

Stuck in the Past

Part 5 of the *Stuck* series

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Being stuck in the past is a problem because...

- It robs you of the opportunity to enjoy the present.
- It holds you back from the opportunity to discover the future.

Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: "I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions." Samuel was angry, and he cried out to the Lord all that night.

1 Samuel 15:10-11

Samuel left for Ramah, but Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. Until the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him.

1 Samuel 15:34-35

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel?"

1 Samuel 16:1

Some of the ways we can get stuck in the past:

- Longing to relive the "glory days".
- Holding on to unforgiveness. (Matt 18:34-35)
- Carrying regret.
- Mourning a loss. (Eccles 3:1,4)

The process of moving on from the past...

- Don't avoid the pain; instead, turn and face it.
- Be patient while waiting in the confusing in-between.
- Let the old give birth to the new in God's time.

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

1 Samuel 16:1

Don't let the old things, even the good things, hold you back from God's best things for your life.

Next Steps

Pray this prayer: *Father in heaven, when I think about the past, I feel ______. There is pain and I don't know why you have allowed it. You know that everything in me wants to resist and stay with what's familiar and safe. I ask that you would give me the courage to let go where I need to let go so that you can birth something new in me. Thank you that with you by my side, I can get unstuck from the past and be on my way into the future you have in store for me. In Jesus' name, amen.*

Take some time to answer the following questions with your spouse, children, or small group...

- If you could go back and relive any moment from your past, what would that be (*not including marriage, kid's birth, or conversion*)?
- Read through the list of ways we get stuck in the past. Can you relate to any of these? Explain. Why do you think you're stuck in this area of the past? How might life be different if you were unstuck? Where are you in the process of moving on from the past (see *sermon notes*)?
- Read 1 Samuel 16:1. What would Samuel and the nation of Israel have missed out on if Samuel had stayed stuck mourning the past?
- How can we pray for you?