

Getting Past our Past

At the beginning of His ministry Jesus stood up in the Synagogue and solemnly read this passage from Isaiah 61

- 1 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,
- 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,
- 3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.
- 4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

When He finished, He set the scrolls down and said: Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing!

This was his mission statement!

- I'm here to bind up the brokenhearted
- I'm here to give freedom to those who are held captive and in bondage
- To release prisoners
- To let people know that God loves them
- And proclaim the day of God's vengeance? To let people know that they can let go of their vendettas, I will take care of that.
- I will comfort all who grieve and mourn: release their joy and cause them to celebrate and give praise to the Lord
- Then they will be like Oak Trees
- And they will become rebuilders and restorers of people who have been devastated
- To restore the desolations of many generations.

In two verses of Revelation 1 God describes Himself in this way:

I am the God Who is, Who was and Who is to come

Have you ever given any thought as to why God would carefully describe himself in this way?

These are the 3 Stages of every Life
Past Present Future

God Says:

In your present: I Am Here

In your past: I was there

In your future: I will be there forever

God wants us to understand that He holds the past, the future and the present in His hands

3 Questions we all need to answer

1. What's my present condition/situation?
Not good at answering this
Don't see ourselves in reality
Denial is not just a river in Egypt
Sometimes others see us better than we do

We are great pretenders! There was a Song by the Platters

Oh yes, I'm the great pretender
Pretending that I'm doing well
My need is such, I pretend too much
I'm lonely, but no one can tell

Oh, yes, I'm the great pretender
Adrift in a world of my own
I played the game but to my real shame
You've left me to grieve all alone

Too real is this feeling of make-believe
Too real when I feel what my heart can't conceal

Yes, I'm the great pretender
Just laughing and gay like a clown
I seem to be what I'm not, you see
I'm wearing my heart like a crown
Pretending that you're still around

Second Question

2. What will I do with my past?
Is the past really past? Or am I dragging it around in the present?
Is it dragging me around?

Third Question:

3. What's in my future? How do I see my future?

The answers to these three questions are of critical importance to our lives

Everyone who goes with God: Has to do three things

1. Let go of the past
2. Walk with Him faithfully in the present
(today is an important day)
3. Believe what God says about my future

The role model for all Christians is Abraham: He is called: The father of the Faith and the Faithful

Genesis 12:1-

- 1 The LORD said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.
(Leave your past and your present situation and come with me)
- 2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing
- 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth

will be blessed through you." (I have a great future for you)
4 So Abram left, as the Lord had told him

If Abraham had not been willing to let go of his past
He would have never experienced God's Promise for his future

And If Abraham had not believed God's promise for His future he would have never let go of his past

In the present

We are supposed to going away from the past For the sake of our future in God...

The Apostle Paul Talked about this in:

Phil 3: 13-14

13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead,

14 I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.

I'm facing away from the past (I'm going to forget it)
I am not wasting my present energies on the past regrets
Because I am pursuing the promises of God

I'm turning my back on

1. The Pride of my past achievements
2. The Guilt and the Shame of my past failures
3. The Pain of my past hurts
4. The Pleasure of my past sin

I am more than willing to let go of my past, But I need God to make the past let go of me

THE PROBLEM

Many times we try to pursue the future while we are still holding on to the past and the past is still holding on to us

A Lesson from the Monkey Bars

Many are robbed of the future because they haven't let go of the past

I'm dysfunctional: Because I am still holding on to the past and it's holding on to me

A lesson from the Farm:

Luke 9:62 But Jesus told him, "Anyone who puts a hand to the **plow** and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."

You can't go forward in God if you are looking back and still being affected by your past.

You'll miss the mark -- Wander in circles

There is more than one kind of healing in the Bible

1. God wants to heal our Wounds:

Jeremiah 30:17 "I will heal you of your wounds"

Now listen, this is important:

Have you ever considered the difference between a wound and a disease?

Diseases are an act of nature Wounds are the result of personal injury

Wounds can be physical, psychological, emotional, or spiritual

- A. Self inflicted wounds
Through an accident or act of foolishness
- B. Wounds Inflicted by others
by accident or an act of cruelty

Diseases are easy to get in touch with:

They are physical and visible
Wounds are sometimes hard to assess..
Brokenhearted? Grieving, Devastated, Hurt

Q. Can you think of a time when you were wounded?

Q. Can you think of a wound from which you have not yet recovered?

The Source of Wounds

Rejection, Betrayal, Mistreatment, Maligned, Falsely Accused, Humiliated, Physically, verbally or sexually Abused, Abandoned, Left Out, Unloved, Ridiculed, Suffered a Great Loss or Disappointment.....

Wounds are responsible for more dysfunction and bad behavior than any other thing.

