

Forgetting or Ignoring?

“Then they remembered his words.”

Luke 24:8 (NIV)

It is very evident that some Christians have very short memories. They read the warnings in the Bible that God's people will have trouble in this life and promptly forget those warnings. This was the case with the apostles when Jesus was crucified. They forgot His teaching about the cross and the resurrection.

Beginning a year before the crucifixion, Jesus taught the disciples that He had to go to Jerusalem and suffer, die, and be raised the third day (Matthew 16:21). We can only guess why this teaching went unheeded by the disciples. Some people think that the disciples' Messianic expectations blinded them to anything less than the Messiah leading a military overthrow of the occupational forces of Rome.

John 6 is where we read of the multitude trying to come and take Jesus by force to make Him king. Jesus had just created a meal that served over 5,000 people and all from the bag lunch of a small boy. The people, recognizing the miraculous power of Jesus, decided that His power should be more than enough to rout the Romans.

The arrest and two trials of our Lord completely devastated the bewildered disciples. Forgetting the Lord's teaching about the cross, they hid themselves away from the authorities who caused the crucifixion, and remained in hiding until the Jesus revealed Himself alive.

We are no better than them. Trouble comes our way and we are surprised, shocked, and wonder if God has forsaken us. We know that Jesus healed sick people when He walked on earth so we assume He will heal our loved ones when they fall critically ill.

We have a theoretical knowledge that Jesus did not heal all of the sick nor did He raise all of the dead. Yet we feel certain that a miracle is going to happen in our situation and prayerfully insist that God do what we so desperately want.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was the real father of modern hymns. He wrote a hymn that is entitled, “Am I a soldier of the cross?” In it there are the following lines that pose a good question for us all. The unwanted answer is obvious.

*Must I be carried to the skies on
flowery beds of ease
While others fought
to win the prize
and sailed through bloody seas?*

Let us work diligently to live in light of all the teaching of Scripture, neither forgetting nor ignoring any of it. Seek to hear everything God says about our life here in this sinful, fractured world. We have the promise that the Lord will be with His people always and that His grace is adequate to sustain us through the darkest nights of sorrow.

Our heaven is ahead of us. By remembering all of the teaching of Scripture we will not be shocked at the inevitable trials we face here and now. By calling to mind the promises of God's unfailing presence we will prevail.

*A feeble saint shall win the day,
though death and hell
obstruct the way.*

-Isaac Watts

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