

**Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia**

**Bible Study - January 14, 2021**

**Prepared & Presented by: Pastor James G. Austin, Jr., PhD, D.Min.**

**Title: "Say Goodbye to the Past and Hello to the Future"**

**Sub-Title: "Let it Go!"**

**Scripture Reference: Philippians 3:13**

**"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. Introduction**

A. As we have been blessed to enter into this New Year of 2021, millions of people are thinking and perhaps talking about changes they want or need to make in their lives.

B. Unfortunately, this is also a time when some people experience deep regret for things they didn't accomplish last year. Maybe there were some goals you wanted to accomplish or tasks you didn't complete.

C. Perhaps some things didn't get done due to no fault of your own. We all know that COVID-19 has impacted each of us in some way or another.

D. In this study, I would like for us to grasp some sound practical truths and for those who are stuck in the past (mentally and emotionally), I want to encourage you to "let things go."

E. If there are things in the past that you need to repent for, do it! It's time to shake off those negative things in your life and start thanking God that today is a new day that offers new

opportunities.

F. The Apostle Paul gave us some sound advice in Philippians 3:13 for leaving the past behind and focusing on the future that is before us.

## II. Exposition [Part I]

A. I would like for you to focus on the part of the verse that says: "...**forgetting those things which are behind** ..." The word "**forgetting**" is taken from the Greek word **epilanthano**, which is a compound of the word's **epi** and **lanthano**.

B. When these two words are compounded into one word, as they are in this verse, it forms the Greek word **epilanthano**, which the King James Version translates as "**forgetting**" in Philippians 3:13.

C. However, the first part of this Greek compound which is **epi**, in this context denotes a **turning**, as in **turning from one thing to focus on something else**.

D. The second part of the compound word is the word **lanthano**, which comes from a root that describes something that is **finished, done with, or obsolete**.

E. When these two words are combined, they form the word **epilanthano**, which portrays the idea of **something you should turn away from and forget**. When used in a passive sense, it pictures something **to be put aside, deliberately ignored, purposefully disregarded, and completely forgotten**.

### Comments:

- (1) The word **epilanthano** denotes something that may very well have really been true in the past but is no longer applicable.

- (2) If you were to paraphrase this word in today's language, you could say: "Stop thinking about it! Put it out of our mind! Put it behind you, wipe it out, let it go. Get it out of your system; get your eyes off of it and move on."

**A question for you to consider:** Do you get stuck on the freeway of your thoughts about past events that may have been negative? If so, I hope that as we progress through this study, you will be able to put your mind in gear and move forward.

### **III. Exposition [Part II]**

A. Now, after you have taken a few minutes to consider the question above, what was the Apostle Paul telling you and me to forget about? He said we must forget "those things which are behind." [Pay close attention to this next piece of information because what you are about to read is really powerful.]

B. The word "behind" is the Greek word opiso, which describes something so obsolete that it should be permanently **relegated to the back or to the past, abandoned, or left behind.** "Leave it behind and never revisit it."

#### **Is this difficult to do?**

C. It is interesting that this word opiso is the same word used in **Matthew 16:23** when Peter tried to interfere with the plan of God. After listening to Peter protest his impending death, Jesus said, "... **Get thee behind me, Satan** ...."

D. Of course, Peter was not Satan, but the devil was speaking through Peter, as he had done with many people throughout history - and he still does so today.

E. But rather than listen to those words, Jesus spoke with firmness and rebuked the devil's insinuations and ideas that were being spoken through Peter's lips.

F. When Jesus said, "**Get thee behind me,**" the word "behind" is this same Greek word opiso that Paul used in Philippians 3:13 - where he told us to forget the past.

G. This means that when you are hassled, harassed, or tormented about past failures or negative events, it may not be just your memories speaking to you - it could be Satan trying to harass you!

H. This is especially true if you have already sought forgiveness and this mental bombardment continues. The devil could be trying to drag you back into regret over past things that are done with, over and not changeable.

I. Right here, I have a wonderful word of encouragement for every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Consider 1 John 4:4b - "... **greater is he that is in you (i.e., the Holy Spirit), than He that is in the world.**"

J. Don't let those thoughts sent from the enemy drag you down into depression and defeat. Make the decision today that you are finished with fixing your mind on negative things that are in the past.

K. Through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, you have the power to turn away from yesterday and start focusing on what is in front of you. Yesterday is a done deal! The clock cannot be turned back.

L. Living in regret and anger about the past will only keep you from moving forward into the future.

**An Interpretive translation of Philippians 3:13 could read:**

**"It's time for you to turn loose of the past! You need to put it aside, deliberately ignoring and purposefully disregarding what happened yesterday. The past is old and obsolete, so why fixate on it any longer? Stop turning around to reflect on the past. You need to get it out of your system, put it behind you forever; and purposefully forget about it ..."**

It is once again interactive time. Please fill in the blanks for the Scripture passages that follow. All passages have been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

"Thou wilt keep him in \_\_\_\_\_, whose \_\_\_\_\_ is stayed on thee: because he \_\_\_\_\_ in thee."

**[Isaiah 26:3]**

"Let this \_\_\_\_\_ be in you, which was also in \_\_\_\_\_."  
**[Philippians 2:5]**

"Finally brethren, whatsoever things are \_\_\_\_\_, whatsoever things are \_\_\_\_\_, whatsoever things are \_\_\_\_\_, whatsoever things are \_\_\_\_\_, whatsoever things are of \_\_\_\_\_, if there be any \_\_\_\_\_, and if there be any \_\_\_\_\_, think on these things."  
**[Philippians 4:8]**

"\_\_\_\_\_ evermore."  
**[1 Thessalonians 5:16]**

## QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

1. Are there any changes you need to make - such as toxic relationships or environments you need to remove from your life - so that you can fulfill what God wants you to do? What are those changes?
2. Do you need to forgive yourself or others for something in the past so that you can move forward?
3. Are there any goals you would like to achieve in this New Year but past disappointments are holding you back? If so, ask the Lord for strength, courage, peace, and guidance to move forward.

**Say Goodbye to the Past and Hello to the Future!**

I trust that this initial study session for 2021 has been instructive, challenging, and encouraging. Feel free to share it with others.

Jude 3

Pastor Austin