

Forget It!

Joe Slater

If you want me to do something and I say, “Forget it!”, it means I’m not going to do that. I don’t expect you to erase your memory of what you wanted. If you tell me of a trivial offense someone committed and I say, “Forget it!”, it means put it behind you and move on. I don’t expect you to develop amnesia regarding the slight.

Forget, as used in the New Testament, doesn’t mean to erase your memory; it has more to do with not being concerned or being neglectful. After detailing the rich past he had enjoyed in Judaism Paul wrote, *“But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal . . .”* (Philippians 3:13-14). Obviously, he still was aware of his past – he had just written about it! But it was no longer of much concern to him. In that sense he “forgot” it.

Hebrews 6:10 tells us that *“God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love.”* God, being omniscient (all-knowing), doesn’t literally “forget” anything. But we need not be concerned that God might cease to care about the good works we do. They will always be important to Him.

Similarly, Hebrews 13:16 exhorts us not to *“forget to do good and to share.”* It’s highly unlikely that a Christian would become unaware that God expects us to do good and share; but we certainly can and sometimes do become neglectful of that obligation.

Should you forget some past grievances and worldly honors? Should you strive **not** to forget to do God’s word, practice hospitality, and labor in service go God and His people? The point isn’t mere awareness; it’s caring about truly important things while letting others go.

Hate?

“Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15).

Not too long ago, I viewed a classic Life cereal advertisement that brought back fond childhood memories. The ad featured two boys disagreeing over a bowl of “healthy” breakfast cereal. After refusing to try it, the brothers offered the bowl to their younger brother Mikey, who “hates everything.” Both were stunned when Mikey began eating the cereal. One exclaimed, “He likes it! Hey, Mikey!” Some consider this advertisement to be one of the greatest ever.

This ad always makes me smile and, like Mikey, I have my own dislikes (I avoid using the word hate). In matters of food, I do not care for beets, black eyed peas, peaches, or radishes. I have a strong dislike for sweet tea, which leads some to question my Southern heritage. On a more serious note, I take offense whenever I learn of injustice or abuse of animals or people. However, God’s word elevates hatred to a most frightening level.

In 1 John 3:15, John writes that *“anyone who hates his brother is a murderer.”* When John later states, *“no murderer has eternal life abiding in him,”* he leaves no grey areas. God clearly equates hatred to murder, but far too many ignore His warning. I cringe whenever I hear someone say that they hate another individual, for that person is placing his or her eternal salvation at risk. Jesus encourages people to love and pray for others (Matthew 5:43-45), but, sadly, many do not care.

And as for me... I refuse to see hate live while love dies.

--Kenny Westmoreland (Celina, TN)

PROCLAMATION 97

“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you” (James 4:10, ESV).

In 1863, then President, Abraham Lincoln instituted Proclamation 97, appointing a Day of National Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer. In this Proclamation our government recognized the supreme authority of God in the affairs of men and nations.

This act was certainly a good thing; and while I do not wish to take anything away from it, I have to say that God beat the president to it. Additionally, God desires humility all the time, not just one day of the year.

As far back as the time of the Exodus we have Moses and Aaron telling Pharaoh to humble himself before God. Later, God reminded his people, Israel, that they should be humble, *“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land”* (II Chronicles 7:14).

The primary purpose of being humble is to display fear and reverence towards God, thus gaining His blessings, *“The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life”* (Proverbs 22:4).

James writes that we should humble ourselves. Are you a humble person? Be careful before you answer. Someone once said, “Humility is something that if you say you have it, you just lost it.”

Humility is from the Latin word “humus” meaning “of the earth.” To be humble is to be face down in the dirt, submitting to the authority of another, without personal pride.

Christ is the perfect example of humility. First, He left His heavenly home to come to sinful earth. During His time here, he became a servant, even washing the feet of His disciples. Finally, He gave His life to the saving of humankind (Phil. 2:6-8).

We should all live by Christ’s example and strive to be better people. The next time you’re tempted by material wealth and worldly desires consider Christ’s humility and learn how to be humble in your own life.

--Roy Allen Crutcher (Mt. Carmel, IL)