

# Remembrance

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Last Sunday, while on our way to vacation in Florida, we visited with friends in Atlanta before traveling on to Waycross, GA where I preached on Sunday morning.

While in Atlanta on Friday night, I was asked about the podium in Waycross. The current preacher uses a large, parallel Bible which dwarfs the podium. I preached in Waycross for 6 1/2 years, but when asked what I thought about the podium, I found myself perplexed. I simply couldn't remember what the podium looked like. Sunday morning, when I actually used it, my memory was refreshed. I had no difficulty, but it is a little small.

Something even more disturbing happened on Saturday. We arrived in Waycross with no difficulty, but we couldn't remember how to get to house of the friends we were going to stay with on Saturday night. I had to call and ask for directions in order to get there. As we drove, my memory was refreshed, and it all began to look familiar again.

Memory is like that. Without even realizing it, memories begin to fade, and things we thought we knew by heart begin to become unfamiliar.

Peter understood the nature of memory when he wrote 2 Peter 1:12-14, which says, "For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me."

Peter's words are comforting to me as a preacher. I know that the bulk of what I preach is nothing new to long-time church members. Of course, it isn't really supposed to be.

Jude wrote, Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (vs. 3). Since the truth has been once for all delivered to the saints, those who have been well-grounded in the truth should be alarmed to hear new things. We may approach topics in different ways and employ different teaching tools, but the message remains the same.

Jeremiah wrote, “Thus says the LORD: “Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it’” (6:16). We should be asking for the old paths, the genuine truth of the gospel, not new doctrines without a Bible basis.

So the work of the preacher becomes the task of reminding Christians things that they already know and reviewing truth in which they are already established. To do any less is negligence.

If I can forget the size and appearance of a pulpit I used for 6 1/2 years and the directions to the home of beloved friends I used to visit almost every week, I have to admit that memories fade quickly.

We preach. We teach. We study, so that we won't forget.