

# Remembering Christ's Words

by J.R. Miller

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of remembering and applying Christ's words to enrich our lives and navigate challenges.*

**Scripture:** Luke 8:5

**Topics:** "Memory", "The Words of Christ"

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## Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes the significance of memory in our spiritual lives, illustrating how it serves as a repository for both joyful and painful experiences. He encourages believers to remember and internalize the words of Christ, as they shape our character and influence our actions. Miller warns that neglecting to heed these teachings can lead to a life filled with regret, while actively living out Christ's words enriches our lives and those around us. He draws parallels between the parable of the sower and the receptiveness of our hearts to God's messages, urging us to cultivate good soil for spiritual growth. Ultimately, Miller reassures that God's promises are eternal and trustworthy, providing hope and comfort in our lives.

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## Transcript

Memory is a wonderful faculty. It is a hand that writes down on an invisible scroll--a record of all the things we do, all the thoughts that pass through our mind, all the impressions that are made upon us. Memory is meant to give us great pleasure. It would gather into the storehouses of the soul--all the precious things of the passing years, and keep them there forever. The joys of childhood are thus treasured, to shed their sweetness on the life in the times of toil, care, and sorrow, which come in the later years. The glad things in the days of youth and sunshine, are stored away to become lamps to shine when it grows dark outside, or to be like singing-birds in the bosom--when earth's music is hushed.

It is wonderful how sweet memories of better days mitigate the sorrows and pains of life, when misfortune or trial has stripped off the things that gave joy. There is a story of a young man who was informed that in a few months he must become blind, and who instantly set out to find and look upon the loveliest things in the world, that in his days of darkness, he might have the memories of the beautiful scenes to cheer him.

Thus memory may help us to prepare for times of sorrow--by gathering up the sunshine and storing it away in our heart. The great coal-fields in the earth are only memories of wonderful ages in the past, when vast forests and dense masses of vegetation grew and fell into the ground, and were covered up and there held in store for service in these later ages. Now the treasured sunshine lights and warms our homes. Similar service does memory perform, when it holds in its storehouses the beautiful things of life's bright

summer days--to give light and warmth when winter comes with its long nights and its cold and storm.

But memory stores up the bitter with the sweet. If we live negligently, carelessly, sinfully--we lay up recollections which can cause only sorrow, pain, and shame. The secret of a happy life--is a well-watched past. Every today--is the harvest of yesterday.

The only way to make tomorrow's memories rich and sweet--is to live today a pure, obedient, gentle, unselfish, helpful life.

There is an Scripture exhortation which says, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus." To remember, in this sense, is also to keep, to do, to obey. It does one little good merely to remember the words which Christ speaks, and not to take them into the heart and life. There is not a line of truth in the Bible, which is not meant in some way to affect the life and character. Bible teachings are the gleams of heaven's light, touching the earth. There is not a truth in the Bible which, if received into the heart, will not leave its impress in some way upon the spirit, the life, the disposition, the conduct, the character.

What becomes of all the sermons? Many of us hear at least two every week. Every sermon ought to be a message from God. The preacher is God's messenger, or he is nothing. If he speaks only his own words and does not speak for God, he is not a Christian preacher. They must be words of life, too, which he speaks. "The words that I speak unto you," said Jesus, "they are spirit, and they are life."

God's Word is compared by the great Teacher, to seed. What follows when the sower goes over his field and scatters his good seed upon the ground? He seems to be only throwing it away. But in each of the little golden grains, is a secret of life that, when the seed becomes soft in the earth, puts out a little point, a tiny sprig, which by-and-by becomes a stem that shoots up into a stalk of wheat. In the season of harvest, the field bears its crop of golden grain.

Jesus tells us what becomes of the sermons. Not all the good seed grows into its appropriate harvest. There are four different ways of receiving the good seed.

There are wayside hearers. The ground is trodden down into hardness by many passing feet, until it cannot receive the seed. The golden grains fall upon it--but lie there uncovered, and the birds come and take them away.

There are stony-ground hearers. A thin layer of surface soil receives the seed, and at once it springs up. But the hot sun blazes down on the place, the thin soil is soon dried, and the green shoots are soon withered and dead.

There are the thorny-ground hearers. The soil is good, rich, and deep, and the seed grows luxuriantly. But the ground contains also roots of briars and thorns, and the same rich soil which produces rapid growth in the wheat--fosters also the quicker growing of these briars and thorns; and the wheat is soon so choked that only poor, starved, shriveled grains form on the stalk, none of them growing to perfection.

