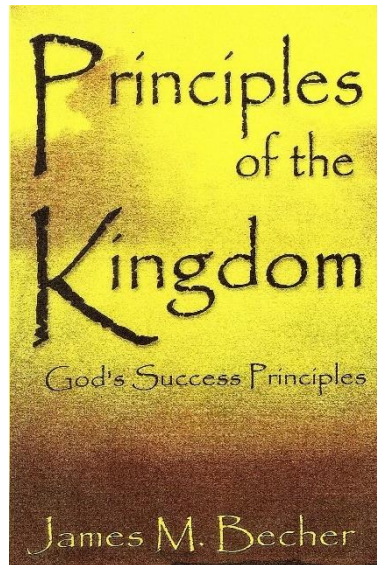




CHAPTER 10: FORGETTING THE PAST

“....Forgetting those things which are behind....”
-----Paul (Philippians 3:12)

Forget it! Forget your failures and move on toward your dreams. It is a fact of life that all of us will inevitably fail in something in some way at some time along the bumpy road of life. When this happens, we need to be able to forget it and move on toward our dreams and goals. If you've sinned, ask for and accept God's forgiveness and then forgive yourself. To quote Steve Goodier:

Unfortunately, no delete key can correct the past so that memories no longer hurt, frighten or humiliate. The past is what it is -- past. And that, too, is good to remember. It is past. Over. Finished. There is no taking it back, yet no purpose is served in re-living and rehashing old memories. It is gone. Let it be a teacher. Let us learn from its harsh lessons as well as its joys. Then let us leave it where it belongs--in the past.¹

Robert h. Schuler, author of *Move Ahead With Possibility Thinking* tells of a shocking experience he had when a car dealer friend insisted that he drive a demonstration model, and when he put the car in reverse, suddenly the digital odometer started registering the MPH in reverse. As he says, "In [failure], it's easy to think of going backward. If we're going backward, let's not count it! The secret of success is to look ahead."

To quote Norman Vincent Peale, from his book, *A Guide To Confident Living*:

One of the most important...skills is that of forgetting. It is said a man is

what he...eats. [Actually,] a man is what he forgets....to be happy and successful you must cultivate the ability to say to yourself, 'forget it!' Memory is one of our greatest facilities, [and] it is a great skill to be able to be selective and say, 'I will hold this...this other, I will cast from me.'²

Why is this so important? Because, and I speak from experience, if you don't, the memories and regrets will eat at your mind like a cancer and will paralyze your progress to the extent that you will never be able to move ahead.

And, after all, the failure you are remembering with so much regret may not be as big of a setback as you think. To quote the mother superior in *The sound of music*, "When the LORD closes a door, he opens a window." But we will never see the window if we are focused upon the closed door.

To return for just a second to my portrayal of Pilate in *Of Such Is The Kingdom*, one of his biggest problems was that he could not forget the past and this was the main reason for his poor self-image and the reason he lacked and at times failed to follow his wife's vision.

But to get back to you and I--what can we do, if, having tried to forget the past, the thoughts persist in our mind? To further quote from Dr. Peale:

There are only 2 things to do: (1) Do everything you reasonably can about it, (2), then practice forgetting it. Walk away from it in your thoughts. Conceive of it as lying back there growing ever more dim against the horizon as each day carries you further from it.²

But, not only must we walk away from the old, but walk toward the new. Start filling your mind with new ideas and prospects for success. If you find your mind blank, try praying. Ask God to fill your mind with fresh new ideas. Then trust that he will. (see Philippians.3:13 listed in the quotes section below)

QUOTABLE QUOTES:

- 1) "Low aim, not failure, is crime."
---Unknown
- 2) "Failure is an event, not a person."
---Dick Innes
- 3) "In great attempts, it is glorious even to fail."
---Longinus

- 4) "You only learn how to succeed by failing, and no success is possible without it."
---Brian Tracy
- 5) "Failure is the greatest opportunity I have to know who I really am."
---John Killinger
- 6) "Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new."
---Albert Einstein
- 7) "There is no shame in failure only in quitting"
---Unknown
- 8) "Try again. Fail again. Fail better."
---Samuel Beckett, 1906-1989, Irish playwright
- 9) "Out of failure comes the confidence and the determination to succeed."
---Ralph Marston
- 10) "Regret is an appalling waste of energy, you can't build on it; it's only good for wallowing in."
---Katherine Mansfield
- 11) "Our best successes often come after our greatest disappointments."
---Henry Ward Beecher
- 12) "I never thought of losing, but now that it's happened, the only thing is to do it right."
---Muhammad Ali
- 13) "The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing."
---John Powell
- 14) "A life spent making mistakes is not only more honorable but more useful than a life spent doing nothing."
---George Bernard Shaw
- 16) "Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson

afterwards."

---Unknown

17) "One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before..."

---Paul (Philip.3:13)

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² Peale, Norman Vincent, "a guide to confident living," (1948, Ballantine books)

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