

## Wherefore Remember...In Time Past

Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

**Ephesians 2:11-13**, "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Even though some memories are painful, it is good that we can remember the past." The scriptures tell us to remember many things of our lives. Here the believers at Ephesus were told to remember their condition before they heard and believed the gospel. It was good for them to think on where they had come from, and it is good for us to do the same.

The people of Ephesus were idol worshippers, but some of them

turned from the idol to trust in the Living God. These are the ones that are being encouraged to remember that they were saved from such sins. The idol was a man made thing that they worshipped. It was not alive and had no capability to do good, or evil. Yet, for generations the Ephesians, like people of other cities and places, had bowed before these man made gods.

When they believed the word of God and repented of their sins they were delivered from such false ways. Spiritually, their eyes were opened and they saw how blind that they had been. It had to shame them to realize that they had given so much time of their lives in a vain and wasted fashion. It is true for us of our day as well, isn't it? It hurts to look back and see the foolish things, both said and done, when we were in sin and without the knowledge of Jesus.

What a difference a decision can make. When they worshipped idols they had no real future, no hope, just a false religion. Before knowing Jesus they didn't realize their true condition. When they believed the truth then they saw how deceived that they had been to worship some foolish, man made object. Truly they who do such things are without

any real hope.

People today who forsake God are like the idol worshippers of Paul's day. They think that they will be alright living the way that they are living. Saying that something is good and will be alright doesn't make it true. Man can't save himself, or anyone else. Until a person comes to trust in God, at best he is deceived by a false hope while trusting in any man made religion.

When Jesus comes into a person's life then there is cause to rejoice and have true hope for the future. The Lord promises forgiveness and life eternal. What he says, he will do, for he never says something that he will not bring to pass. As the scriptures says, we have hope not just in this life on earth, but for all eternity. Imagine what it will be like to live in heaven, where there will be no death, pain, crime, or any evil thing. This is not some idle thought, but the promise of God himself.

There is no way to compare the difference between worshipping some idol and trusting the living God. Idolatry is a vain hope while the living God created man, made a way for man to be saved from sin, and promises eternal life for those who trust in him.

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WHEN THE PROPHET JONAH PREACHED TO THE PEOPLE OF NINEVEH AND TOLD THEM GOD WOULD DESTROY THEIR GREAT CITY AND ALL OF THEM BECAUSE OF THEIR SINFUL WAYS, THE PEOPLE, FROM THE KING DOWN TO THE LOWEST BEGGAR, REPENTED OF THEIR SINS AND GOD FORGAVE THEM AND DID NOT DESTROY NINEVEH!

BUT JONAH WAS ANGRY THAT NINEVEH WASN'T DESTROYED AS HE HAD PROPHESED AND HE URGED GOD TO CARRY OUT HIS WORD, CAMPING OUTSIDE THE CITY TO SEE IF GOD WOULD DESTROY IT!

ONLY AFTER GOD DESTROYED A VINE, THAT SHADED JONAH FROM THE SUN, DID THE PROPHET COME TO REALIZE THAT GOD WAS TRYING TO SHOW HIM THAT MERCY WAS FAR GREATER THAN SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS!

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