

Presented by Dr. Jimmy Hilton

**SOUTH POINT  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

*Finding God's Direction for Life*



**THE GREATEST WORDS IN THE BIBLE**  
**“THE SWEETEST AND BITTEREST WORD: \_\_\_\_\_”**  
**LUKE 16:25**

HOW CAN A WORD BE BOTH SWEET AND BITTER? WHAT IS THE WORD WHICH IS THE WELL-STORED LIBRARY OF THE MIND? WHAT IS THE WORD THAT IS THE SOUL'S JUDGE AND JAILER? THAT WORD IS MEMORY.

**MEMORY AS THE SWEETEST WORD**

A. THE MEMORY OF JOSEPH

BEING BANISHED FROM HIS FATHER'S HOUSE, IN EXILE AND SLAVERY IN A FOREIGN LAND, AND YEARS IN PRISON BECAUSE OF FALSE ACCUSATIONS, ALL COULD HAVE MADE JOSEPH'S LIFE TERRIBLE BUT FOR THE ALLEVIATING POWER OF MEMORY. THE MEMORY OF HOME AND OF HIS GOD KEPT HIM FROM SIN AND GAVE HIM LIGHT WHEN HE WAS SURROUNDED BY DARKNESS. MEMORY KEPT HIM HIS HEART TENDER, CLOSE TO GOD, AND ENABLED HIM TO RECONCILE WITH HIS BROTHERS.

MEMORY WILL BE THE LIGHT BY WHICH WE FIND ONE ANOTHER AND LOOK INTO ONE ANOTHER'S FACES. WITHOUT MEMORY HEAVEN WOULD BE JUST AN ASSEMBLY OF GHOSTS.

B. THE MEMORY OF PAUL

ONE THING WHICH IS VERY STRIKING IN READING THE LETTERS OF PAUL IS THE WAY IN WHICH THESE LETTERS, WITH HIS PROFOUND TEACHING ABOUT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES AND THE PRACTICAL LIVING OF THEM IN DAILY LIFE, COME TO A CONCLUSION WITH GREETINGS TO OLD FRIENDS. HIS MEMORY OF THEM IS FILLED WITH GRATITUDE AND LOVE.

FOR US AS WELL, MEMORY IS THE SWEETEST WORD WHEN WE RECALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN SPECIAL FOR US WHATEVER REASON.

**MEMORY AS THE MOST BITTER WORD**

MEMORY BECOMES THE BITTEREST WORD, NOT BECAUSE OF THE RECOLLECTION OF HARDSHIPS OF PAST TRIALS OR SUFFERINGS, BUT BECAUSE OF THE RECOLLECTION OF EVIL DEEDS. SO, MEMORY IS THE AGENT OF CONSCIENCE AND RETRIBUTION. WHO ARE SOME OF THE BIBLICAL CHARACTERS WHO WERE TORMENTED WITH BITTER MEMORIES? THE BROTHERS OF JOSEPH CERTAINLY COME TO MIND. JACOB IS ANOTHER BECAUSE HE DECEITFULLY WRONGED HIS BROTHER. PETER, AFTER DENYING JESUS, WENT OUT AND “WEPT BITTERLY” BECAUSE OF THE PAIN OF HIS MEMORY. BUT THE MOST STRIKING EXAMPLE OF A BITTER MEMORY IS THAT OF THE RICH MAN IN LUKE 16. WHILE HE WAS ALIVE, HE REJECTED GOD'S SALVATION AND NEGLECTED TO HELP THE POOR BEGGAR LAZARUS, WHO LAID OUTSIDE HIS GATE. BUT WHEN HE DIED HE WENT TO HELL AND HIS MEMORY OF HIS FAILURE OF HIS LIFE ON EARTH TORMENTED HIM JUST AS MUCH AS THE FIRE.

JUST AS THERE COULD BE NO HEAVEN WITHOUT MEMORY, SO THERE CAN BE NO HELL WITHOUT MEMORY, AND JUST AS MEMORY CAN CREATE A BEAUTIFUL HEAVEN, SO MEMORY CAN CREATE A PLACE OF TORMENT.

MEMORY IS THE SWEETEST WORD, BUT IT IS ALSO THE MOST BITTER WORD. HOW WE LIVE EACH DETERMINES WHICH IS GREATER THAN THE OTHER.