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God designed us with a memory that has the capacity and capability to store and retrieve sights, sounds, smells, tastes, music, conversations, emotions, thoughts, motivations, the good and bad times, and what we have said and done—including those things that occurred in private.

What's more, our memory is required for human existence...like breathing. When you think about it, we utilize our memory continuously moment-by-moment. As it simultaneously records what's going on, it also provides us with a source of direction of what to do and how to do it—via what we've learned/how we've done it in the past.

Here are some interesting things to think about:

- What would life be like if all humans were designed without the capacity to remember?
  - How would you perform daily basic activities such as obtaining and preparing food?
  - Let's say I asked you to go to the post office and buy some stamps. Could you drive a vehicle? Would you even know what a car is, where you need to go, what are stamps, what is a post office, etc.?
  - What type of human interaction would occur if there is no remembrance of who you're talking to, social norms, and laws?
  - Would human life even exist?
- Take a moment and consider how our memory is involved in virtually everything we do throughout our day.

The combined capabilities of our mind's intellect (ability to reason, make decisions, etc.)—combined with our memory capacity—set us apart from all other life forms. With regards to our memory capacity, some scientists estimate it is approximately 2.5 petabytes. Some think it is more.

- 1 petabyte = 1,000 terabytes and 1 million gigabytes
- A disk array of 2.5 petabytes:
  - Requires 417 6-terabyte hard disk drives (almost 6 x the amount depicted).
  - Can store 300 years of continually-recorded (24x7) television video.



Sources: Google "What is the capacity of human memory."

Everything is recorded in our memory is a permanent record. What's interesting, it is fairly easy to recover memories we haven't thought about for some time. For example, can you remember:

- Your favorite childhood friend?
- The name of your first love with whom you had the experience of your first kiss?
- The emotional and devastating feelings when you broke up with your first love?
- The smell and taste of your favorite food?
- A terrifying experience?
- A favorite song from long ago?
- A recent dream? (This is interesting because our memory records mental images in our sleep.)

As you reflect upon your memories, you are likely seeing pictures, hearing sounds, possibly salivating at the thought of your favorite food, and feeling the same emotions as you relive some of your experiences in life. When you take a few moments and thoughtfully consider, you will realize you have a significant number of memories. Some are easy to recover, some need a little help.

So, here is an interesting and thought-provoking question. Consider your answer before continuing to read.

## Do our memories go with us when we die?

If you answered no, then you are saying our memories are a component of our physical body.  
If you answered yes, then you are saying our memories are a component of our spiritual body.  
If you answered I don't know, it's OK.

Let's look at scripture to determine an answer.

#1: Jesus Christ provided us with insight of our ability to remember after death.

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'" Luke 16:19-28



Note how the rich man recognized and remembered Lazarus. Abraham told him to remember aspects of his life and the life of Lazarus. The rich man also remembered his family members.

#2: In the Book of Revelation John described how he was transitioned from the physical into the spiritual realm as he entered Heaven. He later described what he heard and saw.

"After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, 'Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.' Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne." Revelation 4:1-2

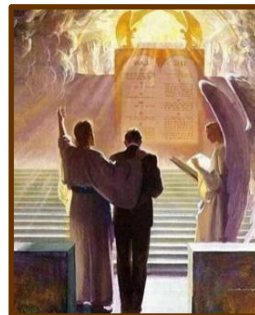
"I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'" Revelation 6:9-10

Note how John described what he heard and saw while he was in the spirit. Plus, note how the martyred souls remembered those who killed them.

#3: The Judgment Seat of Christ

The Judgment Seat of Christ is for Christians. Jesus Christ will reveal the true motivation of our works for Him, and will reward those works that endure His testing by fire.

"For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.' So then each of us shall give account of himself to God." Romans 14:10-12



“Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” 1 Corinthians 3:12-15

Based upon the above examples, if our memory does not exist, how is it possible for each of us to give an account of ourselves to Jesus?

#### #4: Praise and Worship Beyond Our Imagination

Today, when we worship Jesus Christ, much is based upon our faith. However, when we are on the other side, our worship will transform into an experience we are unable to comprehend in the physical realm as faith will no longer be required. This will be the very first time we will fully understand what Jesus did for us on the cross—because (1) we will experience tangible evidence of all of God’s word and promises, and (2) our memories (of who we were, and what we did). Each of us will know we are unworthy of being in His presence; unworthy to receive God’s grace and love; unworthy to receive eternal forgiveness; and are unworthy to receive the rewards bestowed upon us as inheritors of His promise. As such, our memories will magnify overwhelming heart-felt praises, worship and love for our Savior! Some Christians have experienced only a “taste” of what’s to come. These are those who find themselves dancing in joy, raising their hands and voicing their praise in words and song, and some crying unexplainable heart-felt tears as they give God the glory for who He is and what He has done.

Take a moment and imagine what it will be like on the other side; standing among brothers and sisters in Christ; seeing angelic beings; as the shekinah glory of our Holy God permeates our souls with His love.

“And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!’” Revelation 5: 11-12

#### #5: Justification for Eternal Punishment

Those who reject Jesus Christ; those who are not forgiven; those who will not find their name written in The Book of Life; and those who will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity...their memories will provide an excruciating reminder of what they did, what they deserved, and justification for what they are experiencing.

“He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” Revelation 3:5

“And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:11-15

## Physical Brain and Our Soul

Unlike a hard disk drive, our memories cannot be erased, deleted, lost due to power loss, or destroyed due to physical damage to the storage medium because our memories are spiritual and part of our soul. However, our physical brain:

- Is part of our body.
- Provides a means for our soul and spirit to interact with the physical world.
- Will “return to dust” (along with the rest of our body) after we die.

In addition, although brain functionality may be altered by drugs or damaged by dementia, our memories remain.

- Consider the behavior of someone who consumes too much alcohol. They will have difficulty remembering simple things: counting, saying the alphabet, etc.
- Consider a person with Alzheimer's who may have periods of clarity when they can remember everything. The memories did not disappear. Recollection has been “short circuited” by a disease of the brain.

## Inappropriate Memories



There are times Christians will experience undesirable memories and thoughts; which may be triggered by something we have seen or heard; or will just appear in our mind without a “trigger.” These memories may consist of an undesirable recollection of sinful behavior; a negative emotional response to a past or present situation, and so forth—which may be fueled by imagination—and at times our physical body may also respond.

Most of the time we will begin to “walk down this dark path” before we comprehend what we are doing. When our heart realizes we’re experiencing unwanted thoughts, it is important to follow these 7 R’s:

1. Recognize the thoughts are occurring via our sinful nature (self-inflicted or demonically inspired).
2. Realize the thoughts are not based upon truth, are a deceptive lie, and are not Christ-like.
3. Remember we are forgiven (past, present and future because of our faith in Jesus Christ)!
4. Redirect your thoughts via prayer, scripture, and praising God for what He has done.
5. Recover your spiritual connection.
6. Recall what you may have done to put yourself in this situation (for possible future avoidance).
7. Regulate (control, set) what you will allow to enter into your spiritual body.

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.” Philippians 4:8-9

## Future Memories

Because our memory is spiritual and will go with us when we die, our memory will continue to record and recall with perfection because our physical body will no longer circumvent its capabilities.





I pray this writing provides you with a new perspective of our memories, expanded insight into the wonders of our Savior and Lord, and greater anticipation of what He has prepared for us.

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” 1 Corinthians 2:9

All for His Glory!  
Harold D. Thomas

If you know of anyone who could benefit from this lesson...pass it on!