

# Look to Jesus and Run Without Regret

by Annie Poonen

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*This sermon addresses the topic of dealing with regrets in life, emphasizing the importance of letting go of past mistakes and finding comfort in God's love and forgiveness. It explores various scenarios of regret, from personal choices to relationships, and highlights the need to seek God's help in overcoming regrets. The speaker encourages a focus on the present moment, learning from past mistakes, and running the race of life with endurance while looking to Jesus as the ultimate example and source of strength.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 49:15, Hebrews 10:17, Philippians 3:13, John 14:16, Hebrews 12:1, Psalm 103:2, Deuteronomy 6:12, Acts 9:1, Exodus 3:1, Mark 9:24

**Topics:** "Overcoming Regret", "Embracing God's Forgiveness"

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## Description

This sermon addresses the topic of dealing with regrets in life, emphasizing the importance of letting go of past mistakes and finding comfort in God's love and forgiveness. It explores various scenarios of regret, from personal choices to relationships, and highlights the need to seek God's help in overcoming regrets. The speaker encourages a focus on the present moment, learning from past mistakes, and running the race of life with endurance while looking to Jesus as the ultimate example and source of strength.

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## Transcript

Dear sisters, it's such a joy to see you all again. Recently somebody asked me this question, looking back in your life are there any regrets that you have? So that was a personal question, I didn't know how to answer it, I couldn't say there were no regrets, neither could I say yes there are regrets, but when I thought about it, I thought, looking back in my life, I can only say God's love and mercy and forgiveness and comfort is like a vast ocean, and the regrets I had or have, when I think of anything as regret is just like mist, which God just blows away. So thank God that we don't have to live regretting and regretting about our past, because God's love is so great, but I know that many people who have written to me have written about regrets that they had in their life, like some people made a mess of their college days and then they're married to someone and they just couldn't make their marriage life happy because their past life was so miserable.

Another person who I met, she said that she had two children, both of them had a tragic death, both of them died and she was too old to have any more children. She wished she had some more children and she had a lot of regret. Lot of people have had regret about parents and children, distance between parents and children and they couldn't make it up and one of them died and they regret that it was too late.

So lot of people have had to deal with regret, especially death of a loved one, when suddenly someone very close to you has passed away and gone to be with the Lord, there could be a lot of regret, you could have been a better person, loved that person a little more or expressed love, so many things can haunt us, haunt such a person, but how do we deal with regret? Thank God, God has given us a way out of it, we don't have to keep dwelling on feelings of regret. I thought of people in the Bible who had regret in their lives, I thought of the Apostle Paul, he was sore and he was persecuting the church and his only ambition was to haunt Christians and kill them and Jesus met with him and made him an apostle and a witness to Jews and Gentiles and lot of Christians, people became Christians through his word and even now his writings have been a blessing to all of us. Peter who denied the Lord, how much of regret he must have had, but we know that he got over it.

