Dear Partner,

As human beings, we have our imperfections and flaws. One of those flaws is a tendency to get stuck in our past. We all have a past; however, we don't have to live there. As free moral agents who can make our own choices, we can either choose to camp out in our past and let it hold us back, or move forward into the future God wants for us.

Some of us can remember great things that happened in our past that we want to revisit in our minds over and over again. Remembering the good things is fine, but we were never meant to stay there. On the other hand, some of us have had painful experiences we'd rather forget, but something keeps us there so that we continually relive it. Either way, God wants us to learn from our experiences but move on.

Our direction in life is important, and our attitude influences which way we go; we can either go toward complaining, or toward thanksgiving. In the Old Testament, when God freed His people from slavery in Egypt and tried to lead them to the Land of Promise, their attitude held them back. They were so busy complaining about everything, and comparing their old lives in Egypt with what was possible to experience in the Land of Promise, that they remained stuck where they were in the wilderness. The takeaway here is that embracing

a grateful, thankful attitude allows God to move us into our own Land of Promise.

To make any serious progress, we need the Holy Spirit's help; He's the one who can point out any character flaws in us that can negatively affect our future. Letting Him work in us helps us confront the deep issues in our lives that hold us back from being elevated the way God wants. When Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane and was sweating blood, He didn't let negative emotions hold Him back; He instead prayed and kept moving forward. When we have our own Garden of Gethsemane experience, we can do the same thing.

Paul had the most sordid past of anyone. However, he refused to let his history of persecuting the church and murdering believers hold him back from his future. He admitted that although he was far from perfect, he was still willing to move forward. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12-14). A relationship with Jesus meant everything to Paul.

LEAVE BEHIND WHAT'S WEIGHING YOU DOWN

The enemy is always looking for ways to attack us; if he's going to mount a full-scale assault, it's going to be an attempt to tie us to what's behind us. It's therefore critical to be prepared when he comes at us with this. If we're to attain the things ahead, we *must* be able to deal with what's behind us.

The future is calling and God has an assignment for us. It's time to stop re-running the same tape in our heads, cut the cord, and leave behind the things weighing us down. When Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well, a conversation with Him convinced her not to let her painful past distract her from her bright future (John 4:4-29). This was a divine appointment, and her life took a whole new direction.

It doesn't matter what we've done—we can never be in such a hopeless place that God can't use us. Our deeds aren't bad enough to have the power to prevent God from working in our lives; to think otherwise is to be self-centered. "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth..." (Isaiah 43:18, 19). God's getting ready to show out in our situation. Cooperating with Him by looking ahead lets Him do so.

Taffi and I love you and pray for you every day. May the blessing of God be on you and your family. Remember, Jesus is Lord, and "...in all of your getting, get understanding."

In Expectation,

Creflo Nollar

Creflo Dollar

P.S. Don't forget to download this month's free message.

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I do not live in my past! (PHILIPPIANS 3:12-14)
God is doing a new thing in my life! (ISAIAH 43:18, 19)



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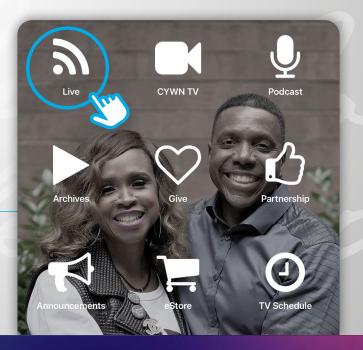
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