

SECOND FORGETTING

REMEMBERING THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL
DURING ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE



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FOREWORD BY SCOTTY SMITH

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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Second Forgetting

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Mast, Benjamin T.

Second forgetting : remembering the power of the gospel during Alzheimer's disease / Dr. Benjamin Mast.

pages cm

ISBN 978-0-310-51387-2 (softcover)

1. Alzheimer's disease—Patients—Religious life. 2. Caregivers—Religious life.
3. Alzheimer's disease—Religious aspects—Christianity. 4. Caring—Religious aspects—Christianity. I. Title.

BV4910.6.A55M37 2014

259'.4196831—dc23

2014001199

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Cover design: IMAGO

Cover photography: Shutterstock

Interior design and composition: Greg Johnson/Textbook Perfect

Printed in the United States of America

14 15 16 17 18 19 20 /DCI/ 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Chapter 1

WHAT IS THE SECOND FORGETTING?

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FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

In this chapter we learned about the second forgetting, our tendency to forget the Lord when we are overwhelmed with the busyness and trials of this life.

- In what situations do you find yourself most prone to forget the Lord?
- What promises do you have the most trouble remembering?
- Read Deuteronomy 7:17–19. When the Israelites stood on the edge of God’s Promised Land, they shook in fear because of the enemies they would face. God called them to not be afraid but to remember instead his great faithfulness in the past and to trust him that he would again deliver. What are you currently facing that feels like much more than you can manage?

- What might God be calling you to remember from the past as you face this trial? Are there specific events God is calling you to remember as evidence of how he has always been with you? How did God provide?
- How can you take courage in trusting the Lord in the present difficulty and as you face the future?



Chapter 2

UNDERSTANDING ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

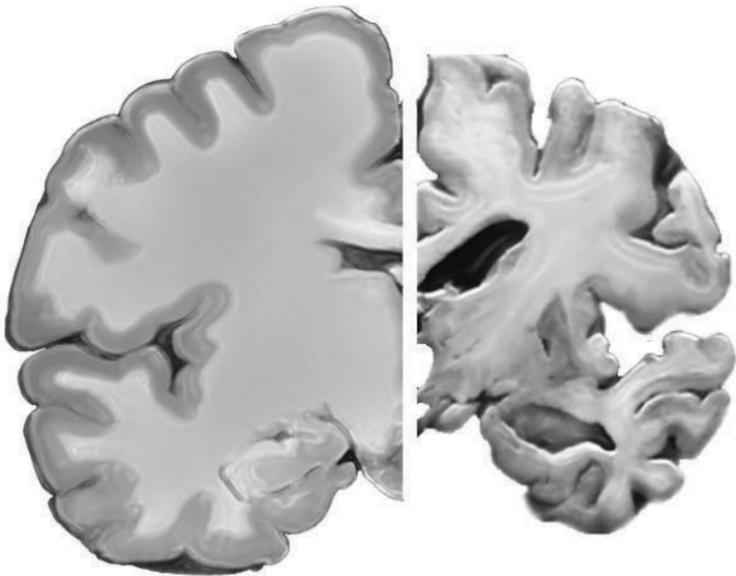


Image courtesy of the National Institute on Aging

Figure 1 Cross sections of a healthy brain (left) and a brain severely damaged by Alzheimer's disease in the late stages. Note the significant shrinkage (atrophy) of brain tissue due to Alzheimer's disease.

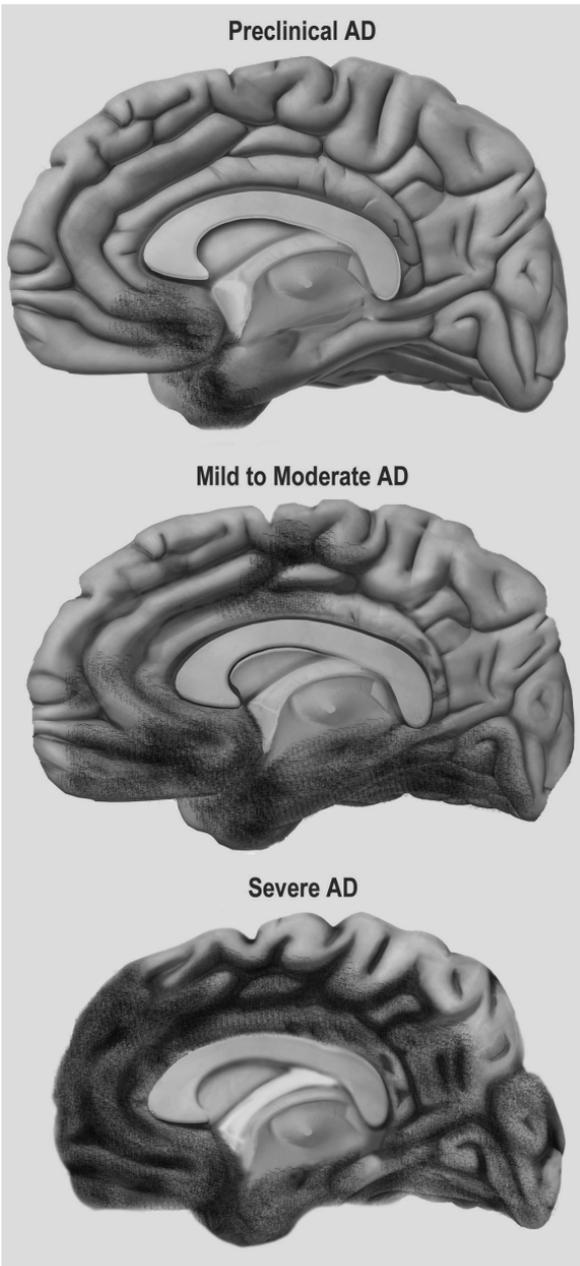


Figure 2 Cross sections of three brains with Alzheimer's pathology. These images represent, from top to bottom, the brains of people with preclinical to mild (Betty), mild to moderate (Frank), and severe (Ed) Alzheimer's disease.