But I was thinking also of Moses, I think a lot about Moses these days, Moses was, he was so fortunate to have a godly mother and father to take care of him when he was small, he was miraculously delivered from death and he was brought up in the Pharaoh's palace like a prince, but thank God for his childhood, his mother and father could tell him godly values and tell him that you don't belong to the, you're not really a prince, you're not really Pharaoh's daughter's son, you belong to God's people, don't forget that. But they had to teach him wisdom, how to deal and how to behave in the king's palace and he went and he lived there and his youth, all the education he got, all the skill he got and then when he went out, we all know what happened, he went and he saw some of his fellow, maybe his loved ones, somebody was ill-treated by an Egyptian taskmaster and he struck that Egyptian man down and he killed him and after that, out of fear, he had to leave and he was in the wilderness. That human zeal of youth and that impulsive nature was there, which made him do that and out there in the wilderness, I wonder what must have been going on in his mind, he would have lived 40 years like that, taking care of his father-in-law's sheep and he must have thought, why did I kill that Egyptian and the thoughts of regret, maybe he must have been thinking of his loved ones, his people in Egypt and fearful thoughts about Pharaoh, whether Pharaoh would still hunt him down, he'd send people and find him in the wilderness, all kind of thoughts must have been going on in his mind and sometimes that can happen to us also or our children, even if we are living at home, our children are living at home, they can be in the wilderness in their spiritual life, far away from God, forgetting about God, having done some stupid thing, some disobedient thing and they're regretting about it and years and months go by, but thank God, God didn't leave Moses like that, God has a wonderful way of reaching out to us, like he reached out to Moses, maybe through a letter a loved one writes or through some news that we get or some verse that we read or a message, even an ordinary thing that can happen in life can make us or that person think back and reach out to God, God reached out to Moses in a miraculous way, just like the prodigal son, he was sitting, he was so hungry and he was sitting and eating the food that was thrown to the pigs and there he thought of his father's house and he thought what even the poor people who come begging at my father's gate, the servants of my father have better food than this, why am I sitting here eating this rubbish, let me go back to my father and I say I'm sorry dad, so something like that God can do to make his children turn back to him, in Moses case, we know what happened, he was tending his sheep and he saw a bush on fire and the bush wasn't getting burnt up but the flames coming out of it and he thought this is something unusual, it's remarkable, let me go near it and as he went near, he heard God calling him by his name, he had forgot, he thought who would remember my name, God calling him by name and saying Moses, Moses and then God spoke to him and said Moses, I've got a job for you, you're going to deliver my people from Egypt and then Moses had a lot of excuses, he said Lord you know what all I've done, I'm a weak person, I can't speak but in we read in Hebrews and in Stephen said about Moses in Acts that he was an eloquent speaker and he had all the wisdom but when he stood before God, he said Lord, I can't speak and how will the people believe me if I

go back and say that I've come to deliver you, they might think you, you killed an Egyptian, how can you deliver us and you ran away, what were you doing these 40 years, you forgot all about us and he had all these things going on in his mind but God had a plan for him and he said you know what God said, Moses forget about the past, people ask you who sent you, say I am sent you, think of the present, don't think of the past, yes in the past you did a lot of wrong things, maybe you were proud about your education, maybe you didn't care for your family and your loved ones, yes some children are like that, they grew up in poverty and then suddenly they get rich and they forget their roots, they forget their parents and the struggles that their parents went through to make them what they are, they may have excuses like that but God told Moses don't look back, don't look back at all the failures in your life, all the ways in which you regret, all the ways in which you forgot about me, I am, I am the same God your mom and dad taught you about, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the same Jacob who came to Egypt, I am the same God, I tell them I am and the present, I'm not living in the past, we can put whatever words we like after the I am, I am your helper, I am your keeper, I am the one who will take care of you, I am your strength, I am the one who will solve all your problems, I am the one who will take away the regrets in your life, we can put all the things there and say Lord yes you're more than enough for me and we can go on from there, so God has had a plan for Moses and he has a plan for us also, he doesn't want us to live lives of regret, sometimes when we think of the regrets in our life they can pull us down and it's only God who is able to lift us up and so being able to forget is a divine thing, humanly it's not possible for us to get over some regrets but God can help us, so there are two things like an anchor, we sang about we have an anchor, thank you Rosanne for choosing that song, the anchor there are two parts like this, like that goes down and I thought of the two parts, one that is the anchor which we should never let go of in our deepest times of regret or fear or pain, these two things we should never let go of, one is God never forgets us, in Isaiah 49 verse 15 we know that verse, if you can turn to that verse Isaiah 49 verse 15, can a woman forget her nursing child that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb, even these may forget yet I will not forget you, behold I have engraved you on the palms of my hands, your walls are continually before me, that's one truth, unshakeable truth, that part of the anchor which God wants us to hold on to, that he will never never forget us, even our mom and dad may forget, yes they won't forget us but even if that happens and or they cast us off, I know many children who've been cast off by parents because of broken homes or some unhappy childhood but God never never forget us and the second part of that anchor is he will not remember our past sins if we come to him in repentance, we read that in Jeremiah and in Hebrews 10 it says in the new covenant especially we read that your sins that's in Hebrews 10 17 your sins and iniquities I will remember no more, those are the two things we can hold on to if ever we get tempted to regret about anything that he the Lord never forgets us and he will not remember our past sins, if the Lord doesn't remember then why should we remember and keep on thinking and regretting, we should when those thoughts of regret come we should say yes the Lord has forgiven and chooses to forget it, why should I keep bringing that in my mind, I want to choose to forget it and say Lord that divine nature which you have that ability to forget a person's past give me that divine nature that I can forget my past and not live in condemnation of my past and I can forget and other people's past also, so those two things are the anchor we can hold on to and there are some things which we should never forget, we should never forget God's goodness to us when looking back we are tempted to look back at a lot of sad things unhappy things but we should never forget God's goodness to us, Psalm 103 verse 2 says bless the Lord oh my soul forget not all his benefits, if we choose to remember when we are tempted to think of some regretting thing we say Lord I want to remember your goodness to me, your kindness to me, take me to think of that and be grateful to you, I want to bless you, I want to be thankful to you for your past goodness to me, in Deuteronomy chapter 6 there's another verse which the Lord told Deuteronomy 6 verse 12 it says when

