

Philippians 3:12-14 –

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But ***one thing I do: Forgetting*** what is behind and ***pressing*** toward what is ahead,

14 I ***press on toward the goal to win*** the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Until we learn to “Forget” what is behind, we will never be empowered to “Press” toward what is ahead!

We often get trapped in our past, or what is behind, due to how we navigate and process pain.

The question of “How does a godly person deal with and process pain?” must be answered.

How we deal with pain, perhaps more than any other thing, will determine if we are able to “Get Past our Past.”

Living in pain traps you in your past!

Fork in the road – Self-medicating path or godly path?

- When we come to the fork in the road, the one most traveled will be the one easiest to follow.
- It will feel safe and natural, even if it is destructive.
- The road of faith must be taken contrary to how you feel.

II Corinthians 5:7 - We walk by faith and not by sight

We must CHOOSE to walk that road because we have become loyal to the Word of God and not our feelings.

Walking the godly path is the only real answer to “Getting Past our Past.”

The destructive path to process pain results in:

- **Anger – Unresolved pain and conflict – secondary emotion**
- **Revenge – I will feel better if they suffer.**

Romans 12:19-21 –

19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

20 On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

- Withdrawing from people – Self protection
 - Isolation – Fear’s ultimate goal
 - Blaming others
 - Obsessing with what brings you pleasure or feelings of approval or reduces the pain – which can lead to Addiction
 - Addiction – Drugs, Alcohol, sex, work & overeating
 - Emotional instability
- **When people are traumatized as children or teenagers, they often stop developing emotionally. They will process current pain, conflict, and emotions at the age they stopped developing.**
 - Emotional irresponsibility – You make others responsible for how you feel.
 - Bitterness

Hebrews 12:15 - See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows or springing up causes trouble, and by this many become **defiled**.

Forgiveness releases you from the past and provides the ability to heal.

Don't give those that offended you one more day of your life.

Matthew 18:21-35 –

21 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

- Owed THE KING 10,000 talents or 2 billion dollars.
 - He was not able to pay, so he and his family would be sold into slavery.
 - Have patience with me and I WILL PAY YOU ALL
 - He first tried to ask for grace to “Pay the debt,” a debt which was impossible to pay.
 - We often try to pay for what can only be granted by an act of mercy and forgiveness.
 - He had compassion and forgave the ENTIRE DEBT.
- Found a FELLOW SERVANT that owed him 100 denarii or \$2,000.
 - He grabbed him by the throat and demanded payment.
 - He desired pain from those whom he hadn't forgiven.
 - He had to forget the burden forgiven to hold the debt against the other.
 - He was turned over to the tormentors.
 - Time is not the friend of those endeavoring to forgive.
 - Time doesn't heal all wounds, in the case of forgiveness it may cement the issue and trap you in the past.

Godly deal with pain by: Taking the right fork in the road

- Forgiving those who have offended us
- Renewing our minds to God's plan, not a way of thinking dominated by our past experiences or pain.
- Gaining a heart of hope or expectation of good, independent of past circumstances or pain.
- Becoming Emotionally responsible

The paths we are to "Forget" are the ones paved with unhealthy and destructive responses and the paths we are to "Press" toward are the ones designed by God to set us free.