

ALAN TAYLOR MINISTRIES

P O BOX 700623; TULSA, OK 74170-0623

918-447-8951

alantaylorministries.org

Moving from Our Past to God's Future

The real question of the Christian life is not what has happened to you, but what you do afterwards! Many people stay stuck in what happened to them, and I don't understand that. Why dwell on how hard you have it compared to others, or why did it happen to you? This type of thinking causes us to stay in misery and depression instead of walking away. It's a shame how many people don't realize that they can actually walk away from their past. What freedom to feel safe enough to just leave your past behind.

This may seem odd, but I've known some people who hold on to their past on purpose. Perhaps they caused the pain and feel guilty and unworthy to move forward. Some feel they need to live in perpetual punishment for something that happened years ago. They may have gotten so tired of trying, that the future is dark. Even still, some people find an odd security in dwelling in the past instead of fighting to move forward!

One young man approached me after a service for prayer. His story was devastating as he was only about seventeen years old. He shared with me how his father molested him throughout his childhood and how much hurt and pain was inside of him. Then he shared how he was afraid of repeating what happened to him to others. I grabbed him and hugged him, as God's grace touched him. I led that boy to the Lord that night and it was wonderful. I explained how God was now his legal Father, and he was now a new creation. He was legally free to let go of the past and move forward. He felt that he was trapped in the past because of such an intense damaging of his youth. However, I needed him to see that freedom from reliving his past came with his salvation. It can seem as an impossible mountain to overcome, when we experience such a loss of innocence in our childhood, and the prospect of battling the emotions can seem overwhelming. Yet, the promises of Christ are much stronger and more real than the brokenness we carry from our past. The moment you were born again, you were granted the legal license to walk away from your history, and to create with God a brand new future.

He needed to know that it was okay from him to let go and move away from his past. This is what the Apostle Paul was explaining in 2 Corinthians 4:13, *"And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you."* In context, he is describing the difference between your beautiful, incredible, wonderful, powerful, perfect, righteous inner man, against the old tired flesh man. The flesh man will fall off of you one day, and although you may still wear it, that doesn't mean that it is who you are anymore. You've been created new and perfect, and because you are now a beautiful spiritual creature, you are free to stop accepting the old man as who you are. You are not destined to stay the same; there is nothing in your history that you cannot overcome!

The Apostle Paul is expressing how even if you feel hopeless in your situation, there is hope in Jesus, there is hope birthed at your salvation. He was actually quoting out of Psalm 116:1-10, *"I love the LORD, because He has heard My voice and my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live. The pains of death surrounded me, And the pangs of Sheol laid hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the LORD: 'O LORD, I implore You, deliver my soul!'"* Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; Yes, our God is merciful. The LORD preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me. Return to your rest, O my soul, For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you. For You have delivered my soul from death, My eyes from tears, And my feet from falling. I will walk before the LORD In the land of the living. I believed, therefore I spoke, "I am greatly afflicted."

Maybe you have something from your past that is hard to move on from: an experience, a failure, a struggle. I know that it can seem impossible to move on if you have unsuccessfully tried over and over before. The fear that you are destined to repeat a lifestyle can seem overwhelming at times. The enemy would love to take away our hopes and dreams of a victorious life. For some of us, we allow our natural soul to reminisce on the good, the bad, and hold on to our past at the cost of moving forward. This pattern is unbelief, and it is debilitating you from experiencing the joys of new adventures. You must first believe that your future is different from yesterday, and from today!

We need to see our past as a sinking ship, that is not the place to stay, but the place to swim away from. Jesus has already provided everything you need to leave the past behind. You have spoken salvation into your heart already, and the chains of the past were broken. If you find that difficult to comprehend, then it's very important for you to swim into the presence of God. Spend time in worship and you will discover the truth. He loves you and He believes in you! He thinks about you every moment of every day, and He has wonderful plans for you future.

It doesn't matter how many times you've failed to move on. The price has already been paid; victory has already been given. Let's keep dreaming the dreams He gave us! Let's fight every day to keep our hope in Him. Let's refuse to stay in a sinking ship and we will make it! Your future looks bright!

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