

Focus

Leaving the past behind frequently is among the greatest challenges a Christian may face. I imagine for the Apostle Paul, leaving the memories of his former life behind were a challenge as well. Think, for a moment, of what Saul of Tarsus was guilty of. He is the authority figure responsible for the murder of Stephen (Acts 8:1) as well as for the persecution of countless other Christians (Acts 8:3). It would be no surprise if his past actions weighed heavily on his soul. Yet as a Christian he recognized the significance of leaving that all in the past.

In the same way, we cannot dwell on the former things either. Sometimes Christians are guilty of romanticizing the life that they used to live. Others are guilty of allowing the disappointments of their past to become stumbling blocks for their future. Paul seems to recognize the significance in leaving the glorification of our past, or the wallowing in sorrow over our past, behind and instead focusing on what matters: Christ, and the prize that accompanies following Him. Just a few verses earlier Paul said he desired to know Christ, the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering that he might attain the resurrection from the dead (Phil. 3:10-11).

One thing Paul did, and one thing we must do, is focus on what lies ahead. Focus on the goal of going home to heaven. In order to do so, we must leave the past in the past.

By Andrew Beasley

Edifier

Evant church of Christ

310 W Brooks Drive

Evant, TX 76525

254-471-5705

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Attending church services regularly is like making a path through the forest: the more often you use it, the less obstruction you find in the way."

Sunday Worship:

9:30 am Bible Study

10:20 am Worship

12:30 pm Afternoon

Wednesday Night

6:00 pm

Will Vann, Preacher

863-899-0987

Email: wvann@yahoo.com

www.evantchurchofchrist.org

Forgiveness

(1st in a series)

Jesus was clear that forgiving others is absolutely critical to our own salvation: “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 6:14-15) It is, therefore, essential that we properly understand this important subject. First, when a problem arises, we must determine if the issue involves sin or not. If there is no sin, then we can and should forgive unilaterally. For example, if someone simply ‘hurt my feelings’ or I felt slighted in some way, there is no sin in that. Perhaps it was an oversight, or maybe a case of bad judgment, but there was no sin. In such cases I don’t even need to address the other person. I can just let that pass. Certainly, I ought not let this linger or cause hard feelings. I can simply ‘let it go’. Jesus described this type of unilateral forgiveness in Luke 7:41,42: “There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?” The Lord’s point is clear – those who are forgiven the most are, or at least should be, the most grateful. But notice the scenario He described. Two men incurred debt. There’s no inherent sin in that. The creditor just waived the debt on his own, and without conditions. We can do the same, and we ought to do so. Often Christians are much too sensitive, even petty, about the issues that they allow to become major problems. When no sin is involved we need to forgive unconditionally. However, things change when sin is involved. More on that next week.

by Greg Gwin

Happy Birthday

Anson Day March 28th
Doug Pruett April 1st
Steve Sugg April 6th
Denise Wall April 11th
Connie Mallett April 30th

Happy Anniversary

April 1st
Calvin & Tammy Burks
April 18th
Jack & Cindi Wall

Consider this...

“Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease” (Proverbs 22:10). Would your home, the place where you work, or the church where you are a member be more peaceful and harmonious if you were “cast out?” If you are a scoffing, murmuring, complaining scorner, they would be. Is it not a sad thought to think that life might be better for others if you were not present?

Those to Serve

(B) Mike Mallett
(FV) Calvin Burks
(O) Doug Pruett
(A) Mike Lovell
1st prayer Jack Wall
2nd prayer Keith Stifflemire
Announcements: Judd Wall
Singing: Kevin Grant

March 3rd
Mission Sunday
March 10th
Daylight Saving Begins
Men’s Business Meeting
March 17th
St. Patrick’s Day
March 19th
Spring Begins
March 31st
Noon Fellowship
Easter Sunday

Prayer List:

Letha Sheldon
Jorge Garza
Joyce Windham
Dora Martinez
David Jones
Tammy Parker
Anita Adams
Pray for our Nation
Our Troops
Law Enforcement
Rescue Personnel