



LOOKING BACK

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INTRODUCTION

In this final weekend of the decade, Pastor Shane encourages us to look back on the last ten years. When we look back, three crucial things happen: our sins look further away, God's mercy is clearer and Jesus proves greater. Join us as we pause and take advantage of this rare, end-of-decade opportunity.

DISCUSSION

1. Pastor Shane challenges us to allow the past to serve as our mentor. If you have ever had a mentor, what are some specific ways he/she helped you? How could our past benefit us in this same way? Discuss this in both general and personal terms.
2. As Pastor Shane taught us, in first century Judaism, they would "Walk Forward, Backward." If space allows in your setting, have one or two people in your group (or if you're alone in your living room, do this yourself) actually walk directionally forward but in a backward stance. What are some of the benefits of this vantage point? How does this affect your perception of your past?
3. Discuss how you typically have handled your past. Do you run away from it? Get stuck in it? Is there a new view of your past you would like to adopt? Share with your group and spend time praying with and for each other.
4. Together, **read Ephesian 2:1-8**. In revisiting this passage from last week, discuss the ideas below. Why are these truths worth revisiting?
 - The ways we "were" vs. what we "are" now
 - What it means that God is RICH in mercy
 - In what ways we are "with" and "in" Christ Jesus.

DO SOMETHING

1. Take a walk outside on a clear pathway and walk backward, noting what you see. In what ways does Jesus prove greater in this position? How does seeing what's behind you serve as a protection?
2. Review the three main points: "When we look back, our sins look further, God's mercy is clearer and Jesus proves greater." Set aside time this week to reflect and write down how this is true in your life. How can we experience encouragement where the sins and shame of the last decade have discouraged us? In what ways is God's mercy evident? What are some ways in which Jesus proves greater in your life?
3. **Read Lamentations 3:22-23**. How does the fact that God's mercies/compassions are "New. Every. Morning." catapult you out of the stuck spots of your past?

RESOURCES

1. C.J. Mahaney shows how to overcome our tendency to move away from the Gospel of grace in his book *The Cross-Centered Life*. Find joy in the Gospel, whose promises allow us to escape condemnation whenever it attacks.
2. Watch Louie Giglio's Passion 2014 conference video *Sent by Mercy*, available on RightNow Media. Giglio points out how we are stopped by sin and amazed by grace.
3. *Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ* by John Piper is a six-video presentation on RightNow Media unpacking what it means to behold and delight in Jesus above all things.

