

1  **Do You Remember a Time?**

Psalm 137

2  **"Do You Remember the Time"  
by Amy Grant**

**Do you remember the time your heart was moved to tears?  
Can you look back on the moment after all these years?  
On the moment love broke through and heaven seemed so near  
Do you remember the time your heart was moved to tears?**

3  **Do you remember the day you first let Jesus in?  
How he gently and tenderly washed away your sin  
Don't you know that He still cares the way He did back then?  
Do you remember the day you first let Jesus in?**4  **Keep holdin' on  
Never letting go  
We're not far  
from the end of the road**5  **Keep holdin' on  
Never letting go  
We're not far  
from the end of the road**6  **In a moment love broke through heaven and heaven seemed so near  
Do you remember the moment your heart was moved to tears?  
Do you remember the time your heart was moved to tears?**7  **Why do you come to church?**

- For many of us it can become just habit.
- We've ALWAYS come to church. Many of us from the cradel roll.
- This can be true even for ministers – maybe especially for ministers!
  - This is my profession – my career.
  - My ego and identity gets wraps up in it.
- For myself, I have to check why I'm here.
  - If it becomes just a job, then I'm sunk!
  - For a follower of Christ, the most important thing is the heart.
  - Though I know I'm not perfect, I know that as a minister what I do has to come from the heart, or it's all for naught.
  - Integrity of heart and life.
- Ministers always run the risk of being "truth-speaking liars" as George MacDonald put it.
- Ones that preach God's Word – but whose life doesn't line up?

8  **But the point is we all need to get in touch with why we come to church.**

- It has to be more than habit or duty.
- We need to get in touch with the part of following Christ that connects with our heart -  
"Do you remember the time, your heart was moved to tears?"
- "The moment love broke through and heaven seemed so near."

9  **It's important to connect to the heart of why we come to church.**

- To tell the truth, we can do that in a positive way or a negative.
- One negative way is to remember the time back then, and be stuck in the past.
- We're always thinking back to how it was in the golden age.
- And we identify some period as the golden age

- The fifties, sixties, seventies, eighties, nineties?
- The assumption is the golden days have already happened.
- And the problem is we can live in the past.
- This was the case with the children of Israel in exile in Babylon.

10  **Psalm 137:1-6 NLT**

**<sup>1</sup>Beside the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept  
as we thought of Jerusalem.**

**<sup>2</sup>We put away our harps,  
hanging them on the branches of poplar trees.**

- 11  **<sup>3</sup>For our captors demanded a song from us.  
Our tormentors insisted on a joyful hymn:  
"Sing us one of those songs of Jerusalem!"**
- <sup>4</sup>But how can we sing the songs of the LORD  
while in a pagan land?**

- 12  **<sup>5</sup>If I forget you, O Jerusalem,  
let my right hand forget how to play the harp.**
- <sup>6</sup>May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth  
if I fail to remember you,  
if I don't make Jerusalem my greatest joy.**

13  **Do you get the picture?**

- The Israelites are in exile in Babylon for a period of 70 years.
- It's the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. – 550 or 560.
- Jerusalem has been destroyed along with the temple.
- The unthinkable has happened – they've been carried off as slaves to Babylon.
- Their leadership has been decimated – their king destroyed.

14  **All they can think about are the good ole' days.**

- Their captors are egging them on – "Sing us a song of Jerusalem," a joyful song – entertain us.
- All they can do is sit and weep, hanging their harps on the branches of the poplar trees.
- "How can we sing the songs of the Lord, while in a pagan land?"

15  **That's where many of us find ourselves – stuck in the past.**

- All we can do is look back at the golden age – the good ole' days.
- The unthinkable has happened – the temple has been destroyed, and we feel like captives in a pagan land.
- Can you relate? I can feel like that sometimes.
- But that's the negative way to remember the past - just stuck there like quicksand.

16  **Yet there is a positive way to remember the past.**

- Rather than being stuck like quicksand, the past – the good times we remember of the past – can be a springboard into the future.

17  **We were sitting at supper Wednesday night, and Don Phillis started talking about asparagus.**

- He said he'd thought about how good some fresh asparagus would taste yet now.
- Do you ever get that way in winter time? The snow is piling up outside and you start thinking about how good fresh garden vegetables would taste right now.

18  **Well Don started talking with Willie about that asparagus, and then he called up his brother.**

- He found out that they needed full sunlight.
- He learned that they needed a certain type of soil.
- Let me tell you, by the time he finished describing that asparagus, I could almost taste it.
- Now Willie said she didn't know if they had a spot with full sunlight – he might have to plant somewhere else.
- Cathy Jarvis offered their yard.
- After supper, Bill Lee suggested that you have to add some salt to the soil for good asparagus – but not TOO much.

19  **Do you see what was happening?**

- They were not just dreaming about asparagus in the past.
- There dreams of delicious fresh garden grown asparagus – provided a springboard into the future.
- And you see, that what faith is. Hebrews 11 says,

20  **Hebrews 11:1 Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.**

21  **So the question today is "What are your good dreams of the past, that can be a springboard into the future?"**

- That's what faith does – it takes the past and makes it a springboard to the future. It energizes you. It gets you excited. You can almost taste it!
- So I ask you this morning, "Do you Remember a Time?"
- What are your most precious memories of church in the past?
- We remember not just to reminisce, but to dream of what can be?
- As we move into the new year, let's connect with the heart of why we love the Lord, why we love his church.
- As we meet for our annual meeting this morning, ask yourself what do I love about the Lord, about the church?
- How does God want to give you faith to make that dream a reality?