

## A Call to Remember

**“You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the LORD, that you may obey them”** (Numbers 15:39).

**Scripture:** Numbers 15:37-41

**Song:** “We Will Remember”

Have you ever slapped yourself on the forehead because you forgot something important? People use all manner of low-tech and high-tech means in the struggle to remember—from tying a string around one’s finger to smartphone calendar alerts. In a fallen world, the tendency to forget is a universal part of the human condition. However, the consequences of forgetting are not equal. Today’s passage reminds us that we are to remember God above all else.

God told the Israelites to put tassels on their garments to help them remember His commandments. He knew the people well. When the Israelites forgot the Lord and His commandments, they adopted sinful, pagan practices. Suffering resulted until the Israelites remembered God and cried out to Him. God wasn’t seeking mere religious observance in His call to remember His commandments. He wanted the Israelites, just as He wants believers through the ages, to look to Him in faith as the true and living God.

Looking daily to God and communing with Him by reading and reflecting on His Word and in prayer go a long way toward preventing “spiritual amnesia.”

**Father**, help me to reflect on You and Your commandments daily. Let my life be a living memorial to Your presence in me. In Jesus’ name, amen.

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June 14–20. **Maureen Fowler** considers herself a sinner saved by grace. She lives with her husband, two children, and a couple of mischievous cats.

## God's Prognosis

**[Jesus] took her by the hand and said, "My child, get up!" Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up** (Luke 8:54-55).

**Scripture:** Luke 8:40-42a, 49-56

**Song:** "Jesus, You Are My Healer"

News of an unexplained medical recovery caught my attention. Doctors had declared that a comatose woman would not recover. However, several months later she awoke, to her astonished family's inexpressible joy. I'm profoundly grateful for doctors who often operate as instruments of God's healing grace. However, God alone is sovereign over the prognosis and outcome of every situation. And we who have faith in God may boldly approach Him with our needs and desires, while also trusting in, and submitting to, His sovereignty.

Jairus didn't approach Jesus on the basis of his own authority as a synagogue leader but as a desperate father with hope in Jesus. A messenger came and told Jairus all hope was already lost. Jesus, however, countered with encouragement: "Don't be afraid; just believe" (Luke 8:50). When Jesus spoke to the child, she stood up before her astonished parents. People diagnosed, but God decided the outcome.

Not every person is healed in this life. Not every relationship is restored to what our internal witness says it should be. However, God is orchestrating His plans in concert with His perfect foreknowledge. In a fallen world, we don't call everything good. However, we can trust God, who is always working toward our ultimate good.

**Father,** help me to remember that You are in charge of my earthly life and my eternal destiny. Your hands are trustworthy. In Jesus' name, amen.

## No One Unnoticed

**The woman [who had touched Jesus], seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at [Jesus'] feet (Luke 8:47).**

**Scripture:** Luke 8:42b-48

**Song:** “Come Just as You Are”

When my daughter was younger and shyer, she frequently hid when told that people were coming to visit. She preferred to observe them from afar. Those who loved her or longed to meet her, however, seldom allowed her to go unnoticed. Today's passage shows that God takes loving notice of people.

The woman with a 12-year ailment involving bleeding would have been extremely hesitant to approach Jesus directly to ask for healing. Her ailment made her weak and ceremonially unclean. Still, the woman was determined. She believed that if she merely touched the hem of Jesus' garment, she would be healed. She touched Jesus' garment and was immediately healed.

The woman wanted to make an anonymous escape, but Jesus wanted more for her. He publicly acknowledged the woman and her faith. Jesus even called her “daughter” (Luke 8:48) in front of the entire crowd. His words and actions acknowledged the woman's God-given dignity as His child made in His image.

God takes caring notice of everyone, including you. We know that He went to incredible lengths to reconcile fallen humanity to himself through Jesus Christ. The holy God makes himself approachable through our faith in His Son.

**Father,** thank You for sending Jesus to die for my sins. I pray for all people to believe in Him and become Your sons and daughters. In Jesus' name, amen.

## True Faith

**As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!”** (Matthew 9:27).

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:27-31

**Song:** “Amazing Grace”

“I once was blind but now I see” stands as one of the best known and beloved lyrics from John Newton’s “Amazing Grace.” Newton’s hymn refers not to physical blindness, but to his own spiritual darkness working in the slave trade. But by grace, God rescued Newton.

