

Prophecy: It's Time To Leave Your Past in the Dust

In his classic novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, British writer Charles Dickens opened his books with words I can relate to: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." I don't know about you, but that describes my 2016.

There were tremendous breakthroughs, but there was also tremendous warfare. There were many new kingdom relationships formed, but some were also lost to spiritual combat. There were many new doors of opportunity, but there was also tremendous pressure. I've learned we do more spiritual growing during the hard times than we do during the easy times—and God is faithful.

Every year at this time I look back on the last 12 months. I take account of the good times and the bad times—and I thank God. And then I declare that the coming year is going to be my year. As part of this process, though, I am also careful to leave the past in the past. I know if I want to freely walk through the divine doors God is setting before me, I need to leave the pain of the past season behind. See, I take God at His Word:

"Do not remember the former things nor consider the things of old. See, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not be aware of it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" (Is. 43:18-19).

Is the Past Blocking Your Path?

God wants to do something new in your life this year, but there could be something that's getting in your way—besides the flesh and the devil. It's called the past. Hear me: You need to press past the pain of your past. If you aren't willing to press past the pain of your past, you will never

have total victory in your life. Consider Paul the apostle's words in Philippians 3:13-14:

"Brothers, I do not count myself to have attained, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

You have three choices: 1. Press past the pain now; 2. Press past the pain later, and be miserable until then or 3. Keep the pain forever. No one can do this for you. You have to do your own pressing.

So what does it mean to press? It means "to exert steady force or pressure against something." We have to press against the pressure that's coming against us. There's pressure against our momentum. There's pressure to go backwards. There's pressure to give up altogether. The pull of the past is a demonic strategy that works like a magnet. It keeps trying to draw us back. We have to demagnetize our souls.

I'll tell you right now, pressing past your pain will cause suffering. But you can either suffer the way you are, or you can suffer through the pain of change and into victory. When the pain of change comes, our flesh looks for an exit.

Our souls would rather stay in the familiar pain than press through the unfamiliar pain. We don't want to suffer, but our suffering will only truly end when we get to the other side of the pain. Pressing is not fun—it's hard work—but the reward is great.

Leaving the Past in the Dust

I heard the Lord say, "It's time to leave your past in the dust, shake the dust off your feet and walk in the future and hope I have planned for you." Leaving your past in the dust often means renewing your mind.

So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from his perspective (Col. 3:1-2, MSG).

What's Christ's perspective? His perspective is that we are overcomers. We are accepted in the beloved. We are not alone because He will never leave us or forsake us. We have the oil of joy, the garment of praise.

God is our vindicator (Psalm 4:2-4). He will repay those who hurt us. He will heal our grief. He will bring us new relationships. He will do it. Our job is to love Him with all of our hearts and minds and trust Him. I like to meditate on two key Scriptures: Romans 8:28 ("We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose") and Genesis 50:20: ("But as for you, you intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many lives").

Let this be your confession: "Jesus, I am willing to press past my pain and into victory. I am more than a conqueror in You. You understand me. You know my hurts and my wounds and my grief and my loneliness. But You are here to deliver me. I refuse to remain in the past any longer. I exchange mourning for joy, praise for heaviness. And I thank You, Lord, that I can press on toward the mark of the prize. Pain, you can't stay. I command you to leave my soul in the name of Jesus. I am free from pain. I am renewed in the spirit if my mind. I am victorious!" {eoas}