There is also good ground--untrodden, deep-ploughed, clean of the roots of other things. On this soil the seed grows into luxuriance, and the harvest waves at length, being reaped from the field.

What becomes of the seed--depends on the soil. What becomes of the sermons--depends on the hearers.

There are hearts like the wayside, trodden down by passing feet, so that no holy word or thought of God finds entrance into them. There are rocky hearts-- emotional, promising well for a little while--but not enduring temptation and trial. There are thorny hearts, in which grow the roots of other things that choke out the divine seeds. No fruit of the Spirit ripens to anything beautiful in them.

This parable tells what comes of a great deal of the holy seed that is scattered on the earth. Nothing comes of it! The birds get it; the heat withers it; briars and thorns choke it. But there are also hearts that receive the words of truth, keep them, nourishing them into growths which yield a rich harvest!

We must not forget that all this hearing of the truth leaves a record. A curious little machine has been invented, which, when placed in the rear of a railway-car, registers on a strip of paper every motion of the car, every curve of the track, every unevenness, every fragment of the history of the train's movement from the moment it starts until it stops. There is something in each human life that, in like manner, registers all that goes on in the life, every day, every year. It marks all our privileges and opportunities. It tells of every sermon we hear, every good word that falls upon our ear, every shining upon us of the face of Christ, every call to duty, every warning and exhortation, every touch upon our life by the hand of Christ, every influence of friendship; and it also shows our response to all these influences!

It is well that we consider what kind of autobiography we are writing these passing days. What does memory enshrine of the words of Christ which we have heard? None of us know how these living words have wrought in our lives. If it were possible to obliterate from our character all that they have done in us--we would then see what we owe to them. The sun is not so much to the planets--as these words of Christ are to our lives!

Think of the comfort we have gotten in sorrow, the light that has made our darkness bright with hopes and has filled our night with stars. Think of the lines of beauty which the words of Christ, like the pencils of a great artist, have left in our lives. We never shall know in this world--all that the words of Christ have done in us and for us! Thus we cannot know what shall be the influence of these words, repeated by us, on others who may hear them.

Perhaps we have resisted the influence of Christ's words in our lives. Some of us grieve over the stained pages, the blotted lines, the failures to be sweet in the time of provocation, to be patient in trial. Christ understands it all. He knows how the lesson has been missed. But He is also our teacher. He says, "Come unto me learn of me,"

and He never grows impatient of our slow learning, even of our failures.

Remembering Christ's words, sweetens the life. It keeps the thoughts always fragrant. A drawer was opened, and a delicious perfume stole out and filled the room. A bag of musk in the drawer, was the secret of it all. So the words of Christ hidden in a human heart--sweeten all the life.

A writer tells the story of a young girl whose spirit grew so wondrously beautiful and gentle, the secret being that one little verse of Scripture was lying like a rich fragrance in her heart, "Whom not having seen, you love." If we let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, it will pour sweetness through all our life, into our thoughts, feelings, affections, and emotions, until our whole being is saturated with the rich fragrance. There is no other secret of true, noble, Christ-like character.

There is another Bible "Remember." This time it is a prayer to God, asking Him to remember the promise on which He had caused His servant to hope. Of course God could never fail to remember any word He has spoken on which any of His children have trusted. We forget too easily the words of the Lord Jesus; but He never forgets a promise He makes!

Men often make promises on which others depend, perhaps staking all their interests and their happiness upon the assurance given to them--only to find at last that the promise has been forgotten. We have all known instances in which one person took another's word, believed what he said, accepted his assurance, giving it implicit confidence, only to learn at length, that there was nothing substantial in the promise. But God's least word is true and eternal. "Heaven and earth shall pass away--but my words shall never pass away!" said Christ. When a soul takes any word of Christ, and builds a fabric of hope upon it, resting on it, believing that it will be fulfilled, sooner might the stars fall from heaven--than that God should forget or fail to fulfill His promise!

In days of war, while the army rested, a bird came and built her nest on the pole of the emperor's tent. When it was time for the army to move, the mother bird was sitting on her eggs. The emperor gave command that the royal tent should be left standing, that the bird might not be disturbed until her young were hatched and were old enough to fly. The bird had trusted him, building her nest in his tent--and he would not disappoint her trust. Just so, if we put our confidence in any promise of God, building our hope upon it--He will honor our trust, and His word shall be as an eternal rock.

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