



## Tools Of Faith

I have always enjoyed history. I am not the type of person who readily remembers dates, orders and sequences. I wish I had a photographic memory, but I don't. So being able to put a date with a historical event has never been easy. What I enjoy most about history is the human aspect of it. I enjoy seeing how events have an effect on the people living through them. I love to see how that shaped relationships.

I think this is a large part of why I devour movies, TV shows, books, and stories about the WWII era. It was a war that had an effect on every person across the globe. It changed and shaped every aspect of life. I see the sacrifices that every person had to make. I see how the challenges were used to shape and grow people. It inspires me the way people grew in quiet strength as they relied on the Lord and did the hard things to help win the war. I'm convicted by the people's discipline and focus. While I am not physically in a battle, I am apart of the Lord's army and in the midst of spiritual warfare. But I often forget this. That is one of the reasons I feel called to go to [Colombia](#) often. The Lord uses that time of service to help me maintain the right perspective and focus.

The fact that I do not have a great memory has shaped things in my life. I think it is one of the reasons I enjoy taking [photographs](#). I admit that I am not the best photographer of people. I'm more of a photographer of God's creation. But taking photos of events helps me put things in order and sparks memories. It also makes me wish I had taken more photos along the way.



Samsung SL620

Writing is another help to my memory. I have several friends who are gifted in writing. Their words are focused and evoke thought and emotions. I'm not that talented, but I enjoy it. My writing started out to help me remember things. It also has been used by the Lord as a means to bring clarity to the things that He has been showing me. I spend time reading the Bible and other good books that exalt God. I spend time listening to good teaching and preaching. I spend time listening to music that conveys the truth and does so with power and feeling. All that is spinning around in my head and in my spirit. So taking the time to write out things brings clarity. I find that as I journal or blog about something, the Lord teaches me more. I have also been humbled when Christ takes over and writes through me. No I don't lose control and blank out and He types. But in those times, I tend to remember that He truly is Lord of my life. I have been bought with a great price and yield to Him to be a vessel and tool He can use to bring Himself glory. I am not a gifted speaker or teacher and not a great writer. But writing is one way I know the Lord can use me to hopefully encourage and strengthen others. But writing helps me remember. I can go back to a journal entry and be taken back to that moment. It challenges me to write more.

A couple of people and events have sparked the topic of memory in my life. First, my friend Laura Watson



Laura & Mark  
Watson

and I served together on M-Staff at [Laurel Ridge](#) during college. Laurel Ridge Moravian Camp and Conference Center was a huge part of my childhood and my walk with the Lord. Going to camp for a week each summer in the beautiful North Carolina mountains was a blessing. The time spend there making friends, enjoying God's creation and growing in the Lord helped shaped me. I had the honor of living out a childhood dream by working on the M-Staff in college. I got to serve the people of the Moravian Church, be a role-model for the campers, keep up the camp I loved and have a lot of fun in the process. Laura served several more summers on M-Staff. She later helped with camps and for several years she was the Assistant Director of the camp. She is now in a new job down the mountain. But before she left she started writing down memories and things she would miss about working there. It brought back so many memories for me. Most of the memories centered around the beauty of the world the Lord created and the people He created to live in it. Laurel Ridge was one of the places the Lord used to show me that I can worship through service and work. I can and do sing in worship to the Lord. I can and do pray, speak and write as worship to the Lord. But my spirit truly soars when I serve and work with a heart and mind turned to the Lord in worship. As you can see here (and through my other [writing](#)), Laurel Ridge made memories for me and is a part of my life.



## Laurel Ridge

Another thing that got me thinking about memory, is the 25th anniversary of [Antioch Community Church](#). I started attending Antioch my freshman year at [Elon](#). So Antioch has been a part of my life for 19 years. It has truly been my church home since I moved back to the county in 1998. I think about all the people whom God has had in the church throughout the years. I am so blessed to have learned from and grown with those who were a part of Antioch and those who still are. In that time, the Lord used Antioch to minister to college students for 9 years. It was a place for those students to stay anchored to God in the midst of so many changes. It was a place of growth in their spiritual walk. It was a place to see godly marriages and families walked out through the ups and downs of life. It still is, even though our focus is not solely on college students. Antioch is a body focused on glorifying God, growing in faith, strengthening families and serving. Antioch has planted or helped to plant 3 churches here in the U.S. Antioch has a missions focus and serves people all over the world. We support missionaries and have sent out people into the mission field long-term. We also send teams from church to several places in the world each year. The anniversary has reminded me of how blessed I am to be apart of the body of Christ.



## Antioch

We just had our yearly family reunion with Mom's side of the family. It was good to be able to be there. I have had to miss it for the last few years. It was good to catch up with people. I am so glad my (great) Uncle Druid and Aunt Sarah were able to come in from Washington state. I miss getting to see them. My Mom also did a slide show about our branch of the family. It was such a blessing to hear about her childhood, my grandparents and great grandparents. Great memories!



Ryan & Jen Ozawa

Lastly, a family is one of the reasons I have been thinking about memory. [Ryan & Jen Ozawa](#) and their family are in the midst of a trial. Jen has had surgery for and is now in treatment for breast cancer. With my Mom being a breast cancer survivor, this hit home for me. I have used this website to try to help Ryan & Jen out during this time. You see this may sound weird to some people, but I consider Ryan & Jen to be my friends. They have been in my life for over 6 years. The weird part comes because I have never met them face to face. I met them through a podcast they did about the TV show [LOST](#). They live in Hawaii and did a weekly podcast about the episodes, the filming locations and more. They drew people in and made the listeners a big part of the podcast. I began keeping up with them through their [blogs](#), Facebook, Twitter and more. They recently started a new [podcast](#) about pop culture dealing with books, movies, TV, photography, travel and much more. I have called in several times and when Jen announced that she had cancer I wanted to help. I prayed about it and thought we could get the listeners involved to [produce podcasts](#) for Ryan & Jen. That way they could take the time they need to fight the cancer and be with

their family. Plus it would help us as the community to get to know each other better. The blessing during this time is that I feel Ryan & Jen and have grown closer. Making memories along the way. Jen & Ryan have been [blogging](#) about their journey. I check the blog daily and read and share. But they have inspired me to write and think about the things that go on every day. They inspired me to not let the big events and things steal away the little things. They inspired me to get back to writing in my journal. I don't want to miss things.

So I hope you all take the time to record your thoughts and memories. Don't be afraid to share. Sharing your thoughts and memories helps you. But it is one of the ways you can inspire, encourage and bless others. They can gain godly wisdom and encouragement from reading about the big struggles in your life. They can also be inspired to not miss the little things in life that make a huge difference. Don't get caught up on poor grammar, out of focus photos, or a shaky voice. God says He will be a lamp for our feet and a light for our path. But we have to be willing to take the step that is lighted in front of us. Be honest and share the good times and hard times. Make memories, share memories, take time to remember and live. Jesus Christ came and died on the cross to free us from the bondage of sin and rose from the dead to give us new life, abundant life, and eternal life. That life does not start when we die but NOW!