

SUNDAY WORD

YOUR FAMILY. YOUR HOME JAN 26, 2020

ALL THINGS NEW

Part 3

MOVING FORWARD

WARM-UP

This year 2020, we're either moving forward, staying the same, or falling backward. We have to admit that it's easier to stay the same than to move forward. If we want all things new this year 2020, we have to move forward.

ONE BIG IDEA

OUR GOD CAN MAKE A MIRACLE OUT OF A MISTAKE.

STUDY

PHILIPPIANS 3:13-14 - "13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus (NIV)." Most of the time, it's easier to just stay the same than it is to change.

LEARN

The past is not our destination. For example, when you get into a car, you'll see that the windshield is huge and wide. In contrast, there's a small rearview mirror right in the middle of the top. Small mirror but huge windshield. Why do you think the car manufacturer made it that way? The manufacturer is simply telling us that what's happening at the back is less important than what's happening in front of you.

However, most of us run our lives by looking through the rearview mirror. We steer our life with our past. Maybe, we're dwelling on our past mistakes. We're constantly thinking of the wrong decision that we made in our life. Perhaps, some of us here are thinking of relational breakdowns. A lot of people go through life looking at the rearview mirror. Every time you see the windshield and rearview mirror, please be reminded that God is telling you: "Where you WERE is nowhere near as important as where you're HEADED."

As long as you're focusing on the past, you're never going to break free to grab God's promises for you in the future.

So, if I decide to hold on to past offense, or my past mistakes in life, or my past relationship, or my past job, I will definitely not be able to move forward and receive the new things God has arranged for me. You either focus on the past or you focus on God's future, you can't have both. Anchor your life on God's future for you and that will give you the power to move forward. If you hold onto your past, it will be dragging you and slow you down to take hold of God's great plan for you.

If you focused on your past, your past is going to define you. Listen carefully: Your past is either going to define or you can define your past. It's up to you.

A lot of us know Romans 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (NIV)." The question is, "Do you believe it?" Genesis 50:20 says, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives (NIV)." This is what God is trying to do in your life: God wants to use every bad experience, every bad circumstance, and every evil deed caused by a person/devil for your own good. You just have to cooperate with Him. According to John 10:10a, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy...(NIV)." So, the devil will do everything to hurt you, to destroy you. But God is working everything in your life, including your bad past, for you. God will redefine your past so it will work for your own good.

In the Old Testament, there's a Book of Job. Job had everything taken away from him - flocks, house, family, and health. Job was in the middle of his property and he was just throwing ash on himself. The devil would be happy if you'll just throw ashes of your past on your head. The devil wants you to sulk and pity yourself on your situation. Instead, redefine your situation and make yourself better. The choice is yours. For your information, it took Job 9 months to redefine his situation. He realized the good that came out of the bad circumstances. In Job 42:5 Job said,

"My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you (NIV)." Job 42:12,16-17 says, "12 The Lord blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the former part...16 After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation. 17 And so Job died, an old man and full of years." (NIV)

What are you going to do in your life this 2020, are you going to move forward, stand still, or fall backward? God is going to make available to you the power to move forward because He got promises for your future. What is impossible with men is possible with God. Our God can make a MIRACLE out of a MISTAKE. Sometimes, we would rather be a slave to our old life than to be free and have a new life. The Israelites let their past define them. They would rather remain as slaves than be free. Exodus 14:13-15 - "13 But Moses answered, "Don't be afraid! Be brave, and you will see the Lord save you today. These Egyptians will never bother you again. 14 The Lord will fight for you, and you won't have to do a thing." 15 The Lord said to Moses, "Why do you keep calling out to me for help? Tell the Israelites to MOVE FORWARD (CEV)." Often, we want God to part the Red Sea before we will move forward. But that's not how faith works. God wants you to obey Him first then He'll perform the miracle.

A lot of times we want God to guarantee our future first. But God wants us to move forward first. Sometimes, we just have to keep quiet and obey what God is telling us to do. When Moses said to be still, it means that they have to pray and believe that God will do something about their situation.

Prayer doesn't mean that we're not going to do anything. Sometimes, Christians use prayer to make an excuse for doing nothing. We should pray but we also have to do what God tells us to do. Prayer should fuel us to move forward. Why did God let them move forward first before He parted the Red Sea? Because God doesn't reward DOUBT. God only rewards FAITH.

Let us be honest with ourselves: We want God to change our financial situation without getting a job. We want God to change our family relationship without changing our attitude with one another. We want God to heal us without us taking a bold step in altering our diet and lifestyle. James 2:17 - "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead (NIV)."

God is willing to close your past if you're willing to move forward. If you're going to focus on your past, God will not be able to perform a miracle in your life. You either grab on your past or you grab onto God. We have to leave the past whether it be past failures or past successes, whether it's past happiness or past pains and hurts. We have to pray to God but we also have to move forward. We have to pray to God but we also have to act on our faith. Remove all your pieces of baggage in the past. And grab God's amazing future for you. Forgive those who have hurt you. Love those who hate you. Forget about your past failures. Let go of your past successes. Get excited for what God has in store for you this 2020. God has something new for you this 2020.



GROUP DISCUSSION

GROW

Application Questions:

1. Why is it important to forget what is behind? What are your past pieces of baggage that you brought onto 2020 that kept you from moving forward?
2. Do you look at the year 2020 with excitement or fear? Share to the group the things that you are looking forward to the future and the fears that keep on playing in your mind at this moment.
3. What are your actions/ steps toward obtaining a great future (spiritually, relationships, career, business, family) for 2020?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER IN YOUR GROUP