Why the Butterfly?

A Book About Remembering

My grace is sufficient for thee:
for my strength is made perfect in weakness.
2 Corinthians 12:9

Shari S. Abbott
Don’t Let the Title Fool You

This book isn’t about butterflies... it’s about Jesus—and why rightly remembering is important.

“Remembering is so important, both for God and for us, that the Hebrew word translated “remember” is used 229 times in the Old Testament and 51 Times in the New Testament. Shari Abbott has captured the essence of this importance in Why the Butterfly?

“Don’t let the title fool you; this is solid, biblical encouragement to remember the past in order to shape your future. I don’t know of another book of this kind, which makes it an even more important read.”

— Dr. Woodrow Kroll, Back to the Bible

“In a time when everything is changing at the speed of light, Why the Butterfly? is a timely reminder to remember the truth about Who God is and who He has made us to be.

“Longer than possessions, experiences stick with us forever. Remembering where we’ve been and where we are now reveals the big picture of God’s plan and provision for our lives, and directs us into our future.”

— Brian Scoggin, Casting Crowns

“The Bible contains many reminders urging people to remember the great blessings that God pours into their lives. In Acts 14:27, the disciples encouraged themselves by remembering all that the Lord had done through them. I often remind myself (and others) that a joyful outlook and
a happier day is easily available as we reflect on the goodness of God.

“In light of this, I heartily recommend the new book by Shari Abbott, Why the Butterfly? A Book About Remembering. The book is full of Scripture verses and significant quotations that show how we can grow closer to the Lord and learn how to see His goodness throughout the circumstances of life. Shari has written a wonderful resource that I am sure will become a treasured companion to all who read it. I pray that this special book is read by many people.”

— Dr. Alex McFarland, Apologist, Author and Speaker

“Why the Butterfly? will open your eyes, heart, and mind to the depth of Jesus Christ and will enable you to be still and truly see, in a simple way, the magnitude of God’s great love for humanity. Shari lets God’s Word breathe life into the reader and shows us that healing, restoration, revelation, and a spirit of thankfulness overflow from our lives when we choose to rightly remember.

“If you desire a heavenly perspective in this journey we call life, read this book! You will be deeply encouraged!”

— Ashley Harrington, Missionary to the Nations

“What a refreshing walk down memory lane. I too often lose sight of what God has done for me, so Shari’s book Why the Butterfly? has been a great reminder of so many foundational truths. She reminds us of everything from who God is, to the power of the Holy Spirit.

“I need to put this on the list of books I read once a year.”

— Eric Hovind, Creation Today
Why the Butterfly?

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That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works. (Psalm 26:7)

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And when the caterpillar, it doth die.
Ariseth to new life, a beautiful butterfly.
~Shari Abbott

To the one who has forgotten. . .

*Remember, Repent and Return.*

To the one who remembers. . .

*Rejoice!*
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Prologue

The definition of the word prologue in the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary is:

**Prologue**

1: the preface or introduction to a literary work
2a: a speech often in verse addressed to the audience by an actor at the beginning of a play
   b: the actor speaking such a prologue

Examples of Prologue
- the prologue to his autobiography
- unfortunately, the burglary, which he committed while still a teen, was but a prologue to a wasted life of crime

As a teen I remember reading a pithy saying, *the past is forever prologue*. I’ve remembered those words over the many years, and have come to understand that there is great truth in them. Our lives are molded by our past, but not in the same way I would have understood so many years ago. The past may be “forever prologue” because it truly does precede our current reality. However, the past doesn’t always determine how we live today, as the saying might suggest.

Past events and relationships might “set the stage” for our lives, but what we remember, and how we process what we remember, will contribute to “writing the script”—and will dramatically affect the direction of our lives. As Christians we know that our relationship with the living God is the single most influential factor in who we are and how we live. While remembering the past may be important in directing our journey, equally important is rightly remembering!
We often hear people say, “life is not a dress rehearsal — this is the big show.” But as Christians, we believe just the opposite. This life is a dress rehearsal. It is a preparation for opening night, when the show begins. We know that this is not our best life now. We are simply pilgrims here, on a journey to a final destination... a celestial home that is being prepared for us. While we are here, we are to prepare for our final flight to our final destination.

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. (Psalm 90:10)

And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. (Psalm 55:6)

We might not know the time of our departure, but we have been told how to prepare. Just as Jesus told his disciple to “Remember”:

But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. (John 16:4, emphasis added)

When fear overtook the Thessalonians, Paul questioned if they had forgotten the things he had told them:

Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? (2 Thessalonians 2:5, emphasis added)

The past may be forever prologue, but you can choose to let it always be rightly remembered.
Introduction

EVERYONE ENJOYS watching a delicate butterfly flit from flower to flower. They appear to be so light and carefree. Can we ever achieve such a carefree life, as that of a butterfly? So... Why the Butterfly? That’s a question I’ll answer later in this book.

This is a book about remembering. Throughout the book I will define the importance of remembering and how it can help achieve the true freedom that uplifts our souls and makes us fly.

We’ll look at remembering with a Christian perspective. We’ll consider what and how we should remember, and ask, What does God say about remembering? Does His Word provide instruction for us about this?

Remembering our Past

Looking back, we can easily see our life as a mosaic, a design created from many individual pieces. Those pieces represent joys and sorrows, achievements and disappointments, times of distress and times of contentment, times of pain and times of comfort. Do you see your mosaic and do you understand how the pieces fit?