you take care lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt in our case brought us out of our past sinful condition forgiven our sins take care not to forget our life of slavery to sin don't forget that so don't forget those things we should never forget we should never forget God's promises and commands all the promises that he has given us don't forget those at times when we are tempted Satan brings those thoughts into our mind then you say Lord help me to remember your promises I want to stand on your promises we should never forget the good things others have done for us when we sometimes we think of bad things that people did those are things we should forget we should remove from our mind but the good things that people have done even the smallest thing Jesus said even a cup of cold water which you have given to my least of my brothers you will get a reward so how much more people have done our brothers and sisters our family members have done good to us we must bring that to our mind and say Lord I thank you for all these things then we should never forget the mistakes that we have had and learn from those mistakes we should not be discouraged and condemn ourselves from for the mistakes we have made but we should say Lord I want to learn from that mistake and I want to go on from them from those mistakes and there are some things which we should forget we should forget the evil and the bad things that others have done to us no that's the thing which we are tempted to do we keep on thinking I can't believe she did this to me I can't believe she spoke like this about me she spoke like this to me those are the things we should forget and I as I said it's a divine thing to be able to forget only God can say can do that your sins and iniquities I will remember no more say we should ask the Lord Lord give me that divine nature to be able to forget the harm and the bad things that others have done so many girls have problems about their forgiving their parents or their moms who had some way lacked something didn't show enough love to them or speak some kind word to them or some trivial thing and they keep on thinking about that and they are not able to get rid of that so we should ask the Lord Lord help me to forget it's like somebody said you know you add good things on top of these files these bad things are the files files that are in the but you keep on adding good things think of good things think of God's word God's promises and the good blessings that God has given us you keep on piling up piling up piling up then these bad things will go right down and they in our mind will be taken away and sometimes Satan is so smart he brings these things to our mind remember that time when this person did this or you did this and we feel so ashamed and those thoughts come those thoughts are from the devil we say Lord I want to reject these thoughts I don't want to dwell on these thoughts of my past or my failure the wrong decisions I did anything let me to forget it so we should forget the evil that others have done and the good that we do to others sometimes we keep on thinking you know I did so much good to this person and she doesn't remember anything I sent her meals I did this I looked after her when she was sick and I did this and and we keep on piling the good things that we did and then we become proud and boastful and God doesn't want us to be like that so we should forget those good things that we did for others and say Lord I've not done it that person I've done it for you but so it's you who should thank me and I don't want to receive any thanks from you and I just offer that to you that service which I did I offer it to you and we should forget as I said earlier we should forget the failures which haunt us and discourage us and condemn us as we heard some time back from our dear brothers in discouragement and condemnation self-condemnation are no entry roads so we should say Lord I don't want to enter those two roads my failures yes there are failures I'm not perfect there are a lot of failures in my life but Jesus is there he's not remembering my failures he has forgiven my past who am I to keep on remembering it's like me telling the Lord Lord do you remember I failed you this at this time on this particular day I failed you and the Lord says what are you talking about I choose to forget about it why do you want to remind me about that so we should say Lord that's what I want to do but I want to learn a lesson Lord from my failures I don't want to repeat them I don't want to condemn myself but I want to learn from that so those failures will be my stepping stones from that failure

