

REGRETS

“Pastor, if only....” So many people live their lives regretting what they may or may not have done in the past. Those two words, “If only,” can shape the future and create an environment whereby past failures govern every decision that is made. Any regret may cause us to evaluate future things based on a negative experience and this is not pleasing to God. Having regrets implies that we have not forgiven ourselves, and unforgiveness, whether it is directed towards others or ourselves is a form of imprisonment (Matthew 18:21-35). Our regrets can hold us captive to the failures of the past. Steve Maraboli said, “We all make mistakes, have struggles, and even regret things in our past. But you are not your mistakes, you are not your struggles, and you are here now with the power to shape your day and your future.”

Any regret we carry is to deny God’s grace. Reverence before God is willingly revealing everything to Him, especially our human failings. If we want to live this life without regrets, we need to be transparent before God. In 2 Corinthians 12:9 the Lord says, ***“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”*** Literally, “My grace is more than enough for you, for My divine power and strength comes to a successful conclusion in human frailties.” Notice, God’s strength is looking for somewhere to exhibit its excellence and perfection, and that is, in our weaknesses and failings. So should we fail, how can we ever have any regrets? For any time we fail God’s divine power and strength is given an opportunity to demonstrate its excellence and completeness. And in the process God is glorified!

In truth, there is no such thing as a life lived with absolutely no regrets because we all fall short in many ways. Only Jesus truly could say, “It is finished,” and know that He had perfectly completed all that God had for Him to do. The rest of us will struggle with a sense of failure, of projects uncompleted, of dreams unfulfilled, of steps not taken, or roads not travelled, or decisions made that now seem like wrong choices. There is no way of denying this! Therefore the question is, what will we do with our failures? If we let them shape us, our failures will dominate us forever. Or we can resolve to believe that in Jesus Christ, we can always make a new start with the Lord. So the key is to say, “I won’t go back. I’m not going to live in the past. I won’t let my yesterdays define who I am today. And by God’s grace, I will go forward; one day at a time, one step at a time, trusting Him to lead me, believing that with Christ, the best is always yet to come.”