

We must not live on past accomplishments, nor can we let past mistakes ruin us.

There is that prize which lies ahead, but it will be ours only if we finish the race or win the final battle. We have a goal, but it lies in the future! The fact that it is in the future means that we have not yet attained it. We have a goal and there is no past mistake that makes it an impossible goal. That goal is the *upward* call from our God.

As this year ends take time to reflect on where you are. Take time to assess what your highest priority is. Then never let the past fill you with pride or cripple you with depression. Forget the past—press onward and upward!

Allan



“IN OUR PRAYERS”

Sick: Miss Shirley, , Ann VanKuyk.

Travelling: Tiffany Bolks and later in the month her mum, Jaracz and Jessica , Kyle family and any others over the Xmas break.

New Teachers curriculum begins 25/01/2009. Each teacher for the 1st quarter should have their book and material to go by this date. If you need help give Glenn or Tiffany a call.

2009 will be an exciting year of growth for our Kids and the teaching programme of the congregation. Let's all get behind it.

Weekly Jog

Jog: 'TO NUDGE, GIVE A REMINDER, JOG THE MEMORY.'

The Last Jog of the Year!

It is amazing how rapidly time passes. This final Jog of the year reminds us of the new year lying before us with all the challenges it will bring. None of us know what awaits us, yet because of God we can face it optimistically.

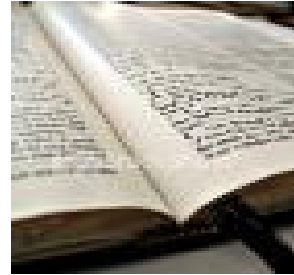
We need to be reminded that we cannot live in the past. Life is an ever changing series of events and while we can profit from each of them, we must not let the past destroy us. Whatever losses we have sustained and whatever battles we may have lost must be recognized, and then we must deal with *present* realities.

Perhaps Paul saw it best. His past had two major factors which could have destroyed his future. The first was his notoriety in Judaism. He had no peers who surpassed his accomplishments; he affirmed that he “. . . advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers” (Gal. 1:14). He was truly the most outstanding “Hebrew of the Hebrews” (Phil. 3:5). Such recognition would have destroyed many individuals, but Paul knew how to deal with the past! He was determined that the past would not shipwreck the future.

The other major factor in Paul's past was the evil he had done. He had hated Christianity. He had imprisoned Christians. He had killed them! Such actions would have destroyed many a man, but Paul understood God and His mercy and grace. While past deeds haunt many individuals in our day, Paul had learned how to deal with them!

What was his secret in dealing with past actions? Hear his own words: “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” (Phil. 3:13-14). *Forget the past!*

Allan Psalm Journal



Psalm 64:

This psalm is described as a “psalm of David,” and it bears internal evidence that it was composed by him, as it contains first, a prayer for deliverance from enemies, Psa 64:1-6; and second, a confident expectation of deliverance, Psa 64:7-10; a form of structure found in many of the psalms written by David.

David's thirst for God. It seems to belong to the period when David was in the wilderness of Engedi (1 Samuel 24), fleeing from Absalom, but confident of restoration

Psalm .65.

Praise to God for salvation providence and protection.

God crowns the year with goodness. The earth shouts for joy with its abundant crops.

Psalms .66.

An exhortation, addressed to all the earth, to praise God, as a matter pertaining to all lands, Psa 66:1-2.

A reference to the mighty acts of God, as a reason for worshipping him, Psa 66:3-7.

A reference to his gracious interposition in time of national danger and trouble, and to the fact that he had rescued the nation in a marvelous manner, Psa 66:8-12.

A reference to the vows which had been made in that time of trouble, and the purpose now to execute those vows, by going to the house of God, and sacrificing on his altars, Psa 66:1.

Amid

We journey through a world swirling with extreme, often grotesque differences. Choices abound, challenges frequently surface, and temptations multiply like hyperactive rabbits. To further complicate, spin rules in all these things. Nothing, it seems, is what it seems to be. I wonder sometimes if the spin doctors even know or care about where truth is found. It's about closing the sale, sealing the deal, manufacturing an imaginary climate for self-serving influence.

What's a Christian to do? How are we to cope? How are we to influence with authenticity? There are common responses or declarations we might be prone to make in reaction to the confusion and dismay, anger being one of them. Anger has a place, but it is limited. We are also prone to an “in your face” statement of our convictions—if they can do it to me, I will give back as good as I got. We need to pause. We need to be sure our response to culture is not only truthful, but expedient (cf. Matt. 10:16).

As an example, our political convictions are capable of being expressed in such a way that those who differ will not give an ear to the Good News we seek to share. We might, with no purposed intention to do so, turn off the very people who most need to hear about Jesus.

Packaging is not the main thing, but it is far from insignificant (cf. I Cor. 9:19-23). Zeal for an audience needs to precede zeal for confronting people with the truth (cf. Acts 17:16-34). No audience, no hearing—no hearing, no positive response (cf. Rom. 10:14-15). The first thing, therefore, is not simply to declare a point of view, it is to cultivate receptive ears so the message we declare will have a chance to be received.

The short of this is simple—give Jesus the best chance we can for His message to be heard. Whatever barriers we might potentially deploy, let us pause and keep them to ourselves. It's the Jesus thing to do.

ESJ