



S E R M O N G U I D E

No Limits with Dr. Delman Coates

What Happened To You?

Luke 5:18-20, 25

INTRODUCTION NOTES Trauma is the most significant factor that shapes and informs why we do what we do, and yet it is something that many of us fail to consider because when we've experienced something bad, something painful, or something that hurts us, the mind tries to protect us by forgetting about it. But even when the mind suppresses it, the body records it. It's stamped in our nervous system and even as we move on from the moment, the sights, sounds, smells, and encounters can trigger the same responses, the same fears, the same thoughts, and the same anxieties that are rooted in our past. Have you ever taken the time to stop and ask, "What happened to me? Why am I the way I am?" Perhaps the problems you are dealing with are a result of never dealing with what happened in your past. That's exactly what we're going to dive into in this message. **KEY POINTS** 1. Realize That What Happened To You Is Not Synonymous With Who You Are Your identity is not found in your past. Who you are is not synonymous with what happened to you. God does not want your identity to be found in what happened to you. In fact, God reminds us of our identity as believers in 2 Corinthians 5:17 which says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." Oftentimes, our current problems come from something in our past. In these instances, we don't need to avoid what happened to us, but instead, we need to try to better understand what happened that triggered us to be this way. But that does not mean that we make what happened to us our identity. If you have given your life to Christ, your identity is found in Him, nothing else. Christ died so that you do not have to be what happened to you. You have a future and a hope, and that hope is Jesus Christ. The plan He has for your life is far greater than what is behind you. You can remember what happened to you, and you can learn and grow from past experiences, but you are not the sum of what happened to you.

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2. Choose To Look Ahead Instead Of Looking Back

Maybe for you, it's not about remembering what happened to you in the past; it's about refocusing on what's ahead. For you, it's time to move forward. It's time to look ahead. In fact, this is exactly what Paul instructs us to do. In Philippians 3:13-14 Paul says, "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, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

It is important to remember what happened to you, to know what has shaped the decisions you've made and the ways you view the world. But then, there comes a time when you have to look forward. We can't stay in the past forever. If you want to do the Lord's work, there comes a point where you must look ahead to what He has next for you. There is a prize and that prize is God's blessing for living according to His will.

God has a race for you to run. It's time to run the race. It's time to receive the prize He has for you. But you can't do that unless you lay down what is behind you and look forward to what is ahead.

NOTES

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1. What happened to you in the past that is affecting you in the present?
- 2. Have you ever been tempted to find your identity in your past trauma or past struggles? How has that affected the way you see yourself?

3.	What is something that God has in store for you that you can look forward to when you're tempted to stay focused on your past?

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