Reasons for Hope in the Mosaic of Your Life is a book by Carl Kerby, president and founder of Reasons for Hope. The book discusses the importance of remembering your past in the light of the cross and seeing the mosaic of your life that God has designed and created especially for you.

Jesus Christ is the Grand Designer of everything. When He saved you, He took all the pieces of your life and gathered them together into a beautiful mosaic.
Why the Butterfly?

Take the time to remember the past, both the good and the bad, the happy and the sad. Remember what God has done for you, and through you. Let God reveal how He has used all things to make you into the person you are today. Let God reveal the beauty of your mosaic and how He has created it from all your past experiences and relationships.

Remember that how you “see” your mosaic will influence and direct you as you make your way home.

Do You Remember Or Do You Forget?

There are events that are forever etched in our memories, and yet there are others that quickly vanish. If asked where you were at the moment you heard about the events of September 11, 2001, it’s likely you would quickly respond with details. You would tell of where you were when it happened and the people with whom you shared your shock and sadness concerning the horrific events of that day. Those who were alive on December 7, 1941 remember another attack on American soil. In fact, Franklin Delano Roosevelt proclaimed the attack on Pearl Harbor as “a date which will live in infamy.” Events such as those are easily remembered, largely due to memorials held on their anniversaries. So also, other events that have occurred on the world stage are easily remembered because of historical records.

Advancements in technology and extensive media coverage have now brought news and images of world events into our own living rooms, unfolding in real time. It’s almost as if we are there and personally experiencing it. Such “up close and personal” experiences can etch the details in our minds and strengthen our remembrance of them.

Equally, if not more important than remembering national
Introduction

and world news, is remembering the events, people, places, etc. that touch our lives personally. They might never be recorded in print or on video, but they have greater impact on us and far more influence in directing our paths.

Consider the people, places and events that you hold dear, those that you count as important and memorable. Perhaps they evoke precious memories that bring joy to your heart, or maybe they bring to mind memories of pain or sadness. Whichever it may be, it’s likely those memories continue to have an affect on your life and significantly alter your path.

Why is Remembering Important?

God commands that His people “remember,” and for very good reasons. We are given solid teachings throughout Scripture about both the blessings of remembering and the consequences forgetting.

The intent of this book is to help the reader better understand the importance of remembering and to create within him a desire and commitment to remember. And not just to remember, but to rightly remember. We define rightly remembering as what and how God says we should remember. Rightly remembering will establish your heart, anchor your soul and transform your mind.

As you read through this book, remember that your

Jesus Christ is the Grand Designer of everything... Remember what God has done for you, and through you. Let God reveal how He has used all things to make you into the person you are today. Let God reveal the beauty of your mosaic...
mind is a gift from God and He has told His people to use their minds.

God said to Isaiah,

\[\text{...come let us reason together (Isaiah 1:18).}\]

And, we know that it is the will of God that we be... 

\[\text{...conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29).}\]

So how are we conformed to the image of His Son? It happens by being

\[\text{...transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Romans 12:2)}\]

Rightly remembering will establish your heart, anchor your soul and transform your mind.

That’s what we’ll be talking about in this book—how we can be transformed. We’ll talk about the importance of remembering and rightly remembering.

Our minds are a precious gift from God and we are to use them to reason in God honoring ways. Our ability to remember directs our lives, and by allowing our memories to reveal God’s presence and faithfulness we will remember rightly. Then, when we experience difficult times, or times of feeling distant from God, we will remember that He is always there. He is faithful and true, and is creating a beautiful mosaic of our lives—a mosaic designed according to His plan, and for His purposes.
Why the Butterfly?
A Book About Remembering

Seven lessons on remembering and how rightly remembering will

Establish your heart
Anchor your soul
and
Transform your mind

Order Why the Butterfly?
at www.rforh.com/store
Reasons for Hope exists to offset the hopelessness that is so prevalent in our time and culture and to direct people to the biblical Jesus.

**H**: Helping Christians share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**O**: Offsetting secular thinking with biblical truth.

**P**: Providing resources that give biblical answers to real-world questions.

**E**: Encouraging Christians to rely on God’s Word as the foundation for their thoughts, their words and their actions.

*Jesus our only true hope!

**We invite you to share your story with us.**
Tell us about times when remembering Who God is, what He has done for you, and/or who you are in Christ has been a source of strength and encouragement. Be sure to include Scripture that has comforted you or guided you. Share with us how remembering has brought rejoicing.

*Share your testimony by emailing us at remember@rforh.com*
A caterpillar spins its cocoon, not knowing the journey it embarks upon. The cocoon encases the caterpillar, bringing about an end to its earthly existence. Then a transformation occurs. The caterpillar is “reborn”—emerging as a beautiful butterfly with wings to soar and an unleashed freedom.

Life is a journey. And this book is about remembering the most important things in life as we travel on that journey. By remembering we can live like butterflies—not weighed down by this world, but uplifted in flight by the power of the True Spirit—heading toward our final destination.

What are those most important things that we must remember along the way? Discover what they are, and how remembering them daily will establish your heart, anchor your soul and transform your mind. Then you will understand what it means to be free.

Don’t let the title fool you; this is solid, biblical encouragement to remember the past in order to shape your future. I don’t know of another book of this kind, which makes it an even more important read.

— Dr. Woodrow Kroll, Back to the Bible

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SHARI ABBOTT, communications director for Reasons for Hope, Inc (rforh), is an avid Bible reader and teacher. She is passionate about equipping Christians to live Christ-centered lives and to be ready always to give a reason for their hope to a world that needs to hear about the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Shari and her husband, Steve, have two daughters and live in Cincinnati, Ohio.