

## Don't Look Back 2017

My very first sermon was titled "**Don't Look Back**"

- First year school of ministry
- Had it all figured out
- Was going to be the best sermon ever!!!
- Was going to open with the **Boston song** of the same title...
- But the pastor didn't like that idea!!

I remember using Lot's wife as my illustration

- Was told "Don't look back" at Sodom...
- But did....
- Turned into a pillar of salt

A simple message...

- Don't let what's behind you keep you from your future
- I thought it was original....
- Only to learn that everyone preaches a version of that in their first year of ministry!!!

**That's been 10 years ago!!!**

- I've preached well over 1000 times since then
- I've experienced a lot
- And I believe I have grown a lot in that time

**But sometimes I just feel tired!!**

- Completely wore out with life!!!
- Anybody understand where I'm coming from today?

Sometimes I feel like this...

- **Picture of runner dragging tire**
- I'm trying as hard as I can to move forward...
- But there's this great weight holding me back

Is that you today?

If so, I believe you're going to get this today...

You see, The Bible says it like this:

**Philippians 3:12-14**

“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Ten years later, I find it difficult God taking me back to that first message!!!

- **Don't look back!!**

And I believe you need this today:

- God has a future (and a hope) for you (**Jeremiah 29:11**)
- There are some great things in your future, and some of those things are closer than you think
  - **So you have to keep pressing on...**
- Moving forward!!!

And the only way you can do that is **forget the things behind you!!**  
Here's the truth:

- We all sin (fall short)
- We all make mistakes (some of those are big ones)
- We all fail
- It's life...
- It happens!!!

But God wants you to move on...

- But the devil wants to use these things to hold you back!!
- Just like that tire in the picture earlier...

**Sure, you walk out of church shouting:**

- I'm pressing on
- I'm going through
- But you haven't forgot about any of these things behind you....
- You're trying to drag them with you!!!

**Forget about them!!!**

Let me share with you some outstanding news for you today....  
So, you have been dragging all that stuff behind you...

- Struggling
- Trying to move on
- Feel like you are wore completely out because of it...

**Romans 8:28**

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

**God can use what has been a struggle as a tool...**

All that stuff you've been hauling around, dragging behind you...  
Has been making you stronger...

But the only way you will be able to operate in that strength is to cut the rope...

Let go of what is behind you and move forward in the new found strength God will give you!!

Ending:

Look....

I know you have things in your past that:

- Hurt
- Bring embarrassment or shame
- Stir anger and resentment

And I also know it's easier said than done....

**But The Blood of Christ is sufficient!!**

He doesn't want you carrying all of that with you...

He says come to Me...give Me that burden

I will give you peace and rest!!

I love how The Message Bible translates this:

**Matthew 11:28-30 MSG**

““Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.””

**I promise, I'm closing with this...**

My Bible tells me that God will give you the desires of your heart...

- God wants to give you the desire today to pursue your future and forget your past...
- God wants to give you the desire to move forward without dragging your past with you...
- Maybe it's something that you're going through right now...

Here's some good news

- Tomorrow, today will be in your past...
- No more looking back

Get ready to walk into God's blessings!!!

- Are you ready?