



Surrendered

40 Devotions to Help You

Let Go & Live Like Jesus

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Abingdon Press | Nashville

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2020940202

ISBN 13: 978-1-7910-0799-7

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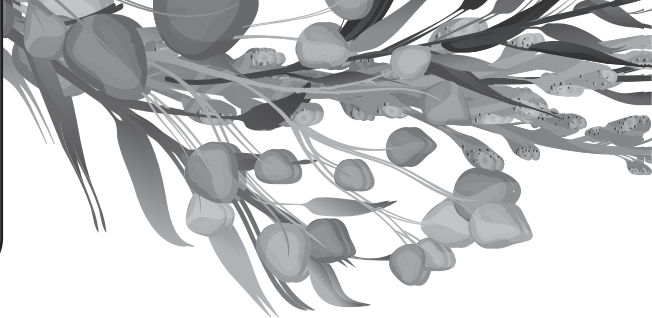
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20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29—10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DAY 11



Letting Go of the Past

*But I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past
and looking forward to what lies ahead.*

(Philippians 3:13b NLT)

Our dog, Quimby, is the best forgetter ever. Even though she was abused before she came to live with us, Quimby wakes up each day happily wagging her tail and licking our faces. She never remembers when we yelled at her the day before. For Quimby, each day is a clean slate. I wish I could be a lot more like my dog.

For humans, it's not easy to forget the past. We're prone to negative bias, and it's much easier to remember the bad instead of the good. We tend to drag the past with us like suitcases into and out of our jobs, relationships, and dreams. Packed in those



**You can carry your past
around for only so long
before it begins to cost you.**



suitcases are our disappointments, pain, missed opportunities, expectations, abandonment, rejections, and failures.

You can carry your past around for only so long before it begins to cost you. The more suitcases you have, the more your past slows you down, messes you up, and keeps you stuck and unable to experience God's very best for your life.

In Philippians 3, the apostle Paul wrote about the joy of being freed from his past. Paul wasn't just freed from the sin; he experienced the fullness of God's peace, hope, joy, purpose, and abundance in his life in spite of his past.

Forgetting your past doesn't mean you live in denial or get amnesia. God wants to apply His healing power to your past and free you from carrying the weight of it in and out of your



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relationships, your hopes, and your dreams. Who you are *now* in Christ is far more important than what you've done or what was done to you in the past.

How do you ask God to disconnect your past from influencing your life now? I use a tool I call my "annual funeral." I've used it for more than a decade and wrote about it in my Bible study, *I'm Waiting, God*.¹ This experience puts me in position for God to help me let go of my past. I grab my Bible and journal and go to a quiet place where I can think, cry, and pray. Here's how you can do this too.

Step 1: Be Real with God

Tell God about all of your painful memories, unmet expectations, resentments, and disappointments in your life.

Step 2: Write It Down

Writing down everything you're pouring out to God makes your feelings, emotions, and perspective real. Recording these not only acknowledges everything that you've been holding in but also symbolically lets it out.

Step 3: Release

This final step is a surrender prayer in which you acknowledge everything from your past that hurt you.

Letting Go of Circumstances

- What part of your past is hard to let go of?
- Imagine what life might be like if you let go of your past. What's one next step you can take today toward letting go?

PRAYER: Dear God, would You free me from the weight of _____ from my past? I've tried to fix and forget what's happened, but I can't do it on my own. I'm praying for Your mighty power to release me from what I've been dragging all this time. It's hurting me. I know Your power can deliver me and bring me to the promised place of Your perfect peace and blessing. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Surrender Principle

Surrender is my only path to God's peace.

1. Barb Roose, *I'm Waiting, God: Finding Blessing in God's Delays* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2019), 119

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- If you nag, what fears are behind those repetitious words?
- How can you surrender these fears to God instead of nagging others?

PRAYER: Dear God, it's so hard to stop nagging! You know how much I love the people in my life and how much I want what is best for them. Yet, God, I have to remember that You love them even more! Please convict my heart. I don't want to gnaw away at my precious relationships. Remind me to come near to You in prayer instead of nagging away at those I love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Surrender Principle

When fear tempts me to flee, fix,
or force my way, I will choose
to stop and pray.

1. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, s.v. “nag (v.),” accessed June 9, 2020, www.etymonline.com/word/nag.