

Zachery Tims: Forget About the Past

Editor's Note: *This article was originally published in Charisma magazine in June 2007. In the article Pastor Zachery Tims, who died on Aug. 12 in a New York City hotel room, exhorted Christians to pursue God's destiny for their lives. The article is characteristic of Tims' charismatic teaching that helped him build a megachurch with 8,000 members in Orlando, Fla.*

Where you're going in life is more important than where you've been.

When you're driving a car, do you ever pay attention to how big the windshield is compared to the rearview mirror? Why do you think the rearview mirror is smaller? It's because where you're going is more important than where you've been.

Destiny is not about the wrong decisions you have made in life; it's about getting back on track and moving in the direction God has ordained.

Certainly we can all learn from the victories and mistakes we've made in the past, but we should not spend all our time staring into the "rearview mirror" of life. If we do, we'll crash into whatever is just ahead of us. We can take a glimpse every now and then to make sure what's in our past doesn't creep up in our future, but we can't park there.

More than any other Bible writer in the New Testament, the apostle Paul seemed to understand this point. He said: "I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).

In order to appreciate the full weight of Paul's words, you have to consider his background, conversion and commitment to proclaiming the gospel to the gentiles. Paul was a success story in his day. He came from the right family and studied under the Nobel laureates of his time. He was president of his fraternity and a partner in one of the largest law offices in the Middle East.

But that's not all Paul was. He had accomplished great things, but he had also done horrible, unspeakable things. He imprisoned, kidnapped, bound and murdered men, women and children because of his ungodly, legalistic religious beliefs.

And it wasn't until he met Jesus face-to-face on the road to Damascus that he heard the voice of the one true God.

Paul knew he had to forget and leave behind his shameful actions against the saints. He was forgiven by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, and he put them all behind him for the hope of accomplishing what God had set before him.

Like Paul, you need to allow Jesus Christ to transform your life and then look to the future. Check where you're going and how fast you're heading there, and make sure the Holy Spirit is empowering you.

Every day, people come to my church with the same kinds of problems I had as a teenager growing up in Baltimore—drug abuse, drug dealing and promiscuity.

I tell them: "God doesn't make mistakes. He has never given up on you. He has a purpose and calling—a destiny—He seeded into you when you were conceived in your mother's womb, and He is still holding it for you today. When God looks at you, He sees your destiny fulfilled, not dead."

If you've wasted years of your life making bad decisions, you'll have to work overtime to regroup and get back on schedule, but that doesn't bother God. He is big enough to

help you jump-start your life to fulfill the plans He has for you.

It doesn't matter if you are an unbeliever or a Christian living a carnal lifestyle; God believes in you, and with His help, you can turn your life around. God's destiny is in you, buried as a seed in your heart.

And since you know it's there, you need to take the next step of nurturing it and reaching for the prize of the high calling God has for you in His Son, Christ Jesus!