

Sermon Brief

Andre Riendeau

September 18, 2022

Text: 2 Peter 1:12-15

Title: “Remind You of These Things”

Subject: Believers need to remember gospel truths.

Complement: Gospel truths need to be repeated, treasured, and preserved.

Textual Idea: Believers must remember gospel truths and so need to repeat, treasure, and preserve them.

Sermon Idea: Our memory must be full of gospel truths.

Interrogative: What is my memory full of?

Key Points:

1. Reminder: gospel truths need to be frequently repeated. (v.12)
2. Reminder: gospel truths need to be deeply treasured. (vv.13-14)
3. Reminder: gospel truths need to be carefully preserved. (v.15)

What do I want people to know? I want people to know that gospel truths “leak.” They must be repeated, treasured and preserved in order to stand firm in a corrupt culture of compromise.

What do I want people to do? I want people to (1) have a regular Bible reading plan, (2) choose one person to disciple, (3) attend WNL classes.

What need am I addressing? I am addressing the need for maintaining solid teaching in an age of compromise.

“Remind You of These Things”

2 Peter 1:12-15

September 18, 2022

One of my favorite movies of all time is **(LCD) “It’s a Wonderful Life.”** I just love it...but I do still get aggravated every time Uncle Billy loses the Building and Loan money to Mr. Potter. So stupid!!! And he loses it in spite of his reminders: strings on his fingers. Talk to me: “What are some reminders?” (take suggestions) All of **(LCD) these are examples** of reminders. Now we don’t set reminders for everything, just those absolutely crucial things that we just can’t afford to miss.

That’s exactly what Peter is doing in 2 Peter 1:12-15. Go ahead and turn there. We’ve begun a new study in this short letter, and I mentioned that Peter has two great concerns, **(LCD) beware false teaching and pursue godly living.** He focused on the call to godly living in the first part of the chapter; starting here, he’s shifting to confronting false teaching. But before he does, he shares some personal thoughts about why he’s writing this letter. In particular, he repeats three different words that all refer to remembering. He’s going to give us three reminders about the most crucial thing of all: the gospel! As we look at these few verses, I’d like you to think about this, **(LCD) What is your memory full of?** Are you needing to be reminded of gospel truths?

Let’s see, 2 Peter 1:12, *“So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. 13 I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, 14 because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. 15 And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.”* As I said, Peter shares personally here and uses three related words: remind, refresh your memory, and remember. Three different but related words in four verses. He is concerned about their memory because of what we’ll see in chapters 2 and 3. False teachers are twisting the gospel and the believers are enticed. As a result, he wants to remind them of gospel truths. This is so relevant in our world as the internet has opened people up to all kinds of teaching and ideas. Lord, protect our minds!

He starts off, “So, or therefore, in light of the amazing heavenly kingdom that we’re heading to and living for, *I will always remind you of these things.*” “These things” would be all the **(LCD) gospel truths he shared in the first eleven verses:**

1. We’ve been filled with “divine power.” v.3
2. We’ve been given “everything we need” for living a God-honoring, God-soaked life. v.3
3. We’ve been “called” by God into His family. v.3
4. We’ve been given “precious promises.” v.4
5. We’ve been made one with God. v.4
6. We can “escape” corruption through Christ. v.4
7. We are called to Christlikeness. vv.5-10
8. The faithful will receive a rich welcome. v.11

These are precious truths that he's reminding them of even though, as he says, "*you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.*" Wait a minute! If they're already firmly established in them, why repeat them again? Have you ever heard the saying that "Vision leaks?" Well, "Truth leaks" too! We need to hear gospel truths over and over again. For example, how many times have I preached that God's love for us is unconditional and that as soon as I confess sin, it is forgiven and forgotten by God...yet, I still find myself marinating in shame and guilt after I've confessed my sin. I say to myself, "Loser! Some pastor you are! You think you can just confess you sin and that's it? Good to go? Get real!" I still hear that foolish self-talk in my head when I confess sin.

Why? Because "Truth leaks!" The truth of the gospel is this, **(LCD) "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."** God forgives our sin COMPLETELY! Do you believe that? Do you yawn when you hear this oft-quoted verse? I've heard this verse a GAZILLION times and yet I STILL need to hear it! I need the constant reminder of the glorious gospel of grace! "Truth leaks" and so our first reminder, **(LCD) Gospel truths need to be frequently repeated.** No matter how basic.

