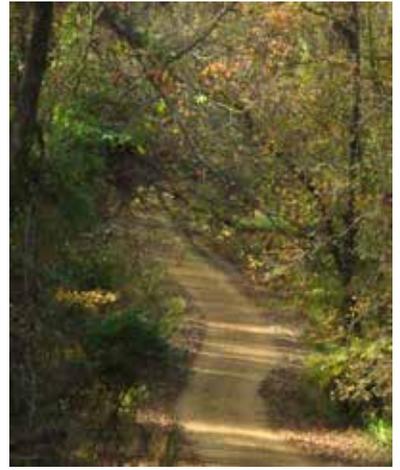


*"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," **Philippians 3:13 KJV***

Memory and Hope are identical except for one small detail; the direction of their focus. One lives in the past, the other in the future. Our society is inundated with poetry and song inspired by lost love and life which can NEVER be replaced. Chasing a memory is like trying to carry water in a basket. All memories can do is sadden us. Even happy memories inflict us with thoughts of our present miserable state. Hope, on the other hand, is a memory of a future promise. Though not guaranteed, Christmas is an example of future hope. The only memory we are supposed to hold dear is the memory of Hope secured by God's Word for it is more absolute than gravity! We are to break the Bread and drink of the Wine of the New Covenant in Christ as a "remembrance" of Our Redeemer's finished work on Calvary to reinforce our memory of His promise to return and gather us unto Himself and Home. *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I WILL COME AGAIN, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* We are to "reach forth" not "reach back." The past will not gladden our heart. It will destroy our Joy. We are to forget the past and press towards the future mark of the Resurrection of Life; the glorious return of the KING! He has promised and we have a lively hope in that promise, because He reinforced it by dealing a fatal blow to our mortal enemy, Death! The past is irretrievable. The present is a vapor. Our future is secure in the unchanging, immutable, Word of God if we believe and obey it! Why would we want to dwell in the sorrowful and maudlin memories of the forever past when we can hope in the forever future? Your present tribulation, dear believer, is as transient as a wisp of smoke in a high wind. *"For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."* Believers will dwell in blessed bliss forever in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Jesus endured the most heinous and blasphemous death in history *"for the Joy that was set before Him."* Our Joy is His dear Spirit and Voice in this life and the anticipation of His beautiful countenance in the next. What a wonder it will be to stand in the presence of God and experience the brightness of His Face and the thunder of His Voice! REACH FORTH!



Memory fades into the past,
Only Hope in Jesus will last,
If we our care on Him will cast,
We'll dwell with Him on High at last! -CGP

Forget the past; you can't change it, and live in the present with the hope of faith embedded in your thoughts of the future God has promised to all who love Him! *"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day: and...unto all them also that love His appearing."* And when the battle's over we shall wear a crown in the New Jerusalem!

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death;"
Philippians 3:8-10 KJV