



## Series: Hard Truths | Big Help

### INTRODUCTION

Older believers know there are seasons of life (“glory days”) that cannot be revisited:  
Former strength, former years, former opportunities, former places...

Jesus Christ and Paul both warned of looking back instead of pressing forward.

Practically speaking, this must include things like:

Old habits, old identities, former hurts, former relationships, old sinful life...

Wisdom often means learning how to honor the past without trying to live there again.

This week’s hard truth is one the older generation knows very well:

**Looking back can destroy what God is working to accomplish in the present.**

**1. Lot’s Wife** – Jesus specifically warned us to **REMEMBER** Lot’s wife.

**Genesis 19:16** – ... *the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife...*

**Genesis 19:17** – ... *Escape for thy life; LOOK NOT behind thee... lest thou be consumed.*

**Genesis 19:18** – *And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord:*

**Genesis 19:26** – *But his wife LOOKED BACK ... and she became a pillar of salt.*

**Luke 17:32** – *Remember Lot’s wife. [Doctrinal context: the day of the Lord]*

**Definition:**

**Back** – *adverb; To the place from which one came; to return. In a figurative sense, to a former state, condition or station. Not advancing; not coming or bringing forward; as, to keep back a part; to keep one’s self back. Toward times or things past.*

**Insights:**

- ✓ The angels literally took them by the hand and warned them to not look back!
- ✓ She looked back – she did the very thing she was warned not to do!
- ✓ It would seem that it was more than just eyesight – it revealed inward attachment.
- ✓ Sodom was being destroyed by God at that moment – God was trying to protect her.

**QUESTION:** What is it in your life that God is bringing to your mind?

## Key Truths

- ✓ God can be moving you forward while your heart is still **DIVIDED** with old affection.  
*God's mercy was leading them outward, yet inwardly not all attachment was gone.*

### Examples (Negative and Positive)

Israel – **Exodus 16:3** – they were out of Egypt yet repeatedly longed for the past.

Abraham – **Hebrews 11:15** – he did not keep planning to return; he went forward.

Elisha – **1 Kings 19** – he burned the plow and removed his return options!

Jesus – **Luke 9:62** – ... *No man, having... hand to the plough, and looking back...*

Paul – **Philippians 3:13** – ... *forgetting those things which are behind...* forward!

- ✓ Looking back often reveals what has not been fully **SURRENDERED** to Jesus Christ.

*The danger was divided loyalty to the word of God – the living and written Word.*

*If we are honest with God, looking back often exposes where affection still lives.*

### Examples (Negative)

Demas – **2 Timothy 4:10** – Like Lot's wife, inward affection showed later return.

Samson – **Judges 16** – his repeated return pattern revealed old lustful appetites.

Peter – **John 21:3** – ... *I go a fishing...* Under pressure, he drifted back to old life.

- ✓ Some seasons of life cannot be revisited without significant harm and **TROUBLE**.

*Lot's wife did not believe the risk was real; she did not take heed when warned by God.*

*Sodom was no longer a place to revisit physically or emotionally in the mind.*

### Examples (Negative and Positive)

2 Sam 1:8; Esther 3:1

Saul – **1 Samuel 15** – he kept what God said to remove; it became future trouble.

Joseph – **Genesis 50:20** – he remembered the past but did not live in former pain.

Paul – **Philippians 3:13** – he did not deny history but refused to let it control him.

## 2. THE OLDER GENERATION

### Listen to their Testimonies:

- ✓ “Leaving the past did not always mean it left my heart.”
- ✓ “Some of the hardest places were often most familiar.”
- ✓ “Over time, I see that partial separation is not separation.”

YOUR TESTIMONY:

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## 3. PRACTICAL WISDOM FOR ALL GENERATIONS

1. **LEAVE** the past – give God full devotion in the present – the gift is the present!
2. **WATCH** what still pulls you back – former lusts must be acknowledged and killed.
3. Do not **REBUILD** the old life – the things which God has helped you to overcome.

### To all generations:

*Be willing to detach from the past. Truly surrender old affections. Press forward with both hands!*

### To the older generations:

*Be an example for the younger believers; share your personal testimony of this truth.*