

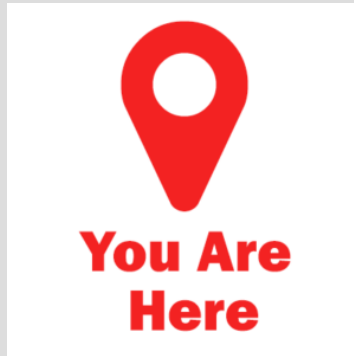
FORGETTING WHAT LIES BEHIND

Philippians 3:12-16 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. 13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, **but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead,** 14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

- [Forgetting those things which are behind] There is an allusion here undoubtedly to the Grecian races. *One running to secure the prize would not stop to look behind him to see how much ground he had run over, or who of his competitors had fallen or lingered in the way. He would keep his eye steadily on the prize, and strain every nerve that he might obtain it. If his attention was diverted for a moment from that, it would hinder his flight, and might be the means of his losing the crown.* So, the apostle says it was with him. He looked onward to the prize. He fixed the eye intently on that. It was the single object in his view, and he did not allow his mind to be diverted from that by anything-not even by the contemplation of the past. He did not stop to think of the difficulties which he had overcome, or the troubles which he had met, but he thought of what was yet to be accomplished.
- This does not mean that he would not have regarded a proper contemplation of the past life as useful and profitable for a Christian (compare the notes at Eph 2:11), *but that he would not allow any reference to the past to interfere with the one great effort to win the prize.* (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

- **Windshield or Rear-View Mirror? Where is your focus?**

- Have you ever noticed how much bigger your windshield is compared to your rearview mirror?
- Why? Where you're going is more important than where you've been.



- **What is behind us is clear!**

- Success, Failure, hurts, wounds, etc..
- Ross (this time right now, this event, this meeting, this service) will never be exactly the same again!
- **There are no do overs in life!**

- God has (always has had) (always will have) a purpose, will, and destiny for your life
 - 2 Timothy 1:9 For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus. NLT
- **Rear-view mirrors**
 - Past Success
 - Or if he looks backward to contemplate what he has done—the space that he has run over—the difficulties which he has surmounted—and his own rapidity in the race, he will be likely to become self-complacent and self-satisfied. He will trust his past endeavors, and feel that the prize is now secure, and will relax his future efforts. Let us then look onward. (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

- Have Dissatisfaction (v12a - I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection.)
 - Paul was aware that he was not there yet.
 - He was not content to stay where he was in his spiritual growth
- The danger of being satisfied
 - Pride blinds us to see our need for growth
 - A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you're looking down, you can't see something that's above you. C.S. Lewis
 - God sends no one away empty except those who are full of themselves. D.L. Moody
 - Pride is an overestimated or an inflated value of our self! Look at Romans 12:3
 - God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5
 - Complacency puts us to sleep. Being satisfied with “good enough”
- Don't look back “forget what lies behind” (v13 I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead,)

- **Past Failures** – What we have done, we have done!
- Backward, we see everything to dishearten and to humble. Our own unfaithfulness; our coldness, deadness, and dullness; the little zeal and ardor which we have, all are fitted to humble and discourage. He is the most cheerful Christian who looks onward, and who keeps heaven always in view; he who is accustomed much to dwell on the past, though he may be a true Christian, will be likely to be melancholy and dispirited, to be a recluse rather than a warm-hearted and active friend of the Saviour.
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- Of course, we've all made wrong turns, got off track, sped up when we should've slowed down & missed some exits all together, not to mention going the wrong way on a few one-ways.
- little sin and **BIG SIN**

- Our purpose/destiny is not the wrong turns or bad decisions; it's about getting back on track, in the direction God has ordained.
- Devotionals Daily [*Fierce Faith*](#) by Alli Worthington.
 - Heading “*Our futures are already claimed by God; we don’t have to stay stuck in a cycle of fear and failure. — Alli Worthington*”
 - Article “**Getting Past our Past Pain**”
 - “We hold onto the pain of past failures until they become woven into our hearts and minds. But that is not what Jesus has for us. In order to heal from the pain of our past failures and overcome the fear of future failures, we must practice our ABCs: **acknowledge** our feelings, **ban** the B’s, and **choose** to believe Jesus.”

- **I. Acknowledge our feelings -**
 - Maybe it's a failed business, a failed marriage, a failed friendship, a failed trust – whatever it is, it's important to acknowledge the feelings you have about the failure. Remember the enemy doesn't want us in touch with our emotions, because you can't heal from what you don't feel.
 - We live in a day an age where we are taught to focus on our feelings!
 - regret - to be very sorry for - regrets his mistakes
 - remorse - a gnawing distress arising from a sense of guilt for past wrongs : [self-reproach](#)
 - **There are no do overs in life.** What we have done, we have done!
 - **Acknowledge, Admit our Failure (sin)**
 - repent - to turn from sin and dedicate oneself to the amendment of one's life

- **2. Ban the B's**

- We **bury** or hide our sin! Out of sight out of mind
- We **blame** anyone and everyone for why we failed.
- We **busy** our self with activity.
- We **brood**, constantly replaying our failures until they become our focus or deep-rooted fears.

- **3. Choose to believe Jesus**

- I John 1:8-10 If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. 9 But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts. NLT

- Because we will all fail. This is a reality of living on this planet. We all fail and will continue to fail. What matters is how we respond to our failure. We can choose to believe that Jesus can rewrite our stories and use our failure for his good (and ours), or we can become stuck in a cycle of failure.
- Brennan Manning, in his book *Ruthless Trust*,
“Wallowing in shame, remorse, self-hatred, and guilt over real or imagined failings in our past lives betrays a distrust in the love of God. It shows that we have not accepted the acceptance of Jesus Christ and thus have rejected the total sufficiency of his redeeming work. Preoccupation with our past sins, present weaknesses, and character defects gets our emotions churning in self-destructive ways, closes us within the mighty citadel of self, and preempts the presence of a compassionate God.”¹

- The Bible is full of people who failed! It was their response to failure that is important!
 - Eve and Adam, Cain, King Saul, Esau, Judas Iscariot
 - David, Peter, The Woman at the well, Saul who became Paul,
 - *Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah? — John 4:29*
- We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God!
 - Whatever your failure is: _____
- These don't have to be your story or define you!
- “You can choose to believe the truth that Jesus has a purpose for you beyond your failure and allow Him to rewrite your story. Our futures are already claimed by God; we don't have to stay stuck in a cycle of fear and failure. Failure doesn't have to be your story. He is still writing your story.” Alli Worthington

- The danger of spending too much time looking in the rearview mirror is we can crash or miss what's right in front of us.
- Yes, we can and should learn from past mistakes (or victories)
- Yes, we can take a quick look to make sure what's in our past doesn't creep up on us (our future)...but don't park there.



- Unto those things which are before] Before the racer there was a crown or garland to be bestowed by the judges of the games. ***Before the Christian there is a crown of glory, the eternal reward of heaven. There is the favor of God, victory over sin and death, the society of the redeemed and of angelic beings, and the assurance of perfect and eternal freedom from all evil. These are enough to animate the soul, and to urge it on with ever-increasing vigor in the Christian race.*** (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)