it's like a ladder each failure is like a ladder for me to climb higher and higher and closer to God so about our past there are some things which we can do and we should do when the feelings of regret come if there are things we need to set right like when feelings of past regret comes and we feel that we have hurt somebody we can write a note of apology or an email or call them up on the phone and say I'm really sorry that day I did like this or I said like that please forgive me or to our mom and dad mom I don't want to wait for your birthday to thank you but the Lord reminded me that you've been such a good mommy to me and you took care of me and you forgave me even though I was so stubborn many times and I hurt you I want to thank you and I'm sending you this bouquet or at least this card for you don't wait till they become sick and unconscious and we wish oh I wish I had spoken to my mom right now we can do something and we can call them up or send a letter to them if we don't have the chance to talk the courage to talk straight to them we can send them a card and write in the best way we can and say thank you mom or our sibling or someone whom we have lost contact with you know I had some regrets in my life about my loved ones things happened which brought a distance between my loved ones and me and I wanted to show my love to them but circumstances were such that I just couldn't meet and I prayed I said Lord this thing is there I don't want my parents to die without me ever getting a chance to talk to them or tell them exactly how much I love them and praise God he gave me a chance he gave me many chances supernaturally he gave me chances so that after they died in my heart there was just such a comfort and such joy as I said before looking back they were like mists which the Lord just blew away if I hadn't done that my life would have been full of regret my parents have died and I didn't do what I could do so don't condemn yourself for things which you couldn't do but if there are the chances which you can do be let's take that opportunity if to write to them apologize to thank them if we have taken something wrongfully and we feel that that's sitting in my house and I haven't yet returned it it's a small thing but they may not miss it maybe it's a book or maybe it's something else oh yes I haven't returned it let me be quick to return it thank you and add something to it maybe it's some container you can fill it up with some chocolate or something and return it so loving and forgiving and sometimes the people whom we should have shown our love they may not be there but maybe their children are there you know when David after Saul's death he said are there anybody in Saul's family whom I can show love to and he found one of his lame children called Mephibosheth and he brought him into the palace and he took care of him so maybe some children who somebody whom we should have loved we can show we can show love to them so God if we are really sincere God will show us many many opportunities give us many opportunities to show that love then but there are some regrets which are good looking back in our life there are some regrets which may be good and we can do something about definitely looking back in our life we can have regret about our spiritual condition not I'm not the person not the person I should be my prayer life and I need to pray more I'm so self-centered in my prayer I need to pray for others I need to intercede maybe somebody sitting here may not yet have the assurance it's being born again before it's too late make that decision to accept Jesus into your heart or feelings of regret not how unchristlike I am I'm still so selfish I talk about myself I think of myself my lack of prayer my lack of desire to read God's word the besetting sins which I have my anger things which I don't want they keep coming up in my life and Satan keeps reminding me of those things Lord help me help me to get over those things those are regrets we can do something about but there are a lot of regrets we just have to let go we just have to say looking back there are so many things we just have to let go and we can do nothing more some people have written to me that in their single days they were in their college days they were fooling around with the wrong person and now they are married and they have regrets about the past that life that they lived a lot of young girls have had that tormenting thoughts what's the use of thinking on that those are things we just have to let go Lord I want to let go of it take it away from my mind you know one thing what we can do about is Lord take it we don't talk to others

