

April 14, 2013

FORGETFULNESS

Ah...memory!!

- "The only thing faster than the speed of thought is the speed of forgetfulness. Good thing we have other people to help us remember." — Vera Nazarian
- "I have a two-story house and a bad memory, so I'm up and down those stairs all the time. That's my exercise."—Betty White

Self Esteem

- A pre-occupation that is nearly universally accepted in American culture, and has even become woven into much of what the church does, and is today.
- What can we see in Scripture about what our view of self esteem should be, and is there a way we can change?
- Let's look at self esteem from the point of view of Paul addressing divisions in the Corinthian church.

1Cor 3:21–4:7 (ESV)

- So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future--all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

1 Corinthians (cont'd)

- This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself.

1 Corinthians (cont'd)

- For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

1 Corinthians (cont'd)

- I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

Source of Strife

- Pride and Boasting.
 - "Spiritual pride is the illusion that we are competent to run our own lives, achieve our own sense of self-worth and find a purpose big enough to give us meaning in life without God."—Tim Keller
 - Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man... It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition is gone, pride is gone.— C.S Lewis

What is this Arrogance?

- Paul uses Greek word, Phusioo
 - To inflate, blow up, to cause to swell up.
 - To be puffed up, to bear one's self loftily, be proud.
- Interesting visceral metaphor.
 - Overinflated, swollen, painful.

Contrasting Views of Self-Image

- Western, Post-modern
 - Lack of self esteem causes people to do wrong.
- Historical, and much of non-western
 - Too high of self view was the root of evil.
- Paul presents a radically different view from either one of these competing perspectives.

Characteristics of Paul's View

- I don't care what you think....
- Or any human court....
 - We tend to always feel we are on trial
- I don't even judge myself....
 - No confidence in his judgment, (lack of acquittal)

Is There an Antidote?

- "Filled up" versus "puffed up."
 - See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. —Col 2:8-10

Is There an Antidote?

- “Filled up” versus “puffed up”
- Greek word, “Pleroma”
 - That which is (has been) filled.
 - That which fills or with which a thing is filled.
 - Of those things which a ship is filled, freight and merchandise, sailors, oarsmen, soldiers.
 - In the NT, the body of believers, as that which is filled with the presence, power, agency, riches of God and of Christ.

Is There an Antidote?

- “Filled up” versus “puffed up”—(Pleroma)
 - And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.—Eph 1:22-23
 - So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith--that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.—Eph 3:17-19

Self-Forgetfulness

- “True Gospel humility means I stop connecting every experience, every conversation, with myself. In fact, I stop thinking about myself. The freedom of self-forgetfulness. The blessed rest that only self-forgetfulness brings.”—Tim Keller

How Do We Get There?

- Fullness in Christ
 - The verdict is in.
 - There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.—Romans 8:1-2
 - An actual verdict before the performance!
 - We are taken out of the courtroom.
- Life in Christian community.

How is Self-Forgetfulness Different?

- How can we worry about being snubbed?
- How can we worry about being ignored now?
- How should we take criticism?
- How do we handle praise?
- How can we care that much about what we look like in the mirror?

What Would This Look Like?

- Colossians 3:1-17
 - If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.....