

Underdogs: My Past is Too Bad
Discover Church
Mark Phillips
9/28/25

Move Forward From a Bad Past

1. The **weight** of the **past**

- **Define** your past

“While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep. And Saul approved of their killing him.” Acts 7:59 – Acts 8:1

“On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.” Acts 8:1-3

- **Consequences** for your actions

2. The power of **God’s Grace**

- God’s grace **seeks** the **sinner**

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.” John 3:16-21

“Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” Acts 9:1-6

- Let God’s light **blind** you
- Find **purpose** in the **pain**

“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.” Romans 8:28

3. Move forward in **freedom**

- **Accept** God’s Forgiveness

- All people are sinners including you

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

- The penalty for sin is death

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23

- God loves you and sent Jesus to pay the wages, the penalty due for your sin

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

- Receive this free gift of salvation by confessing Jesus as Lord

“If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.” Romans 10:9-10

Choose Life!

- By calling on Jesus so you can be saved

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

- Forget the **past** and press **forward**

“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 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.” Philippians 3:12-14

Your pain and your past can become your platform.

- Live out your **transformed life**

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.” 1 Peter 2:9-12

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” John 1:5

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1. The _____ of the _____

- _____ your past
- _____ for your actions

2. The power of _____

- God's grace _____ the _____
- Let God's light _____ you
- Find _____ in the _____

3. Move forward in _____

- _____ God's Forgiveness
- Forget the _____ and press _____
- Live out your _____

Scripture: Acts 7:59 – Acts 8:3; John 3:16-21; Acts 9:1-6; Romans 8:28; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 10:13; Philippians 3:12-14; 1 Peter 2:9-12; John 1:5