	Stage		
	Early/Mild	Middle/Moderate	Late/Severe
Person	Betty	Frank	Ed
Examples of changes	Memory problems begin	Confusion about time and date	Needs help with personal care
	Difficulty finding right words	Getting lost in familiar places	May not speak often and difficult to understand
	Trouble with some everyday tasks such as managing money or medication	Wandering	Difficulty with walking and swallowing
	Trouble planning and anticipating consequences	Trouble picking appropriate clothing	Difficulty recognizing faces



FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

In this chapter we learned some of the basics of Alzheimer’s disease, one of the most feared and dreaded conditions of later life.

- If you have Alzheimer’s disease, take some time to talk with a loved one about what is most difficult about having Alzheimer’s.
- If you don’t have Alzheimer’s, consider what you’ve learned in this chapter and discuss what you think would be the hardest part of living with this disease. Why is it so terrifying to so many people?



Chapter 3

REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING

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FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

In this chapter we learned that memory is more than the recollection of facts and recent events. Memories involving actions, emotions, and the distant past can influence our life in the present, even though we may not be aware of them.

- How will this influence the way you interact with someone who has Alzheimer's? How can you use the broader understanding of memory to help them remember the Lord?
- If you aren't involved in Alzheimer's care, how can you use this to better remember the Lord in the busyness of daily life?

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Chapter 4

THE GOSPEL FOR THOSE WITH ALZHEIMER'S

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FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

In this chapter we learned how God fully knows and reaches us even when we can't speak and others can't seem to understand us. When we can't speak a word of prayer, he prays on our behalf. When we groan under the weight of sorrow and suffering, the Holy Spirit groans with us and intercedes on our behalf. When we seek the Lord, it is because the Holy Spirit moved and prompted first.

- If you care for someone with Alzheimer's, how does this change the way you see their spiritual life? How might this influence the way you see them and provide care?
- How does this knowledge of God's provision influence your own faith?



Chapter 5

THE CHALLENGES OF GIVING CARE

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs)	Basic Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)
Managing money	Bathing
Taking medicine appropriately	Hygiene
Grocery shopping	Eating
Driving	Getting dressed
Using telephone and other technology	Walking and moving around
Housework	Getting in and out of bed



FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

In this chapter we learned about the challenges of giving care.

- If you are a caregiver, what are the most difficult aspects in your experience? Where do you find yourself groaning for God's mercy and help? Where have you unexpectedly experienced his grace in the midst of this trial? Ask God to help you see and experience his grace today.
- If you aren't a caregiver, considering what you've read about caregiving, what do you think would be the most challenging for you personally? Ask God to show you how you might be able to serve a caregiver you know.



Chapter 6

GOD'S GRACE FOR CAREGIVERS



FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

In this chapter we learned about God's grace in caregiving. Christ is the perfect caregiver and we are called to trust in his provision and imitate his example.

- How might God be using your caregiving experiences to grow your faith and to draw you closer to him? How might today's challenges be part of the longer redemptive journey God has for you?
- How can Christ's model of humble, sacrificial service influence the way you approach caregiving?
- If you aren't a caregiver, how can you encourage a caregiver to follow Christ's example of sacrificial love? How can you help them avoid trying to become a savior?



Chapter 7

ALZHEIMER'S AND THE CHURCH



FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

In this chapter we learned several ways that the church can begin to step into the lives of people with dementia and their caregivers. Consider your church community or neighborhood and begin to pray about how you can be present with those who are suffering with dementia.

- How can you offer practical and spiritual support to the caregiver? The person with dementia?
- Pray that God will give the church a vision for caring for some of the most vulnerable people in today's society. What would it look like if the church looked for opportunities to share the love of Christ with this group of people?



Chapter 8

REMEMBERING STORIES OF FAITH



FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Our stories matter — to us, to God, and to those he has placed around us. Remembering our stories and the ways God has led us has many benefits and can encourage our own faith and the faith of those around us.

- Take time to sit with someone and ask them to share some of their story with you.
- Take time to remember and review your story, and maybe even share it with someone you love and trust. As you do this, take notice of things that you end up writing or telling someone that you previously had seemed to forget. Are there parts of your journey that you hadn't thought about before this activity? Are there ways in which you have forgotten the Lord in your journey? How can you better remember this moving forward?



Chapter 9

REMEMBERING THE LORD



FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Chapter 3 taught us about the different types of memory and the current chapter builds on this by explaining how we can help people with Alzheimer's disease remember the Lord. Think about the last church service you attended.

- Which aspects of the service do you think would be most effective in reaching a person with Alzheimer's disease? Which parts would be most difficult? What about the physical environment — do you think it helps or hinders the person with dementia?
- If you were going to design a church service for people with Alzheimer's and their families, what would it look like?
- How can you bring the church to people who have Alzheimer's and no longer attend services?
- What does the forgetting observed in Alzheimer's disease teach us about God's grace?



Chapter 10

PREVENTION AND PLANNING



FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

In this chapter we learned about how we are being formed by what we choose to do today, both in terms of our character and our risk for dementia.

- What can you change about your current life that might reduce your risk for dementia? How can you become a better steward of your brain?
- Knowing that Alzheimer's disease cannot be fully prevented, take steps toward planning by answering the following questions and share your answers with someone you love:
- How would I want to live if I were diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease?
- How would I want people to care for me if I knew I couldn't care for myself?
- How would I want to live right now if I knew I was going to develop Alzheimer's disease?
- What would I want to be sure that I always remembered?

