

Issue 12 - Faith in the Wilderness, Part 2: Remembering the Journey

Messy Story of the Week

He gripped the steering wheel a little tighter.

It had been a long day — the kind filled with small irritations: traffic, forgotten lunches, kids arguing in the back seat. His patience was wearing thin, and the only prayer he could manage was a weary, *“Lord, can You just get us home?”*

Then a small voice from the back broke the tension.

“Hey, Dad, remember last year when the car broke down and we thought we’d be stuck forever? And that man stopped to help us?”

The van went quiet.

He remembered — the heat, the frustration, and then the stranger who showed up with tools and a smile. Gratitude caught in his throat.

A few miles later he whispered, *“Yeah, I remember.”*

That one sentence shifted the whole atmosphere. The arguments stopped, the heaviness lifted, and what had been just another hard day turned into worship.

Sometimes we just need someone to remind us what God has already done.

Faithful God Then and Now

God told Israel to build reminders on purpose. After crossing the Jordan River, He instructed them to gather twelve stones from the riverbed and set them up as a memorial.

“When your children ask you, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them, ‘Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.’”

— Joshua 4:21–22

Reflection was part of their formation. It wasn’t enough to survive the wilderness—they were called to remember it.

Remembering is how faith becomes personal. It’s how stories of God’s faithfulness get passed to the next generation.

What We Can Learn

1. Gratitude Is an Anchor.

When we pause to remember how God provided in the past, our faith steadies for what lies ahead. Gratitude roots us in truth when feelings want to wander.

2. Reflection Turns Pain into Purpose.

The Israelites’ wilderness was full of failure, yet every step became part of their redemption story. When we look back with God, regret turns into revelation.

3. Faith Stories Need to Be Told and Retold.

Joshua’s stones weren’t just for decoration—they were conversation starters. In families, that means saying, “Do you remember when...?” The retelling builds faith.

4. Remembering Builds Trust for the Future.

Each “stone” of remembrance says, *“He did it before. He will do it again.”*

Behind the Curtain

In coaching, I see what happens when people finally stop to remember. Their shoulders relax. Their breathing slows. Hope returns.

I sometimes call it *raising an Ebenezer*, a biblical word that means “stone of help.” When Samuel placed an Ebenezer after a great victory, he declared, “*Thus far the Lord has helped us.*” (1 Samuel 7:12)

Raising an Ebenezer isn’t about piling rocks in the yard; it’s about marking the moments when you saw God move. Write them down, tell them aloud, sing them if you must — but don’t rush past them. Because when you trace His hand in the rear-view mirror, you realize He was steering the whole time.

Faith Step for the Week

Read Joshua 4 or Psalm 105 as a family, and talk about the deeds of the Lord, both with the Israelites and in your own family history. Sometimes God’s work is in a small, unexpected blessing — or something bigger, like the kindness of strangers when you or a family member was in great need.

Start a Joshua Jar.

Place a simple jar in the center of your home. Each family member writes one moment of God’s help or goodness this week — big or small — and drops it in. Read them together at month’s end and thank God for His faithfulness.

Bible Verse

“When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.”
— Deuteronomy 8:10

2-Minute Practice

Close your eyes and name three moments of God’s goodness from this past year. Thank Him for each one — slowly, specifically, with your whole heart. Then pray: “*Here I raise my Ebenezer; thus far the Lord has helped me.*”

Next Week

The Grateful Samaritan — with guest Henry Nwaneri, exploring the story of the ten lepers and the one who returned to give thanks.