The two men in our text for today suffered a different kind of darkness from being physically blind. And they knew that they needed God’s merciful healing. The way they addressed Jesus suggests they weren’t looking for just any healer. “Have mercy on us, Son of David!” they cried. Son of David was a messianic term, referencing Israel’s long-awaited and expected Savior. The men knew that Jesus, the Messiah, could make them see. And they were persistent to follow after Jesus, most likely with the help of friends who guided them.

When Jesus asked the men if they really believed in His ability to perform the miracle, their answer was a resounding “Yes, Lord” (Matthew 9:28). Those words, rooted in their faith, declared their faith. They were the words that released God’s miraculous healing.

No one receives the “sight” of salvation in Jesus Christ without faith. Knowing about Jesus is not enough on its own. It is our faith that releases God’s grace in our lives first for salvation, and then to grow in spiritual insight.

**Father,** thank You for the marvelous gift of salvation and your work in our lives. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Mistaken Identity

**The crowd was amazed and said, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.” But the Pharisees said, “It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons” (Matthew 9:33-34).**

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:32-34

**Song:** “The Lion and the Lamb”

Jesus knows what it’s like to be misunderstood or misrepresented. People often misjudged His mission and motives. The Scriptures foretold His coming as Messiah. However, misguided expectations and jealousy made many, including some of Israel’s religious leaders, blind to Jesus’ true identity.

Many Israelites wanted Jesus to seize power from Rome. Others felt threatened by the potential loss of their own power and position if He would have done that. Regardless, Jesus did not waver from His purpose. He faithfully preached about God’s kingdom and healed spiritual and physical sickness. Such actions are not the work of someone in league with the forces of darkness. Nevertheless, the Pharisees accused Jesus of using demonic means to heal a man who was mute and demon-possessed. Their failure to correctly recognize Jesus resulted in tragic consequences (see Matthew 23:33-36).

All of Scripture, calls us to understand that Jesus’ ministry reflects His identity. C. S. Lewis correctly said that thinking of Jesus as something He is not, such as a mere moral teacher, is not valid. We have no reasonable option but to recognize that Jesus is Lord. He proved His claims with words and actions. There should be no mistake about Jesus’ identity. Who do you say He is?

**Father,** help people understand that Jesus is Lord. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Help Wanted, Prayer Required

**[Jesus] said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:37-38).**

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:35–10:1

**Song:** “Bringing in the Sheaves”

When the economy is booming, “Help Wanted” ads pop up everywhere because there is more work than available workers. More workers are always needed in God’s economy. There is no shortage of people who need to be reconciled to God. There is a shortage, however, of workers to minister to them. Today’s passage reminds us that prayer is the key to finding more workers for God’s harvest field.

Jesus didn’t tell His disciples to go down to the local marketplace to find workers. He told them to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send more workers. Jesus knew that workers for God’s kingdom need both God-given faith and equipping for service. Jesus had intimate knowledge of the demands of ministry. During His time on earth, Jesus taught and healed crowds He described as “harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36). More faithful workers can extend the Lord’s salvation and compassion toward those in need.

In His sovereign wisdom, God chooses to empower the prayers of believers to help multiply workers for the harvest. As you pray for God to send out more workers, don’t exclude yourself. Ask God to equip you for your own service in your home, at work, among your neighbors, and beyond.

**Father,** please send more workers into Your harvest field. Help me walk and work faithfully among them. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Know God Before You Mock Him

**The noisy crowd . . . laughed at [Jesus]** (Matthew 9:23-24).

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:18-26

**Song:** “God of Wonders”

People sometimes use the sarcastic humor of ridicule as a power move. They often aim to demote someone or an idea and elevate someone else, themselves, or a different idea. Ridicule unifies friends and separates enemies, all at the same time.

When a person died in New Testament times, professional musicians and mourners came to play and cry out, and they expected to be paid. When Jesus told the noisy crowd to “go away,” He was canceling that day’s job. Their ridiculing laughter was to unify them to keep performing and dismiss Jesus to remove Him from the scene. But Jesus was not deterred. God is never disqualified or dismissed.

If the musicians and mourners had been looking for Jesus, rather than for someone near death, they would have seen and heard Jairus expressing his faith in Jesus to heal (Matthew 9:18). They would have seen an unknown woman (v. 22) healed because she believed. No one really watching and listening to Jesus would have had any reason to ridicule Him.

When we get to know God by learning what He has done, and then trust Him for what He says He will do for us, we have no reason to ridicule Him—and no interest in doing so. You will never want to dismiss Him from working in your life.

**Father,** thank You for sending Jesus to show us Your power that is available to us when we put our faith in You and what You say. In Jesus’ name, amen.