

Talk About It

Small Group Discussion Guide

The Danger and Value of Looking Back

May 25-28, 2023

Start Talking When you reflect on your life, can you see how far you've come? If so, briefly share this with your group.

Main Idea This weekend, Pastor Charlie taught about the danger and value of looking back. He said people generally remember people, places, and events in two categories: better than they were or worse than they were, but rarely as they were.

Pastor Charlie gave three dangers of looking back:

1. Looking back can open old wounds
2. Looking back can cause you to rehearse sin
3. Looking back can lead you to doubt or question your next steps

And three values of looking back:

1. Looking back can teach you valuable lessons
2. Looking back can inspire you to trust God's promises
3. Looking back can remind you how far you've come

Jesus wants us to continually fix our eyes on Him through every circumstance of life

Here are three ways to stay focused on Jesus and discern the best next step in our spiritual journey:

- Do what is right over what is easy
- Love people
- Get back up when you fall

- Personalize it**
1. Seeing how far God has brought us and how faithful He has been is helpful. What do you do to remind yourself how far God has brought you?
 2. Do you often look back and remember things as better than they were or worse? How does that impact your view of the present moment?
 3. One of the biggest lies the enemy tries to tell us is that God can't use us because of our past sins and failures. Share from scripture, in your own life, or in the life of someone you know how and why you know this is a lie.

LET'S DO IT! Commit to a step and live it out this week

1. The commitment to say 'yes' to Him must be accompanied by an emphatic 'no' to the sins that have previously separated us from Him. Take time to pray this week about what your next "yes" to God should be and what that means your "no" should be.

2. Schedule time this week to reflect on the three benefits of looking back on your life. Look for valuable lessons. Let it inspire you to trust God's promises in your life. Let it remind you how far you have come. Share these things with your group or a trusted friend, or find a journal to write in and thank God for these things.

3. Pastor Charlie shared the importance of being reliable. He told us trust is built as we keep our commitments and do what we say we will do. Commit to one way this week you can show up for God.

Pray

Jesus, thank You for the ability to look back and see Your hand of faithfulness throughout our lives. Thank You for the many lessons You've taught us over the years and for the ability to always remember how far You've brought us. I pray you protect us from opening old wounds and rehearsing old sins as we think of the past. May You help our eyes remain fixed on what You are doing right here. We know our past can inspire others and teach them about Your goodness and faithfulness. Amen.

Key Scriptures

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV)

"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."

Luke 9:62 (NIV)

"Jesus replied, 'No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.'"

Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV)

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."