about it I mean maybe we can talk to our husbands about it if you want to get rid of it but don't talk to younger people who won't be able to handle it but and get over it and say Lord don't let me think about it take it away even from my mind and sometimes some people have a feeling that they are in the wrong place am I really should I be here if you're married and your husband and you have made that decision then we don't have to be condemning ourselves saying why am I here have I done the right thing that decision is belongs to both a husband and us why did I leave my home and come here why am I why did I leave my why did my husband leave that job and come here all those things are beyond us that belong to our family so let those things be there and say Lord and if we should move out of here convince my husband and let us both agree on that and sometimes in the past may have been some wrong friendships we had and that friendship has influenced us we can't do anything we can't do anything about the wrong friendship but we can say no more of that kind of friendship no more of the friendship which encourages me to gossip and talk ill of others I want to put an end to that I want to have nothing more to do with that that type of thing sometimes some people are regretting the medical treatment the doctors gave them and they're permanently um their health is affected because of the wrong treatment what can we do if the doctor may not has not done that deliberately but by mistake that doctor has given you the wrong treatment and we are suffering from it we say lord help me to forgive that doctor help me not to keep on and maybe all my life I have to suffer but it's okay lord let me draw closer to you through this suffering which I have to undergo but I know that my body belongs to you I offered my body anyway to you it belongs to you and so you take care of it you can heal me or if you want me to live like with this thorn in the flesh give me the grace to take care of it so many people are under condemnation because of some wrong treatment or sometimes we may have done the wrong thing for our children given them the wrong type of food or done something wrong which has affected them we we should not condemn ourselves and live in regret to say lord I made a mistake but maybe my mom made a mistake in letting me have this but I want to forgive and you forgive me and you can heal my child heal me let me not to live with that regret making me so those are the things we have to let go so many children are suffering because they have come from broken homes because the parents have left them mom and dad they think that the moms and dads have forsaken them but we do not know what circumstances led to that maybe there was a lot of suffering maybe the fear of some greater sin being committed that's why they had to separate so don't live in condemnation or regret about those things and say lord all those things of my past I want to leave in your hands I am your child you help me to deal with the past help me to forget about it and help me to live my life free from all the regrets of the past sometimes we are victims of some injustice something some racial injustice because of our color or in our job situation somebody else got the job which we should have got our husband should have got or we lost a job because of some partiality or a husband has lost a job because of partiality those are things we cannot do anything about we can look for another job or change but there's no use of living in regret about it we have to let go of those things and say lord I hand it over to you and I want to think about it I want to put these things in the bottom file I want to add good things on top of these things you know there was a there's a beautiful song which I was thinking about there are some some things which we cannot tell others but we can tell it to Jesus I think Rosanne you might know that song but I'll just read the words of that song are you weary are you heavy-hearted tell it to Jesus tell it to Jesus are you grieving over joys departed tell it to Jesus alone tell it the chorus is tell it to Jesus tell it to Jesus he is a friend that's well known you've no other such a friend or brother tell it to Jesus alone second verse is do the tears fall down your cheeks unbidden tell it to Jesus tell it to Jesus have you since that to men's eyes are hidden tell it to Jesus alone do you fear the gathering clouds of sorrow tell it to Jesus are you anxious what shall be tomorrow tell it to Jesus alone are you troubled at the thought of dying tell it to Jesus for Christ's kingdom I'll sign tell it to Jesus alone you know so many girls have come to

