

What Is Real Remembering?

1. IS WISDOM OLD OR YOUNG?

In the following pairs, which word do you prefer?

excited / content
passion / patience
risky / safe

How we define happiness often changes with age:

Under 40 happiness = excitement.
Over 40 happiness = contentment.

And how we experience and define faith can change with age:

Under 40 faith = experience, passion, action.
Over 40 faith = commitment, sacrifice, patience.

These are generalisations and they won't fit everyone. But this is why the Body of Christ, the church, us need to be together. Because you can't capture the love of God with only one generation or age group. Wisdom is old and young. The young need to learn it, the old often lost it!

2. A PAINFUL POEM ON WHERE YOUTH LEADS

Ecclesiastes 12:1-8

*Remember your Creator in the days of your youth,
before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, "I find no pleasure in them"
before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars grow dark, and the clouds return after the rain;
when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent,
when the grinders cease because they are few,
and those looking through the windows grow dim;
when the doors to the street are closed and the sound of grinding fades;
when people rise up at the sound of birds, but all their songs grow faint;
when people are afraid of heights and of dangers in the streets; when the almond tree blossoms
and the grasshopper drags itself along and desire no longer is stirred.
Then people go to their eternal home and mourners go about the streets.
Remember God before the silver cord is severed and the golden bowl is broken,
before the pitcher is shattered at the spring, and the wheel broken at the well,
and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.
"Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Everything is meaningless!"*

Do you understand what the things in the poem refer to? You're welcome dress in a wig and glasses and stand between the blackboards and have your photo taken after worship. That will help you recall it!

When I was younger I used to look at older people and think, "I'll do better than that, I'll never get as dumb or decrepit as that." Now I talk to teens and they see me and think "I'll never get as dumb or

decrepit as that!" The old King Solomon appears to be warning the young to get wise because what is coming is not pleasant, but there is much more to it than that. It's wisdom that the young need to learn, and the old need to unlearn.

3. THE WISDOM OF REAL REMEMBERING

Ecclesiastes 12:1

Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come

What does it mean Biblically to 'remember'?

{ Definitely not this... Remember: to retain or recall information. }

"The Hebrew people of Bible times did not simply think truth - they experienced truth. Truth is more than just a teaching - it is an encounter. This is why the Hebrew people never really developed vast systems of thought... To them, the deed was more important than the creed... We may often think of memory as a purely mental act involving the retention of information. But "remembering" in the Bible usually leads to or results from purposeful action. Remembrance is a key part of worship and of the function of the Holy Spirit..."

- Marvin R. Wilson, Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1989.

Remembering: To live in a reality and act from it!

Luke 1:54

God has helped his servant Israel, and remembered his mercy...

Exodus 20:8,11

Remember the Sabbath rest day to keep it holy...

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day.

Luke 22:19

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Remembering is not just thinking about something - it is to live, to be and to act in sync! This is something we do in prayer; we live in the reality that God is with us, surrounding us, loving us unconditionally and then we act from that. This is why you need to start your day with a quiet time. Remember - stop for a moment and live in the reality that God is with you. Then you will act from that and not blindly and randomly.

4. REAL REMEMBERING COMES FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT

Notice the writer does not say "remember God" but "remember *your Creator*". This means living in the reality that you are not the boss of the universe - living under the creative power of God.

Before you get up in the morning. Before you take a breath. Before you step out. God knows you, entirely and completely - and God loves you. To live in this reality and act on it is the most beautiful thing. Simply rest in that, start your day open to the Holy Spirit, open to God's love for sinners and for you. Live in real remembering under grace!