Wounds keep people from loving

Wounds keep people bound up in isolation and fear

Wounds keep people from healthy relationships

Wounds drive people to addictions and self destruction

Wounds cause people to give up

The sad reality is that many wounds go unattended because they are hidden, they are nursed, and they are acted out...

Men have a particularly hard time with this: Our maleness keeps us from admitting that we have hurts and are in need of healing

God says "I will heal your wounds"

2. God Wants to Heal our Broken hearts

Psalm 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

He heals those whose hearts have been broken through

Bitter rejection

Betrayal in a relationship

Major Loses

Tragic Experiences

Great Failures

Disappointments -----

3. God wants to heal our backslidings

Jer 3:22 "I Will heal your faithlessness (wandering ways)

Hosea 14:4 I will Heal their apostasy (Even Worse)

The world is desperate for healing

The saddest condition of all, is to be desperately wounded and in pain and go on saying, "I'm fine"

It's getting harder and harder to do (God is making it harder to do)

TIME DOESN'T HEAL ANYTHING It just gives us more time to hurt and find ways to cope

Matthew 13:14-15

14 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: " 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

15 For this people's heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see
with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

Now we can read this and think

These people are in this condition because they are willful and wicked

But they are in this condition because **they are in pain**

I WOULD HEAL THEM....IF THEY TURNED TO ME

They have closed their eyes - Become dull to pain

They don't want to look at it anymore, They don't know what to do with it
But if they would bring it to me, I would heal them

God wants to heal: Diseases – Wounds – Broken hearts - Wandering ways

Turn our backs on what's behind us and go forward

Let go of it

The people who were most drawn to Jesus were people who had the most troubled pasts

Do you know why? Unconditional love and the promise of healing

Because He, like no one they had every met,

was always ready to forgive and forget their past and accept them as His friends

In Jesus: Life was no longer about the past

It was now about the present and God's promised future and it was unconditional

A tax gatherer becomes an Apostle?

A prostitute becomes a Disciple?

A disgraced woman brings salvation to a whole town?

A Murderer (Paul) becomes the primary writer of the bible

The Lord does not have a "Shame Finger" -- That's the devil

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus

GOD SAYS: You made Past mistakes? I forgive you now Forget them,

You were hurt in the past by others?

Forgive them and forget it

Just like I have forgiven you and forgotten your past

Move on, Your future is what's important, not your past

God not only gives us permission to let go of the past He commands it...

This is why forgiveness is such a big topic in the bible-- Forgiveness is letting it go...

Forgiveness is so hard for some people to embrace:

What? You mean you are not going to make them accountable for their past? Pay for their mistakes?

Jesus was so up front with this:

The woman taken in Adultery

Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more

Forget your past, go for your future

Luke 7

A woman, A sinner, with a bad reputation

Shows up at a meeting of prominent Citizens

Pushes her way through a disbelieving crowd

Kneels at Jesus' feet weeping, wetting his feet with her tears Wiping them with her hair and anointing them with perfume

The Pharisees said: "How can he let this sort of a person "Touch Him?"

He looks down at her and says "Your sins have been forgiven"

Your account is clear, You have no past, You only have a future

The nature of people is to:

Hold onto the past, Refuse to forgive others, Refuse to forgive ourselves

When you let it go - It will let you go

If you don't let it go, It will affect your present and your future

Matthew 6:14-15

¹⁴ For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

If you hold onto it, it will hold onto you!

But enough about the Past! WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

Real motivation comes from what we see ahead Not from what happened in the past

We can look back and say "I long for the good old days" That will never change anything

God wants to give us a vision of the "good new days ahead"

God wants to give us a vision of your future

That is strong enough to motivate you to let go of your past

Believing what God says about the future

Brings about 2 things:

1. It gives us the strength and motivation to "Let Go of the Past"
2. It gives us direction for the present: Today is an important day. I am on a journey to God's promise.

What we believe about the future will determine what we do today and what do today, will determine what the future will look like.

If we have no hope for the future

Today will just be another unimportant day on your journey to "Nowhere"

Read your bible:

God has some incredible words to encourage you

Your life is not about the past it's about your future

Words that pertain to the future?

Hope - Faith - Dream - Destiny - Purpose - Goal - Vision

God has given me some great promises

I am on my way, I am moving forward And Today is a very important day....

Believing what God says about the future is called: Faith

Romans 4:12 "Follow in the steps of the faith of our Father Abraham"

He took those steps because he was made a Promise

He stepped out of his comfort zone, He stepped out with God

With the promise of God firmly fixed in his mind

I'm going with God today for the promise of tomorrow

God has made you and I some promises my friend

A Promise of eternal life, A Promise of relationship with Him

A Promise of freedom from bondage, A Promise of direction in life

A Promise of healing for wounds, A Promise to restore broken relationships

And so many more Etc...

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.

Altar call today? Come forward: I'm leaving the past behind