coming. That is about his powerful second coming, I think it's talking about. And so they must remember to grow in godliness, because Jesus will certainly return.

[10:08] Now, at first glance, that doesn't seem to make sense. I mean, if Peter had said, remember to grow as a Christian, because that pleases God, you know, that makes logical sense. But here he says, remember to grow as Christians, because Jesus will return.

How does that work? What's the logic? Well, Peter has been saying, verses 10 and 11, to grow as Christians, so that they don't fall, but rather find themselves. Receiving, find themselves in God's kingdom.

You know, grow as Christians, so you don't suffer judgment, but rather receive that rich welcome into Christ's kingdom. And it's Jesus' return that brings both of those things on that final day. When Jesus returns, he will bring in the final judgment day, and the rich welcome into his kingdom in all its fullness. And so Peter says, remember to grow as Christians, because Jesus will return. And therefore, he will bring final judgment for all, and full salvation, though, for only those who've persevered in faith. That's the connection. You see, if Jesus doesn't return, then there'll be no new heavens, no new earth, no heavenly Jerusalem, as described in Revelation 21, and there'll be no judgment day.

[11:22] And so it doesn't matter how we live. If there's no hope of eternal kingdom, there's nothing worth persevering for. And if there's no judgment day, where we have to give an account, then why bother being godly?

And that's what the false teachers were banking on. And just flick over to chapter, actually, it's in the right-hand corner of your page, chapter 3, verse 3 and 4. Just right-hand corner of your Bibles there.

He says, first of all, you must understand that in the last day, scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, where is this coming? You know, Jesus' second coming, that he promised.

Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on, as it has since the beginning of creation. You see, there were some false teachers there saying, where is this return of Jesus?

Jesus is coming, that the apostles keep going on about. Nothing's changed. Nothing seems to be happening. And so they were denying Jesus' return, which meant they could live whatever way they like.

[12:23] They could follow their evil desires, verse 3. They're saying, if Jesus isn't returning, then there's no need to worry about the future.

Just live for the present. Follow your desires. Do what you want to do. Now we'll see more of what these false teachers were like next week. But here Peter is saying, no, no, remember to grow in godliness because Jesus' return is certain.

It will happen. But how does Peter know it's going to happen? Well, he knows for two reasons, which he explains in the rest of our passage tonight. At first, he knows it's certain because he has glimpsed it.

And secondly, because God has promised it. So have a look at chapter 1, verse 16 to 18 again. He says, We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty, his glory.

For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the majestic glory saying, this is my son whom I love. With him I am well pleased.

[13:29] We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on that sacred mountain. Now, I wonder if you know what Peter's talking about.

Any ideas? On a sacred mountain, saw his majesty, heard a voice, starts with trans, ends in figuration. Yeah, transfiguration.

Well done. And Peter's saying, we glimpsed at that event, his majesty, his glory. And so because he glimpsed Jesus in all his glory, he knows there's more to come.

He knows Jesus has to return so that everyone will see that glory. That's his point. Now, I quite like my wife's lasagna. It's one of the few things I could eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Um, no, you're not breakfast, but I love her lasagna. And when I come home and I smell it cooking and I open the oven to get a glimpse of that crispy cheese melting on top, I know what's in my future.

[14:39] Lasagna. And that's what Peter's saying here. He's saying, at the transfiguration, when he got a glimpse of Christ's glory, he knows the future.

He knows his will return to reveal that glory to all people. Yet Peter is not just certain because of what he saw with his eyes or heard with his ears.

He's also certain because of what God promised. So have a look at verse 19. He says, And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you do, you will do well to pay attention to it as to a light shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. He says. Here, he's saying that what we have seen and heard on that mountain has actually only made God's promises in his word more certain, all the more certain.

You see, what did Peter and the other apostles hear on that mountain about Jesus? Well, they heard God say, this is my son, whom I love with him.

[15:56] I'm well pleased. And this phrase, this is my son. It's not just saying that Jesus is God, the son, you know, the second person of the Trinity. It's actually a reference to the Christ, the king.

Do you remember what God called the king in Psalm 2? Remember Psalm 2, our first reading? Don't remember. So you forget things. We need, we need reminding that Peter's right.

turn back to Psalm chapter 2. If you get a page number, can you yell it out? 5, 3, 2.

Thank you. Remember Psalm 2, why do the nations conspire and the people's plot in vain?

The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gathered against the Lord and against his anointed one. That's the word Messiah. They say, let's break their chains and throw off their fetters.

[16:56] But the one enthroned in heaven laughs and the Lord scoffs at them. Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them. He's wrong saying, I have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill.

I will proclaim the decree of the Lord. This is now the son speaking. That God said to me, you are my son. There it is. You are my son. Today, I have become your father.

Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth, your possession.

You'll rule them with an iron scepter. You will dash them to pieces like pottery. That's what God has said to the son, the king.

And so the psalmist continues in verse 10. Therefore, you kings be wise, be warned, you rulers of the earth, serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son. In other words, honor the son, kiss his feet, lest he be angry with you because the son is the king, you see, and lest you be destroyed in your way for his wrath can flare up in a moment, but blessed are all who take refuge in him, in the son.

