

“Looking Forward...Always”

Phil Driscoll, one of the greatest trumpet players of our time, has a ministry that has touched millions for Christ through music. One particular lyric in one of his latest songs states: “...*you can't go anywhere if you don't look ahead*”. This is a profound statement that many never adhere to, especially when the one who is trying to take us somewhere is God. Ever try walking forward while looking back? What happens almost immediately? You either trip and fall or you hit something. When the Lord has a new direction for us, we need to embrace it and not look back. This is often hard to achieve because we get too comfortable. Think about it. Here you are enjoying your position at work, in ministry, or where you live or go to school and all of the sudden the Lord says “it's time to move”. Or, there's that relationship that the Lord says “it's time to let that go” or that business that He says “let it go because I have a better plan”. Whatever the new direction may be it often comes when we are not ready and in some cases, not willing. In fact, what we do is resist, or when we do decide to obey it is usually grudgingly.

I have found that the more we pile on the mentality of the “good old' days”, the harder it is to let go. Face it, we all have the “good old days” in one way or another. It is those times in our past that we reflect on with a sense of nostalgia. It is the successful salesperson who has racked up award after award and still has them on the wall. It is the single guy who can say that he was a dating machine in his single days. It is the preacher who speaks of his days of preaching to thousands at a time, or the older woman who remembers when she could fit into a smaller size outfit or swimsuit. It is the employee who thinks back to his “A” grade days as a college student. Nostalgic moments, however many you may have, are fine but when they cause you to be distracted from where God wants to take you *then* we have a problem. God does not have a problem with you looking back on your life, especially, if it provides a platform from where you can learn from your past accomplishments or past mistakes but it is not a place where you dwell for long when He says “it's time to go”. As a matter of fact, dwelling too much on past victories, defeats, or just the “good old' days” is just another tactic used by our enemy to keep our focus away from the new direction that God is leading us in. The constant looking back at our lives creates the misfortune of missing out on what is coming in the future. Besides, yesterday's victories, defeats, or good old' days do not determine tomorrow's outcome. So, let's stop looking back and focus on looking forward. God is telling us to go ahead and steal second base but we still have our foot on first. Well, you can't steal second base with your foot on first. You have to let go and not look back. It can cost you, as was the case with Lot's wife.

Lot's wife knew the instruction that she was given (Genesis 19:17). I am sure that Lot reminded her many times of what the Lord had asked them to do. She was instructed to leave the city of Sodom, while the city was being destroyed by God's angel, and not look back (Gen. 19:17). Well, as the Bible states, no sooner had she left that she looked back and turned into a pillar of salt (v. 26)! The question then becomes, “why did she look back?” After all God was very specific. I believe it was for the same reason that we look back when God is giving us a new direction in life or a new calling, our hearts and minds resist because we like to live in the comfort of what is familiar and we begin to think about what we will be losing as a result of this new direction. We begin to have those nostalgic moments and want to hang on to them so much that we miss where God wants to take us. We fail to see the new gains and only focus on the perceived losses. It is in that very moment that God calls us to remain faithful and trusting to His leading even if we do not understand why the new direction. God knows what and where He is leading us to and He promises that gains will always outmatch any losses if we continue to always look forward.

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