Remember Vince Lombardi two weeks ago, "Gentleman, this is a football." Sometimes we need to go back to the basics. "Believer, this is a Bible." We need constant repetition of simple gospel truths. I've read the Bible through about thirty times. I need to keep reading it – over and over – I need the repetition as mind-numbing as it feels sometimes. Because if we're honest, we find repetition tedious. Think about it: **(LCD) whether it's the same pre-recorded message with our credit card company or repeating the same thing to our kids for the millionth time, or reading John 3 for the billionth time,** we find repetition boring and frustrating...yet it's CRUCIAL to our progress in everything! Lord, change our mindset toward Your Word! Help us see it as the great gift that it is!

So with that said: do you have a **(LCD) Bible reading plan?** I find that without discipline I'll avoid repetition. This is one from the Navigators. I've got copies of it up here if you'd like one. You can start it any time of the year and you can read through the Bible at whatever pace you choose. It has 25 readings a month in case you miss a few days here and there. The bottomline is that we need to be frequently repeating gospel truths to ourselves. So let me ask you again, **(LCD) What is your memory full of?** You're filling it with something, how about God's Word?

Verse 13, "*I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, 14 because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.*" Though there are different opinions about authorship, I have suggested that I agree with the traditional view that Peter wrote this letter at the very end of his life, in Rome during Nero's infamous, anti-Christian reign. In other words, he wrote this letter under the threat of persecution and martyrdom. It had to be pretty intense because he says that he'll "*soon put it, his body, his life, aside.*" He senses that he's at the end of his life on earth and, most likely, he's reminded of what Jesus had told him so many years earlier, **(LCD) "Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands,**

and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!””

You can be sure that Peter never forgot these words...especially after he watched Jesus stretch out his hands on the Cross. Peter is aware of his gruesome fate but there are two things he says in verse 13 that help him have a health perspective on his impending crucifixion. First, he refers to his body as a “tent.” The image in his reader’s minds would be that of **(LCD) nomads who would quickly fold up their tents** before moving on. In other words, Peter has an eternal perspective on his life. He realizes that this earthly life is temporary and that enables him to stay focused even in the face of death. The apostle Paul had this attitude too. **(LCD) “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain...I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far...”**

This is gospel truth!!! We need to be reminded of it! For Peter and Paul, this body, this life, is just temporary. Can we say that same? Do we really believe that dying and being with Jesus is “better by far?” I love how Paul talks about this tent imagery in Corinthians, **(LCD) “We know that when these bodies of ours are taken down like tents and folded away, they will be replaced by resurrection bodies in heaven—God-made, not handmade—and we’ll never have to relocate our “tents” again. Sometimes we can hardly wait to move—and so we cry out in frustration. Compared to what’s coming, living conditions around here seem like a stopover in an unfurnished shack, and we’re tired of it! We’ve been given a glimpse of the real thing, our true home, our resurrection bodies.”** Again, this is gospel truth. Do we really believe it?

Look at these pictures: **(LCD) which reflects your attitude about your earthly life?** Now don’t get me wrong. I’m not saying we should live in a literal tent and I’m not saying that living in a beautiful house is sinful. What I’m asking about is your heart attitude. Is your house your castle or is it a means for forwarding the kingdom of God on earth? Are you able to sell it and leave it quickly if God says so? Are you tied to your earthly house, or do you see it as a tent for God’s purposes?

If we’re going to have the right perspective on our stuff, we need to be reminded of gospel truths like our true life is with God the Father. So with that in mind, Peter says in verse 13, *“I think it is right to refresh your memory...”* The verb here is translated in the New Testament like this: **(LCD) “refresh; woke; rough; got up; stimulate.”** It’s a word that primarily has the sense of awaken, arouse, stir up, even roughly – like shaking someone awake! Again, he’s on the verge of martyrdom and before he goes, he wants them to wake up to what’s really important: the gospel! The Kingdom of God! There is nothing more important to him than stirring their memories of gospel truths because Peter seeks first the kingdom of God! We focus on what’s important to us – the Lord Jesus and His gospel is tops for Peter. Our second reminder, **(LCD) gospel truths need to be deeply treasured.** This life is temporary for Peter, his real treasure is with God. How about us? Is Jesus our highest love?

You can tell what someone loves by what's on their mind when they die. I've shown this before, **(LCD) this is a rabid Pittsburgh Steelers fan who died.** At his wake, instead of a coffin, he was placed in his recliner with remote in hand and a TV playing a Steelers game on it. He's got his Steelers blanket on him. I don't mean to be disrespectful, but friends, this says a lot about what this man treasured – a football team.