And on that mountain, Peter heard God declared Jesus to be this son, to be this king. And it just simply confirms that Jesus is the king of Psalm 2, who will rule over the nations, who will have the nations as an inheritance, who will judge the nations, dash them to pieces like pottery, and who will save his people who take refuge in him.

[18:27] But all that hasn't happened yet, has it? Do all the nations bow before Jesus? Does every tongue confess that he is Lord? Not yet, do they? Has judgment day come where he dashes them to pieces like pottery?

No, not yet. And so again, when Peter hears this phrase about Jesus, Psalm 2, it confirms, makes it more sure, that promise in the Old Testament, and again, more sure, the promise of his return, that he will indeed judge the nations, and save his people.

That's what Peter is saying, back in 2 Peter, verse 19, we have the word of the prophets, like the psalmist, made more certain, because of what we saw, and heard with our eyes, and our ears.

I notice, though, ultimately, it isn't just the prophets who promised it, it was God. See verse 20, 2 Peter, chapter 1, verse 20. It says, above all, you must understand that no prophecy of scripture came about by the prophets' own interpretation.

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. You see, Peter is saying that scripture is ultimately not the words of the prophets, but the words of God.

[19:48] That's why we call the Bible God's word. It's from him. So when false teachers reject the promise of Jesus' return, or the day of the Lord, as it's called in the Old Testament, in the end, they

are actually rejecting God's word.

And this word promised that there would be a day of the Lord, that Jesus, the King, the Messiah of Psalm 2, would return to judge and save.

So what are we to take from all this, which is point 3, our final point? Well, the first, I've got three points as well. The first is in verse 19. We had to remember to pay attention to scripture.

Peter says, you will do well to pay attention to it. It's pretty straightforward, isn't it? Paying attention is to read it, to reflect on it, and to obey it.

Because it is like a light in a dismal place, a dark place, a light that helps us to see the hope of Jesus' return, and all that comes with it. A light that gives us direction in this life to keep making every effort and grow in godliness, knowing that Jesus will return.

[20 : 56] I know a guy who became a Christian while reading the Bible overseas in a room by himself. And he gave his testimony at church, the church I was at, and I remember him saying that he came to understand who Jesus was by reading the Bible.

He was living the world's way. He was doing very well at uni. He got into medicine. In fact, he's finished medicine now. Yet, there was something missing. Particularly when it came to explaining the beauty of the world around him.

He enjoyed rock climbing and things like that. And yet, the Bible was like a light that helped him to see and make the connections. It helped him to see who God is, and it guided him to Jesus, and to a meaningful life now, and the certainty of life in heaven later.

God's word gives light in the dark world. And so we are to pay attention to it, says Peter, until the day dawns, that is, until the day of the Lord comes, and Jesus rises in our hearts, that is, until we know Jesus completely.

For then we won't need the Bible. But for now, we're to pay attention to it. That's the first application, if you like. And the second is that we're to remember that Jesus, Jesus will return. We have eyewitness accounts, and we have the promises of the Old Testament made more certain, because of these eyewitness accounts.

[22 : 19] So, do you believe that? Do you believe Jesus will return? It's not something we often talk about much, is it? Even as Christians, I fear that it's becoming a little foreign to us.

But Peter's point here is that it is certain. And when we get to chapter 3, he'll just ram that home even more so. It is certain because Peter has glimpsed it, and God has promised it.

And because it's certain, then so too is the judgment day, where we'll all be held accountable for this life, and only those who have persevered as Christians will be welcomed into the next. So I need to ask you at this point, what have you done with Jesus?

Do you believe in him? Because he will return, he will bring judgment upon those who have rejected or simply ignored him. So what have you done with Jesus?

For those who take refuge in him, who trust him with our lives, well, he will give us a rich welcome into his kingdom. It matters what we've done with Jesus.

[23 : 24] And the third point of application, final point, if Jesus' return is certain, then we're going to make every effort to grow as a Christian.

For some here, that might mean becoming a Christian by believing in Jesus. And if that's you, then please speak to me or Mark after the service. And for those of us who already do believe in Jesus, then we're going to keep reminding one another and keep encouraging one another to make every effort to grow so that we won't fall and face judgment, but rather persevere and enter Christ's kingdom.

Now, I know you know this. In fact, I said it last week, but Peter is dying to make sure his readers remember it. And so I think it's okay for me to remind you again this week.

Because we forget things, don't we? Last week, I asked us to pick a quality or two from that list in chapter one, verse five and seven, you know, goodness, self-control, love, and so on.

And I asked us to pray on Sunday and during the week that we might grow in that quality we're struggling with. And I wonder how many of us remembered to pray for that during the week.

[24 : 32] Go on. I won't ask for a show of hands. It's easy to forget, isn't it? We forget all sorts of things. I recently, not recently, actually, it's going back a little while now. I married a couple where the best man forgot the rings.

And so they actually got a taxi driver to pick up the rings from his place, drive it down to the church. They passed it along the church up to the front. No one noticed. Except his bride-to-be.

