

AN ENCOURAGING WORD FOR TROUBLING TIMES #122 (by Rev. Dr. Alice Wolfe, 9/11/20)

“Remember... Lest We Forget”

Remember... Many of us are doing that today on the anniversary of the infamous 9/11. We're remembering where we were when we heard the news about the airplanes crashing into the Twin Towers. We're remembering the overwhelming sadness and grief we felt at the loss of lives. We're remembering the shock we felt as a nation. We're remembering how our world changed.

Throughout the Bible, God remembers his people and calls his people to remember. In the NRSV translation, the word remember (or some form of it) appears 323 times. Why? God wants his people to remember and learn from their past mistakes (or those of their ancestors) and not repeat them, and God wants his people to remember how he helped and saved them and that there is no other god.

“So remember this and keep it firmly in mind: The LORD is God both in heaven and on earth, and there is no other.” (Deuteronomy 4:39, NLT)

In our nation today, many have forgotten, and we've let other things become our gods. We've let individualism, free choice, freedom of assembly, and freedom of speech become our gods. As a result, we've let lies, selfishness, slander, false news, hatred, anger, riots, and violence rule our nation. We've forgotten the Police Department and Fire Department heroes who ran into the towers (to save people of all colors) while everyone else ran away. We've forgotten how our nation pulled together as a result of the tragedy. We've, forgotten how so many turned to God after 9/11 that churches saw record attendance the following Sunday. Unfortunately, it didn't last.

My friends, we need to remember! We need to remember that there is only one true God—the God who has loved us since before the creation of the world, the God who created the world and everything in it (including us), the God who performed miracle after miracle to set his people free from slavery in Egypt, the God who parted the waters and cooled the fiery furnace, the God who left his throne in heaven and came to earth to be one of us and live with us, the God who loved us so much he gave his only Son to die on the cross for our sins, the God who healed the sick and gave sight to the blind, the God who raised the dead, the God who hears and answers our prayers, the God who is with us and will never leave us or forsake us, and the God who simply calls us to love him and love others.

Let us remember..., lest we forget! Let us remember how God calls us to love God and love our neighbors—all of them—whether they look like us, think like us, believe like us, or doing anything like us. After all, it's not about us as individuals; it's about us, as a people of God—and God calls us to love everyone as he has loved us. Let us remember now, return to God, and rally together... so that future generations will remember how God changed the world (and our nation) through us!

PRAYER:

Loving God of all creation, forgive us and our nation for all our sins! Forgive us for forgetting you and all you've done for us. Forgive us for letting other things become our gods. Forgive us for not loving our neighbors as ourselves. We pray for healing for our

nation. Help us... today and always... to remember—to remember you and all you’ve done for us, to remember to love everyone as you have loved us, to remember how you’ve helped us in the past and how you can help us now and in the future. Help us remember how you want to change the world through us—and offer ourselves to you! In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

LIVE IT!

Spend some time with God and remember... What has God done for you and for others? (Thank him!) In what times or ways have you forgotten God? (Ask God to forgive you.) Pray and ask God how he wants to work through you to share his love and change the world... for the better!



Photo by Anne Bybee

