

I Can't Forget

When someone sins against us, we can't forget. We have eternal memories when it comes to the faults of others. Everyone can relate to this malady. We all have harboured grudges against those who have offended us. We are quick to take offence but slow to forgive. When it comes to the sins of others, our memories are perfect. A wife can remember every time her husband has looked at another woman. He can remember every time she has nagged him. A sister remembers every single time her big brother bullied her, while he remembers every time she got on his nerves. Our memories are better than any elephant when it comes to the wrongs of others.

However, we suddenly develop total amnesia when it comes to our sins. We can't remember our own faults. Our forgetfulness about our own problems is complete. It is absolute. We don't want to admit we are wrong. We refuse to apologise, to confess, to repent. We go through life assuming that all our problems are caused by others. We are oblivious to our own failings. We simply can't remember them.

But our inability to forget the sins of others and to remember our own sins is merely symptomatic of a much deeper, more disturbing forgetfulness. We have forgotten that we are children of God and that we have sinned against Him "in thought, word, and deed." We have forgotten that we daily sin much and deserve nothing but God's wrath and punishment. We have forgotten that we have grieved our God, that we have hurt Him by our iniquity. We have a mental block, amnesia, and utter forgetfulness about our trespasses. We have driven this from our minds. We have hidden it from our mind's eye. We have no recollection of it. We need to admit our wrong, confess it, and repent of it.

When we admit our wrongs, confess them, and repent of them, our memories are miraculously refreshed and we are reminded that God has remembered our plight. He has sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to forgive us. God has not forgotten us. He has made an everlasting covenant with His people, which He will never forget. God's memory is perfect. He remembers the forgiving work of Jesus on the cross. He holds this before His mind's eye constantly, and He looks at us with the favour and love He has for us on account of Christ.

At the same time, and again miraculously, God forgets. He forgets our sins. He does not remember our trespasses. How remarkable is divine forgetfulness! God remembers only the goodness of Christ; He forgets our evil. He remembers the cross; He forgets our sin. God forgets in His remembering; He remembers in His forgetting. God's memory and God's forgetfulness have brought about the removal of our offense and have paved the way for us once again to be the people He originally created us to be: His people, His friends, His beloved children. Paul writes that "*He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins*" (Colossians 1:13-14).

Forgive and forget? We can because God has forgiven and forgotten our sins and will eternally remember His promises to us. In fact, God has given us the commission to forgive others as we have been forgiven. In John 20:23, Jesus tells His disciples: "*If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.*" It is not only possible for Christians to forgive those who sin against them, but it is a fundamental characteristic of Christians that they do so. Through faith in Christ, we are given the attitude of Christ (Philippians 2:5). Ever remembering God's forgiveness; we are ever forgetful of our neighbour's sins toward us.