me with feelings of hurt that they were molested in their childhood and that scar it remains in their mind for years and years and they're afraid afraid to get married afraid to trust a man those are deep sorrows which we we cannot share with anyone but we can say tell it to Jesus he can heal every scar he can take it out of your mind he can teach us to forgive that person maybe you'll meet that person in heaven that person who molested you God forgave his sin and he's in heaven how will you be able to meet that person if you haven't forgiven him on earth so those are things which we have to let go and not hold on to because that will if we keep on holding on to that then we make our lives miserable we make our family miserable our children miserable because deep down this hurt is there and every now and then those things keep coming up so we that's the secret tell it to Jesus we can't tell a lot of things to other people but we can tell it to Jesus there's a beautiful verse philippians 3 13 it says paul says forgetting the things behind let me read that verse philippians 3 13 one thing i do forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead i press on toward the goal or the price of the upward call of god in christ jesus paul was a man who persecuted christians who's forgetting that paul was a man who suffered a lot for christ's sake that also he wants to forget he won he wrote scripture he doesn't want to think of that and get proud about it forgetting that's why it's such a divine thing to be able to forget the past and reach out to god and how as i said it's a divine quality and only the lord can give us through the power of the holy spirit jesus said in john 14 in the holy june john 14 verses 15 and to 17 jesus said i'm going away but i'll send the holy spirit another helper a comforter who live in you he'll abide in you he'll live within you right now i'm with you but after i leave the holy spirit will live in you and he'll help you he'll help you to get over all these regretful things he lives and he'll help you to deal with everything he's a comforter things which you cannot share with others he'll comfort you he'll be with you he'll walk alongside with you and most of all he'll tell you about me he'll make my things living to you how much i went through so that you could have this abundant life praise god and in hebrews 12 it says let me think that was such a ebook 12 therefore since we are surrounded by so great weaknesses let us lay aside every weight lay aside every regret every weight and sin which cling so closely and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us looking to jesus we can't run any other way we can only run looking at jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith he's the one who began the race who started this race for us and he's going ahead gone ahead of us we look at him and we run we don't look at all these weight the weight of regret the weight of sin we don't look at those things we look ahead at our forerunner who ran the race and opened the way for us so we can run free all these regrets are like weight pulling us down just lay those aside and run with patience because of the power that the lord has given us so the power of the holy spirit it's only the lord who can help us to run this race and be a blessing to others we'll meet a lot of people with regrets people will come to us and say i regret this i'm sorry about this and we'll be able to help them and say yes this is the thing we have to let go it's a weight don't let that weight drag you you know when people want to drown they tie a weight on them and they jump into that's what the weight can do slow us down and even destroy us but cast out that weight that weight of regret and run with patience looking at our forerunner and he'll help us so i'll just summarize a few things that i i was just wondering if the the electronic situation will be okay but thankfully everything is okay but i'll just go through some of the things where uh which i was talking about there are some things in our past which are beyond our control we have to just let go and there are some things which we need to do something about like forgive ask forgiveness restitution repair debt those things we can do and don't talk about our grievances to anybody tell it to jesus don't forget that song i read somewhere that in our mind we should have many burial services you know funeral services anytime these kind of regretful thoughts come dig a grave and put that thought and bury it and say i am done with it i don't want to think about it so do a burial service of these kind of past things which come up don't look back except to thank god and learn some lessons from the things that mistakes that we have done live in the present god is the

god of i am and of course the future but the present is ours what we have what we are today and what we have today is what we have now live in that don't live in the past regret for life that's all shadows that's all cloudy it's all mist but the present is clear god's word shines into our heart so live in the present and say lord you are the god who said you i am i want to be in that present and experience you you are my helper you're my the supplier of every need you're my comforter i want to claim you as you are then we should prevent situations which we might regret later on you know like if you're having an argument with somebody or we're having a trying to convince our children especially when they're in the teenage and we want to convince them and we keep on talking we might do as say some things that we'll regret about so try avoiding try to avoid such situations especially if they are adults i remember many times when i used to talk to my mom i would say something to her which i really didn't mean and afterwards i regretted and i thought i should not have said that but one time i got a chance to tell a few things to her and say mom i really didn't mean it you know i'm your daughter my tongue says things like that i really didn't mean it i'm really sorry well sometimes it's good for us to take heed and avoid things that can lead to situations like that then as i said we should run the race looking unto jesus and hold on to the promises and don't forget the anchor the two sides of the anchor the two ends of the anchor that god never forgets us and he doesn't remember our past and past sins and inequities and then philippians 3 13 one thing i do forgetting what is behind i run i run the race looking unto jesus and with the power of the holy spirit because only the lord can give us that strength and ability it's a divine virtue to be able to get rid of our past and look forward to the future may god bless us

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