

Walking into the Future **Joshua 1:1-8 (1/1/2012)**

Comparing the experiences of God's people in the Bible with our experiences is biblical, 1 Corinthians 10:11. The Jordan River represented more than just a physical boundary. The other side of the river represented the future.

1. Keep the Past In Proper Perspective (1-2a)

Learn from It but Let Go of It

Moses' contribution continues, but his day was over. The time for mourning had passed, Deuteronomy 34:8.

- **Some people live in the past**

There are times to celebrate the past and to learn from the past. There are appropriate times to refer to the past.

Things in Life Come to an End, Eventually Life Itself

Moses wrote "So teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom", Psalm 90:12.

- **Some people refuse to let go of the past**

The Bible teaches that Jesus "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin", Hebrews 4:15. The word "tempted" also means tried. There is no trial that we can go through that Jesus does not understand from experience. That is the basis for our going to Him for help.

Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Give the Past to God and Ask Him to Redeem It

Joseph is a good example of this. After experiencing one trial after another, he named his firstborn son Manasseh, which means "forgetting". This was Joseph's life perspective, Genesis 50:20, "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good"

- **Some people cannot forgive themselves for the past**

God puts away our past sins at salvation. Isaiah 43:25, "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins."

Why are we seeking to remember what God has chosen to forget?

Romans 4:7, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered."

The word "forgiven" means to send away.

Alan Redpath, "Let none of us allow past failures to keep him from getting on his feet and stepping forward to do what he believes to be God's will."

1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Letting go of the past is often a key step in finding healing in the present. No one chooses to be a victim, but continuing life as a victim is a choice.

Our Past Is Part of Us but It Should Not Define Us

2. Serve Christ In the Present (2b)

The Challenge Is Always In the Present

- **Serve in the present with an aim toward the future**

Some people live in the past. Some people live only for the present. Paul understood how to balance both realities, Philippians 3:13-14. Canaan land is not a picture of heaven. It is a picture of the victorious Christian life. This is a life of trials, challenges, struggle and victory. Jesus revealed what the Christian life would be like, John 16:33 & 1 John 2:17.

Without Christ, Life Makes No Sense

3. Focus Upon the Promises of God (3-7, 9)

Believers Should Always Be Optimistic About the Future

- **We can have confidence facing the future because God is already there (3-4)**

When we get there we find that God has already been there waiting for us. What awaited the Israelites in the future was already theirs because God had given it to them. They had to step out by faith and appropriate it. God has obligated Himself through His promises.

--God has already **determined** our future (5a)

This is both collectively as part of the church, and individually as one of His children.

--God has promised us His **presence** in the future (5b)

This is an unconditional promise for every one of God's children. This is a restatement of Deuteronomy 31:6 and is repeated in Hebrews 13:5. This is a promise found throughout scripture. Jesus promised this to His disciples, John 14:16-18.

We Experience the Holy Spirit's Constant Presence

- **As Christians we should face the future with faith, not fear** (6-7, 9)

Some people live in dread of the future. We know our ultimate future and it is glorious.

Our Future Is Eternal Life

4. Stay In the Word of God (7-8)

How to Realize God's Promises

- **The best preparation for the future is to understand and submit to the authority of scripture**

Too many Christians are living their lives outside of the revealed will of God. Those who do can expect the heartache that comes from disobedience to be in their future. Proverbs 13:15, "Good understanding gains favor, but the way of the unfaithful is hard."

The child of God who lives in willful disobedience to God's Word can expect the Father's discipline. The child of God who lives in obedience to God's Word can expect the Father's blessing.

The Victorious Christian Life Is the Obedient Life