



"God gave us memory so that we might have roses in December."  
—J.M. Barrie

12-May-17

## Eulogizing God

While considering the [Passover](#) season, it occurred to me that [God](#) and His Son, [Jesus Christ](#), deserve a eulogy! What is a eulogy? *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as "a speech or piece of writing that praises someone or something highly, typically someone who has just died." Notice that eulogies can also praise living people, since it literally means "good speech."

Eulogies are all about expressing fond memories. PsychologyToday.com remarks on memory:

Memory makes us. If we couldn't recall the who, what, where, and when of our everyday lives, we wouldn't be able to function. We mull over ideas in the present with our short-term (or working) memory, while we store past events and learned meanings in our long-term (episodic or semantic) memory.

Memory is the internal process by which we encode, store, and retrieve information. Whatever reaches our physical senses is changed into data that is stored in our minds for a period of time, some for a short while and others for a lifetime. Our brains attempt to retrieve that information as needed and return it to our consciousness—and sometimes the retrieval process fails,

especially as we age. Memory occurs automatically and constantly, and we are often unaware of it happening until an image or a sound or a smell from our past makes its presence felt.

What we may not realize is that memories can be an effective spiritual tool, benefiting us in several ways. For instance, they can be a source of encouragement. When we recall the difficulties we worriedly slogged through earlier in our conversion, and how God worked them all out for good, we can be bolstered for the hard times in our futures.

Memories can increase our [peace](#) of mind and [joy](#). When we remember the experiences of our lives, we can relive the pleasures, adventures, and excitements that have sprinkled our past. Somewhat hyperbolically, novelist Alexandre Dumas wrote, "Memory is a paradise out of which fate cannot drive us." So many memories can bring smiles to our faces, but even darker memories have their benefits, as we will see.

Recollections can help deepen our relationships with each other. Thinking back on the wonderful—and perhaps sometimes stressful—times we had with one another at a Feast or at [Sabbath](#) services or in serving opportunities strengthens our bonds and endears us to each other. There is nothing like shared experiences to take very different people from diverse backgrounds and shape them into lifelong comrades.

Memories can add to our [wisdom](#), lending a practical aspect to our experiences. Lexicographer Dr. Samuel Johnson shows how basic memory is to this process: "Memory is the primary and fundamental power, without which there could be no other intellectual operation." With a wink, publisher Franklin P. Jones helps us understand how gaining wisdom often works: "Experience is that marvelous thing that enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again."

Our memories can lead us toward [repentance](#). When we think about our failures and wrong choices—and their resulting pain, sorrow, and suffering—it leads us to make changes in our behavior. Every now and then, I think about Uli, a dog we had for many years. He was one of the most stubborn dogs, and there were times that I had little [patience](#) with him. I would yell at him and jerk him around, and now I am sorry about that because he did not

deserve such treatment. He was truly the most loving and devoted pet anyone ever had.

Memories can lead to an increase in [faith](#), faith that is born of our experiences with God. An old Spanish proverb explains, "Experience is not always the kindest of teachers, but it is surely the best." When we recall how God has come to our aid—often unbidden—we can trust that He will do so now and in the future. Remember that time He healed us? Remember that time we received money or a job or a promotion out of the blue, just when we needed it? Remember that time He kept us safe from a storm, an automobile accident, or some other near-tragedy? These are the kinds of memories that will build and buttress our faith.

Finally, memories can help us achieve a deeper relationship with God. It is important to God that we remember Him and His acts, which the Bible admonishes us to do many times within its pages. The following scriptures are just a few of the places where it does so:

- [Deuteronomy 8:11](#): "Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today."
- [Deuteronomy 8:19](#): "Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish."
- [Psalm 20:7](#): "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God."
- [Psalm 103:2](#): "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."
- [Psalm 105:5](#): "Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth."
- [Psalm 119:52](#): "I remembered Your judgments of old, O LORD, and have comforted myself."

- [Jonah 2:7](#): "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the LORD; and my prayer went up to You, into Your holy temple."

Looking back and remembering the events of our past brings a keen awareness of God's involvement in our day-to-day lives. It can help us to "[see God](#)." We need to make the effort and take the time to give our pasts a second viewing, as well as to tell others about our adventures, successes, mistakes, foolishness, and yes, even some of our sins.

We should want to share our stories of God's intervention and providence and the joys of our calling. We should want to pay tribute to our great, sovereign God and His Son, Jesus Christ, who intercedes for us. We should want to proclaim Them as involved, in control, and working all things together for good ([Romans 8:28](#)). They deserve to be eulogized every day—in prayer, in conversation, and in formal gatherings of God's people. What are your fond memories of God?

- Dan Elmore

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## From the Archives: Featured Sermon

### [Remembering Who We Are](#)

by John O. Reid

Unless we realize who we are, we won't have the zeal or motivation to overcome, becoming an easy target for Satan. We desperately need to realize that we are being made ready to be the bride of Jesus Christ, preparing for this marriage by obediently following the lead of our Husband-to-be, diligently overcoming and inculcating His law deeply into our inner being. When we consider the awesome contrast of what we were before we were called and what God has fashioned us into, we cannot allow ourselves to commit spiritual fornication or become unfaithful harlots. We must consider our future Husband's work, His way of thinking, His likes and dislikes, endeavoring to fit as a perfect companion to Him in every way.

## **From the Archives: Featured Article**

### **[Courage and the Dog Soldier](#)**

by Mike Ford

Though we are surrounded and sometimes buffeted by numerous difficulties, trials, and threats, God is always faithful to provide what we need to endure and overcome them. Keying in on I Corinthians 16:13, Mike Ford illustrates what the apostle Paul advises Christians to do to persevere through the threatening times ahead.

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