

Living With The Consequences Of My Sin/Living In God's Grace

Acceptance and Serenity - Lesson 4

Philippians 3:13-14 – Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 118:24 – This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Our secrets will no longer bind us in shame. As we gain the ability to forgive our families, the world, and ourselves our choices will expand. – Al-Anon, *From Survival to Recovery*

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. – *Alcoholics Anonymous, "Into Action"*

During Christmas and other holidays it's easy to get into an "if only" state of mind: "If only I hadn't screwed up, I'd be celebrating Christmas with my family;" "If only I'd stayed sober I'd still have that good job and I'd have been able to buy decent presents for the kids." But the Bible's message of grace makes it clear: Your sin doesn't control what happens in your life, God's love does, and you'll see his loving plans unfolding in the situation you're in right now (not the situation you would have been in if you hadn't messed up).

- What is helping you to look without regrets at the ways you've messed up?
- Even though you hadn't planned on being in the situation you're in, how have you seen God's plans work out in this situation?
- Sometimes the hardest person to forgive is you. How is God helping you to be aware of your sins and still live in forgiveness?
- A man in jail over Christmas once said, "You know, this has actually been my best Christmas ever." Have you seen that sort of thing happen in your life?