**September 11, 2022**

**Introduction**

Today is the 21st anniversary of the attacks on the world trade center. “We will never forget.” I want to challenge all of us this morning with making sure that we remember and prioritize our service to God.

Philippians 3:1: “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.”

We need to be reminded about the things “we already know.” Just as we have anniversaries and monuments to remind us of things in our nation’s past, We need reminding about the importance of our service to God.

**1. We need reminders to refocus us**

* Revelation 2:5

Revelation is written to seven churches all of whom are addressed briefly at the beginning of the book. The first church addressed is the church at Ephesus which has many positives about the group (2:1-3) but have left their first love (2:4). So, what is the solution?

* Remember from where fallen
* Repent (2x)
* Deeds at first
* ***They must remember so they can focus on what is essential.***

They have drifted from their first love and they need to rekindle that desire to serve the Lord. Remember how you first carried out your service to the Lord (Acts 19-20) and repeat that. God wants us to maintain our passion for Him!

* Revelation 3:3

Sardis was viewed positively by others (3:1), but John says their deeds are incomplete (3:2). As he challenges them, he does not explain something complicated they need to do, but they need to remember.

* Remember what you have received and heard (i.e. what been taught; Phil 4:9)
* Keep it
* Repent

They have fallen asleep on the job and are incomplete in their work for the Lord because they have forgotten what they have been taught about God. ***Our focus should center on God! We all need reminders it is all about Him! This applies to us as individuals and a group.***

**2. We need reminders to guard our hearts**

* Prov 4:23

In Deuteronomy 7-9 God warns the people the things they might say or thing in their hearts which could cause problems for them at a future date.

* Dt 7:17

Do not think the nations are more powerful than you and doubt the power of God. Instead, remember God’s power to deliver you from Egypt (7:17-19).

* Dt 8:17

Do not think that success is due to your intelligence, might, or power, but remember that God grants you the power to accomplish everything (Dt 8:17-18).

* Dt 9:4-6

Do not think victory occurred because you are so righteous but take time to remember how you have failed and God has forgiven you (9:7-ff).

Our hearts must be guarded because from them flow the things that defile us (Mt 15:19-20).

**3. We need Reminding of our ultimate goal: imitating God**

* Eph 4:32
* Eph 5:1-2

**Start with 5:1…** Be imitators of God

Since we are to be reborn and made new (4:17-31) what should we look like? We need to be imitators of God. God’s characteristics need to be our characteristics. We must be imitators of God. This is explained in context.

**Ephesians 4:32…** We need to be kind and gentle toward one another. This is no surprise since these are qualities many people think are admirable. But we are to be forgiving to each other and that forgiveness is to match the example of Christ.

**Ephesians 5:2…**Then we are called to love each other in the way that Christ loved us.