

Time Traps

Ready:

“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.”

-Philippians 3:13

Set

“Back in '82, I used to be able to throw a pigskin a quarter mile. How much you want to make a bet I can throw a football over them mountains? Yeah. If coach would've put me in fourth quarter... We'd have been state champions, no doubt. No doubt in my mind. You better believe things would have been different. I'd have gone pro...in a heartbeat. I'd be makin' millions of dollars and...livin' in a... big ol' mansion somewhere.” - Uncle Rico, “Napoleon Dynamite”

The tragic thing about Uncle Rico from the movie “Napoleon Dynamite” is that he’s stuck in the past. He’s caught playing the “what if” game. “What if the coach would have put me in? What if I’d have gone pro?” By dwelling on his past, he’s wasting his present.

If we’re honest with ourselves, we’ve all struggled with this at one point or another. Most of us have been Uncle Rico. And maybe we still act like that on occasion only we sound more like this: “I can’t believe I dropped that pass. What if I would have caught it?” “I can’t block that guy. He kicked my tail last play.” “If only I wouldn’t have dropped the baton. We would have easily won that race.” For us, instead of being stuck in 1982 like Uncle Rico, we get stuck in a previous play, game or season.

On the flip side, the other mental time-trap we fall into is living in the future. “When I get my chance to go in, I’ll...” “When we get the ball back, we’ll...” “Next week I’ll be better at...” The problem here is that if we keep thinking about tomorrow, we’ll miss the opportunities we have today. The most important time is now!

It is important to learn from the past and to consider the future, but we can’t live there. We must live in the day we are given. It may be difficult, but we must trust the Lord with our past and our future. Next time you are tempted to focus on either what is behind or before you, remember these two things:

1. You can't change the past.
2. Your present determines your future.

Today, live the life you have now. Honor the Lord by serving Him where you are and let Him take care of where you are going.

Go

1. Why is it so easy to get stuck in the past?
2. What is so tempting to daydream about the future?
3. Which of these is more tempting for you? How can you overcome it?

Workout

Matthew 6:34

Bible Reference:

Philippians 3



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