

“Baggage: Regrets”
Philippians 3:13-14
April 17, 2016
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Baggage---we all have some. We have the Baggage of stress and busyness or the busyness that causes stress. Today we go to the baggage claim area and find the Baggage of Regrets.

Anybody here ever have a case of would of, could of, should of. My guess is just as each one has Baggage we each have had some regrets in our life. Now when we think of regrets it can get very serious very quickly.

So in a light hearted way I want to show you a couple of “Regret-full” pictures. They are pictures from a bakery which means that even people with a lot of “dough” have regrets. My best guess is when the baker realized what he had done there was major regret. **(Image 1: 2 cakes that say “Happy Birthday on Both) (Image 2: Cake that says “Thanks for a Great year in Purple.”)**

It would be hard for that person to forget. Now there is a difference in making a mistake and going on and living with a life of Regrets. Scripture read this morning says “forgetting what lies behind.” But instead we should be “straining forward to what lies ahead.”

Oh, but we so often times live in the past....or bring the past with us. We are a product of our parents and their baggage and any of the baggage they may have given us, as well as our own baggage that we have picked up along the way. Put it all together and that’s a lot of baggage.

I have a friend who for good reason could easily be weighed down with the baggage of the past. In my friend’s life there were mistakes, issues and problems. Some were that person’s choice as bad as that choice may have been. The baggage is still there. Rather than wallowing in the past that person’s favorite sayings is this **(image) Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift of God which is why we call it the present.**

To realize today for what it is and as scripture says to “press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Some may have heard or even used the following illustration. I find it fitting with the theme.

A psychologist walked around a room while teaching stress management to an audience. As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected they’d be asked the “half empty or half full” question.

Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired; “How heavy is this glass of water?” Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.

She replied, “The absolute weight doesn’t matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it’s not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I’ll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralyzed.

In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

She continued, "The stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralyzed—incapable of doing anything."

Remember to put the glass down.

(Facebook, Social Interview)

What's in the Baggage? Am I going to hold it for an hour, a day, a year, or even perhaps years. The longer we hold it the heavier it becomes. Put the glass down...put the Baggage down.

In worship planning Rev. Cathy recommended a chapter in a book. The book was written by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend. The name of the book: *God Will Make a Way (What To Do When You Don't Know What To Do)*. (2002, Integrity Publishers) The chapter she especially wanted me to check out was the one entitled "Leave Your Baggage Behind."

Before I continue on I want to let you know that some have been carrying baggage for years. It may be because of things that were said or done to you. It is often not easy to simply "put down that baggage." Throughout the years I have been to professions Christian Counselors. I recommend them. I want to remind you that here at PHUMC we have 2 on staff. Rev. Cathy herself is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and we also have Amanda Hawkins who is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor. They have a confidential office space. You can email Rev. Cathy for more information or simply call the office and ask for Rev. Cathy.

I found the 6 steps that are mentioned in Cloud and Townsend's book are important and very appropriate and needful steps. You may want to take note of these in your sermon notes.

RESCUE YOUR HEART FROM THE PAST

1. Agree that you have a problem from the past, and confess it.

We must admit that we have some baggage. Confess it and own up to the reality that it may or may not be your fault but you have some baggage. Now although it may not seem like your fault what we do with that baggage from the past is something we can work with and prayer and accountability control.

2. Get healing and express grief.

Some things may have taken place for which you need healing. Have you ever admitted that you were sorry that whatever happened happened? Have you allowed yourself to grieve?

2 Corinthians 7:10 New International Version (NIV)

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret...

Grieve and then be healed from any pain in the past. You have a whole bunch of tomorrows to live without that baggage.

3. Receive forgiveness.

Maybe you have some failures in your past that is dragging you down. Be free from any guilt or shame of the past. Satan loves to have you keep feeling guilty about things in the past. God wants you to move on. Receive forgiveness.

Psalms 103:12 English Standard Version (ESV)

...as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

Now I get mixed up on my directions on which way east is and west is....but I do know they are a long way apart.

In order to do this you must often forgive yourself. Sometimes the person who has the most trouble forgiving is you. God and others have already forgiven you. You are forgiven. Let go of your regrets and be free.

4. Forgive others.

If someone has done you wrong why allow them to keep holding you hostage. Move on ‘forget what lies behind and strain forward to what lies ahead.’

Resentment can eat away at you. It eats you up from the inside out. Now please know we can forgive others while realizing the truth that we have been hurt by them. They may not have it in them to seek your forgiveness. In fact some you may need to forgive may not even be on this earth anymore. Why let a person no longer around rob you of joy when you allow the Baggage of Regrets.

Giving up that grudge is like dropping Baggage.

5. Examine your ways.

Have you allowed patterns of behavior to drag you down? Maybe you were taught something as a child and continued that pattern. It is difficult learning to be yourself. I am learning more and more that it is okay to be me. God created me to be me. And yet I must examine patterns I have engrained in me to evaluate if I just have had the habit of doing them, or perhaps I need to drop them take better control with a whole new outlook on the future.

6. See the new you through new eyes.

It's not who you were told you were necessarily as to who you really are. Yes we each have weaknesses and strengths. Do you see yourself as God sees you?

And oh, how He loves you and me. You are of great value to God. See the new you through God's eyes. It is difficult to fathom.

Once again from the book *God Will Make a Way* by Cloud and Townshend.

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- 5. Examine your ways.**
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Put down the water. Put down the Baggage. Jesus has got this. **(Image)**

Yes, let's throw those things in our baggage that are weighing us down away.

Hear Paul's words in Philippians from a different translation.

Philippians 3:13-14 New Living Translation (NLT)

¹³ No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

Christ is enough. The world behind me. The past behind me. Regrets behind me. Seize the day and realize the promise of tomorrow.

(Video.... "Letting Go")

<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/56927/letting-go>