

TIME TO LOOK AHEAD!

As we get older, we have a tendency to look back, and if we aren't careful, to give in to the selective eyesight that sees only the problems and failures of the past. It's too easy to look for someone in the past to blame or resent and way too easy to stumble around in bitterness and regret.

The best thing to do with the past is to learn from it, while keeping our eyes on today and looking forward to the days to come!

Jesus talks about a man who "looks back" because he is not ready for service in the kingdom of God (**Luke 9:62**). Now what that passage is telling us is that the past can be a distraction that keeps us from being what the Lord needs us to be today! The apostle Paul talks about "forgetting what is behind" and moving on toward the things that God has ahead (**Philippians 3:13**). We've got to stay centered in today, seeking to honor God and living for His future. Remember what Jesus taught us to pray: ". . . your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (**Matthew 6:10 TNIV**).

Lord, help us look ahead. It's time to look ahead. Help us to turn our attention away from the things that have already passed and direct our focus toward the things that are yet to be. We've spent too much time looking back. We have spent too much time dwelling on the things that we cannot change. We have spent too little time on the opportunities that lay ahead.

Lord, help us to enjoy the memories we have of our children as they have grown and moved toward independence. But, help us not to dwell so much on "those days" that we miss "these days" we are living now and enable us to enjoy them to the fullest.

Lord, help us never forget the times and the ways you have delivered us in the past, but do not allow us to think that Your days of deliverance are over and help us never doubt that You will continue to deliver us in the future.

Lord, help us to stop dwelling on the mistakes of the past to such an extent that we are paralyzed with fear of making another mistake.

Lord, remind us that our sins have been forgiven and that we are free to live a life of victory with confidence and boldness in the future.

Lord, thank You for enabling us to accomplish some good things in our life, help us to not be satisfied with those things already accomplished and help us to continue to rely on You for everything we endeavor to accomplish in the future.

Lord, help us as Your people, to let go of the past, to admit where we have failed, rejoice where we have succeeded and move on toward what You have planned for the future.

Lord, help us to take responsibility for our oversights of the past, learn from them, and venture into the future without guilt, or regrets and be fully determined to do a better job as Your ambassadors to the world in the future.

Lord, You have brought us through tragedy and triumph. You have never failed us. We have every reason to believe that our future with You will be glorious. So, let us live today to the fullest and with confidence and with hope.

Consider the example of Moses:

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel (Hebrews 11:24-28 NIV).

The best way to change the past is to live the way God wants us to live today, rooted in the moment and living for God — in service to others and in service to the Kingdom.