

Leaving Regrets in the Past



Carter Conlon February 15, 2020

The writings of the apostle Paul clearly show that his preeminent desire in life was to know Jesus. He wanted to be fully yielded to the living Christ whom he was now aware had taken up residence inside his earthly body. He wrote, "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

Paul was aware of something that we need to rediscover today: We are not called to simply bring the knowledge of God to our generation; we are called to be a visible expression of who God is by allowing him to demonstrate his power, wisdom, grace and love through us.

Paul also made a statement which should encourage us whenever we feel mediocre compared to those we read about in the Bible: "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected" (Philippians 3:12). He was essentially saying, "I am not everything that I should be." Paul was not — and neither are we! But he continued with something very encouraging: "But I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me ... forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (3:12-14).

In other words, "God has a plan for my life, and I am moving forward to fulfill that which Christ has determined to do through me." One of the hardest things for us to leave behind is our regret. We tend to carry it with us through life — those constant thoughts of, "If only I had done this; if only I had been this; if only I had not been so selfish." And the list goes on and on.

Paul had a great many reasons to live in regret. For instance, he says, "I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God" (1 Corinthians 15:9). And in Acts 26:10-11 he lists even more of his offenses. But he made a deliberate choice to forget those things that were behind him and go forward with Jesus! Likewise, you can choose to lay all your past failings at the cross and walk away from your regrets. He died to give you a new mind and a new heart — receive it by faith!

Carter Conlon joined the pastoral staff of Times Square Church in 1994 at the invitation of the founding pastor, David Wilkerson, and was appointed Senior Pastor in 2001.

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