

## ***Learn From the Past, But Don't Live There***

There may have been a time when you could have reacted differently in a situation by being more calm and reasonable ... *But you didn't.*

There may have been a time when you could have made better decisions, decisions that would have kept you away from bad things and bad people ... *But you didn't.*

There may have been a time when you could have guided your children a little better, keeping them closer to godly influence ... *But you didn't.*

There may have been a time when you were faced with great temptation and you could have made a decision that would have kept you out of sin then, and possibly more sin later ... *But you didn't.*

There may have been a time when you were given an opportunity to become more active in the work of the church ... *But you didn't.*

There may have been a time when you could have spoken a word for Jesus to a friend, to a neighbor, and possibly have won a soul ... *But you didn't.*

There may have been a time when you could have shown more respect to your parents and honored them with your obedience ... *But you didn't.*

The year is slipping from our grasp. Only a few days remain within it. Some of us are looking back, evaluating and reassessing our triumphs and failures. The failures may loom large. Though consequences may linger, let me assure you that failures do not have to be final. As long as we have breath, we can seek forgiveness for failures and gain strength to move forward. If you find yourself as one without Christ, your steps forward must begin with the acceptance of Jesus through the gospel (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38, 39; 2 Thessalonians 1:8). If you are a Christian, repentance is needful for you to move forward (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9).

One thing is to be remembered: God and others are quicker to forgive us than we are to forgive ourselves. Seek and accept forgiveness; forgive yourself; move on.

*“Brothers, I do not count myself to have laid hold, but I do one thing: forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are ahead, I press toward the goal, toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 3:13-14, McCord). —**Lance Cordle**