

Forward-Looking Joy

Scripture Reading — Philippians 3:12-16

*I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.
Philippians 3:12 —*

A person does not drive a car forward while looking too much in the rear-view mirror. A sprinter loses valuable time if he or she glances back too often. Similarly, a believer does not dwell on past failures but looks ahead to future joy.

It's easy to idealize the "good old days." When discussing the cultural filth of today, we sometimes get the impression that the past was defined by moral purity. But that notion is wrong. Both past and present are defined by sin and grace. The future will be too.

The truth is that "there is nothing new under the sun." The Bible affirms that "what has been will be again"—including war, famine, and disease. "What has been done will be done again"—including every imaginable sin (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

The best life was not in the past, and God does not promise we will have our best life now.

That's why the Christian faith is forward looking. Though it looks to the past to recall God's faithfulness, it forgets past sins in order to forge forward in Christ to the full life he promises with God forever. For Christians, the best is yet to come!

So forget what is behind and "press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called [us] heavenward in Christ Jesus."

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for the gift of salvation. Help us to forget the past, to press on, and to take hold of Jesus' goals for our life. In his name we pray. Amen.

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