

How should I handle bad memories in my life? Bad memories come from what we or others have done to us. There is bad advice: a) Do we forget them and push forward, forgetting the things that are behind? b) Do we accept this as who we are and become that memory? c) Do we relive it over and over and let it depress us and rule us?

>>>What does the Bible say our response should be? The Bible doesn't call us to forget. Does Philippians 3:13 tell us to forget it and leave it? The context of Phil. 3:13 is the accolades and former life apart from Christ. We might have shameful memories that remind us of our former life.

>>>God doesn't want you to remove your past, but He does want me to redeem my past for His use and glory.

Question 1: What is it mean to have a redeemed memory? It is a bad memory that is reinterpreted by the truth of God's word through the power of the Holy Spirit- we see it through God's truth. Why is a redeemed memory valuable in the life of the Christian?

- 1) Valuable for faith: for growing and strengthening us. Bad memories and evil challenge our faith daily. God was there in those moments of our lives. God is not blind nor hard of hearing about what happens in our lives, Is. 59:1, Ps. 139, Gen. 50:19-20. God is working in believers to bring about His promises, Rom. 8:28.
- 2) Valuable for deterrence and defense: our memory motivates us to never return that way again. Pr. 26:11 says that as a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool repeats his folly. A fool has no memory of his folly and failure. Prior to Christ, we were slaves of sin, free in regard to righteousness, Rom. 6:20. Now we see our shame and are dead to our old man, Rom. 6:6-7.
- 3) Valuable for thanksgiving: we praise God more, 1 Tim. 1:12-14, Paul remembers his past and what God did by giving him a new life. He remembers God's mercy and grace, V13. One who is forgiven much, loves much, Luke 7:36-50. We bring honor to Jesus when we put Him in the highest place in our lives.
- 4) Valuable for humility: proud Christians should only be proud in the work of the Lord in their lives. Paul calls himself the "foremost sinner," 1 Tim. 1:15. Paul calls himself the "least of the apostles," 1 Cor. 15:9. The word of God helps us to place ourselves low and God high.
- 5) Valuable for usefulness: our memories 1) Demonstrate God's patience with us, 1 Tim. 1:16. 2) Energize our labor unto God to be generous and be a servant of Christ, Tit. 2:13-14. 3) Make us able to be peaceable, gentle, and showing all humility to all men, Tit. 3:2.

Question 2: What value do bad memories have here in the present for godliness?

- 1) Not living in sin's ignorance: V3, foolish: dull-witted, know nothings. We are spiritually ignorant apart from Christ, Eph. 4:17-18. We avoid living in the futility of our minds.

- 2) **Not living in sin's rebellion**: we were disobedient from the heart, born in rebellion to God. Ps. 51:5, brought into life in iniquity and wickedness by our very nature.
- 3) **Not living in sin's slavery**: we were deceived by Satan, Rev.12:9, 1 John 5:19, V3 says that our deception made us slaves to serving our lusts and pleasures.
- 4) **Not living in sin's normality**: V3, enslaved to lusts/pleasures from within. Living in malice (ill-will, evil) and envy (greedy for others' things). Believing that I deserve anything that I want, and in my sin, thinking I can have whatever I want that another has.
 - a. **Hateful and hating one another**: despicable (appalling) in our lives and our behavior towards others.

Further Discussion and Application

Considering that God was there when we were in our trials and tribulations in life. When we were lost Christ died for us. What does our lost state help us realize about God's graciousness?

How does the memory of our former life, push us forward to seek the Lord fervently and to continue to grow in Christlikeness? Why is sanctification such a wonderful gift from the Lord and why we are blessed to know that God is working in us to make us like Christ (Rom. 8:28-30)?

Read the account of the woman who worshipped and washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and hair. How do we forget to acknowledge all that Jesus has done for us? How will humility and thanksgiving help us to properly place Christ's grace and mercy in our lives? What should we do when we forget and are reminded of His love for us? What should our lives be full of?

Read Titus 3:1-2. What are the results of God changing and regenerating our lives (Tit. 3:5)? How do those good works demonstrate the changing power of God in our lives? What will our testimony and words speak to those who are deceived by their own sin and who need salvation?

Our memory reveals that our sin was worse than we thought, and our salvation is better than we deserve. How can our bad memories bring glory to God?