On the other end of the spectrum was Scottish pastor **(LCD) Samuel Rutherford.** This is long, but I think it's worth the read. Listen to this account of his death: *"Some days before he died, he said: "I shall shine, I shall see Him as He is, I shall see Him reign, and all His fair company with Him; and I shall have my large share, my eyes shall see my Redeemer, these very eyes of mine, and no other for me; this may seem a wide word, but it is no fancy or delusion; it is true, it is true; let my Lord's name be exalted, and if He will, let my name be grinded to pieces, that He may be all in all. If He should slay me ten thousand times ten thousand times, I'll trust." One of his friends, Mr. Robert Blair, who stood by, his bed, said to him: "What think ye now of Christ?" To this he replied: I shall live and adore Him; glory, glory, to my Creator, and to my Redeemer forever; glory shines in Immanuel's land." In the afternoon of the same day he said: "Oh, that all my brethren in the public may know what a Master I have served, and what peace I have this day; I shall sleep in Christ, and when I awake, I shall be satisfied with His likeness. This night shall close the door, and put my anchor within the veil, and I shall go away in a sleep by five of the clock in the morning." Words which received their exact fulfilment. His soul was filled with rapture as he lay dying, and he cried, "Oh, for arms to embrace Him! Oh, for a well-tuned harp!" So he passed away, declaring as he went that in the love and presence of his Lord, he had found heaven before he entered within the gates."*

So much gospel truth here!! Friends, these are the last words of someone who treasured Christ above all. Gospel truths were dripping from his lips. How will it be for us? Let me ask again, **(LCD) What is your memory full of?** Whatever we treasure will come pouring out of us at the end of our lives. Be filled with gospel truths so that you treasure Christ above all!

Finally, verse 15, *"And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things."* There's that phrase we saw twice last week, "make every effort." It's the same root word, "spoude," "speed, haste, effort." Peter says that he's pouring himself into making sure that they'll be able to remember these gospel truths after he dies. What's he pouring himself into? Scholars have different ideas Some think he's referring to sharing all his remembrances of Jesus with Mark so that Mark could write the story of Jesus – the gospel of Mark. Maybe. Others think that he's referring to other letters he planned to write in the future and others think he's referring to this very letter – assuming that it will be re-read in the coming years. Regardless, as Peter is coming to the end of his life, his focus is on passing on the deposit of truth that was given to him. Because of that focus and effort, we have the gospel of Mark, 1 Peter and 2 Peter – all filled with life-transforming gospel truth. Our third reminder, **(LCD) gospel truths need to be carefully preserved.**

And they have been. I want you to know that you can trust this Bible in your hands. I'll have more to say about that next week, but for now, consider **(LCD) this chart**. Each of these yellow circles represents the number of copies we have of an ancient written work. The biggest circle by far is the New Testament – over 24,000 manuscripts. The next largest are the works of Homer – 643. They go all the way down to Plato – 7. No one questions the authenticity of Plato even though we only have 7 copies of his works. Plus, this chart shows the years between the original writing and the earliest copy. For Plato, it's 1200 years! For Aristotle, it's 1400 years! How accurate do you think those copies are? For the New Testament, thanks to the Dead Sea Scrolls, it's 40-70 years! I'll have more on the reliability of the Bible next week but suffice to say, you can trust this Bible because of people like Peter who made every effort to pass on gospel truths.

Paul had the same conviction as he said to his protégé Timothy, **(LCD) “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”** Peter and Paul realized the rich deposit of truth they'd been given, and they carefully preserved it and passed it on. The next generation did the same thing, and so on; and we are called to continue that tradition. How about you? Are you carefully passing on the gospel truths you've been given? That's one reason why we do **(LCD) Wednesday Night Live**. We feel a responsibility to carefully teach the gospel truths that have been handed down through the generations. I encourage you to take the time to fill yourself up with gospel truth!

So one last time this morning, **(LCD) What is your memory full of?** For Peter, with his life about to end, all that mattered was the gospel. Same with Samuel Rutherford. What about us? Dave Brown told me this week of a good friend of his who **(LCD) lost his 23 year old son** this week to a bike accident. Grieving on Facebook, he wrote this, *“Doubling down on my faith in the Lord. Only moments till we're together.”* Moments like these are when we need to be reminded of gospel truths like this one, **(LCD) “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”** I do. Do you? Let's close with a song that reminds us of this powerful truth.

Sing “I Will Rise”