Putting the Past Behind  by Sis. Brenda Rucker

*“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 3:13-14*

*​*Everybody has a past. Some would love to remain there and bask in it forever. Some others would rather erase it entirely and pretend it never happened. The truth for all of us is this: the past is passed, and there is no re-living or un-doing. And so, we press on, forgetting that which is past and straining toward the goal ahead, that victory found only in Christ Jesus. And, what are some things we should forget, that would hinder our moving forward in Christ?

​For one, we need to forget our failures. It is human to make mistakes and it is impossible to go through life without having the experience. Rather than continuing to relive it, fix what you can, learn the lesson, and press on with a commitment to do better going forward.

​Let's also forget our hurts. People will invariably rub together when they get close, sometimes creating friction. We are bound to get wounded and experience painful situations. Holding on to the hurt only makes the wound more painful. Tell the Lord about it and let it go. Remember His promise to fight your battles for you--and press on.

​This reminds me of the story in Esther, where Haman felt offended because Mordecai would not bow down to him. Haman was so insulted he set out to destroy all the Jews, Mordecai especially. He built a hangar to kill Mordecai, but when God turned the tables,  Haman found himself swinging from the hangar instead. Put it behind you, "lest you be destroyed."

​We also need to forget our success. Oh, but can't we get puffed up when we achieve success according to the world's standards! Success by God’s standards is attained when we learn to love one another and be gracious to one another. Forget the vain glory, and press on to gain real success in Jesus Christ.

​It’s not easy, but we should try to forget our sorrows. Perhaps the death angel has visited your family this year, or some other event to bring sorrow to your heart. Remember all that you love with fondness, but allow the sorrow to pass. Look to the Holy Spirit to be your Comforter, to bring you peace and joy. Leave sorrow behind, and press on to what the Lord has waiting for you ahead.And dare I say, we should deal with and forget our sins. We have to confess them to the Lord, correct what God allows us to correct, and then forget them. Go in God's forgiveness, and sin no more. Our God not only forgives, but He also forgets, casting our sins into the sea of forgetfulness, so that we can press on…

Life in Christ offers so many opportunities and blessings that are just waiting for those available to receive them. Let’s not allow burdens from the past to deprive us of the good things God has in our future. Forget those things that weigh us down, remember the goodness God has already shown, and press on for victory in Christ Jesus!