

LETTING GO

But Not Giving Up

(Hebrews 12:1b)

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There's this story of the man who was hiking alone in the mountains when he slipped and fell off a cliff.

The only thing that kept him from plunging to his death down a deep gorge was a tree growing from the side of the cliff.

As he fell, the hiker grabbed a limb and hung on for dear life.

Clinging tightly to the tree limb, the man began shouting desperately, hoping that someone might be coming along the trail behind him. **"Help! Help! Is there anyone up there?"** But no answer came back.

Finally, as he neared exhaustion, and his grip on the tree limb began to weaken, the hiker yelled again in total desperation, **"Is there**

anyone up there?" This time, a booming voice answered, **"Yes, I'm here."**

The hiker was elated. "This is great! *Who are you?*" *"It's the Lord."* *"Oh, thank You, Lord!"* the hiker gasped. *"What do you want me to do?"* *"Let go, and I'll catch you."*

But the terrified hiker was too afraid to let go of the limb. So, he cried out again, *"Is there anyone up there?"* The Lord answered again, *"I said, let go of the limb, and I'll save you."*

But the hiker couldn't bring himself to let go of the only piece of security he thought he had. So, after thinking about it for a minute, he shouted, *"Is there anyone else up there?"*

This person is like a lot of real-life Christians who are clinging desperately to all

manner of emotional security blankets.

We think these things we hold on to are what we need, whereas, they are depriving us of the saving we need.

This is what the writer of **Hebrews** talks about in **chapter 12:1**. He is describing the race of faith and mentions two things that will drag us back.

Our focus today is on the first thing he mentioned – *Lay aside every weight*. In other words, **Let go of these weights**.

Most times, the reason we find it difficult to let go of this baggage is because we confuse **Letting Go** with **Giving Up**.

Like the hiker, he felt if he let go, he may have given up on life and he will die. Also, we feel if we let go of these things we hold so dear, we may have given up on some basic things of life.

When Jesus told his disciples to leave your businesses, father, and mother; and come, follow Him, He was not literally

saying their families are not important.

But He passed a message that to go forward in life, we must learn to let go of things that may draw us back.

It didn't mean they had given up on their families. But it meant their families could become a weight that will pull them back.

And they had to let go in order to fulfill their calling. And truly **LETTING GO** is a better formula for living.

It is important for us to understand the difference between **Letting Go** and **Giving Up**.

Letting Go has to do with your frame of mind. When you let go of something, you are making a conscious decision coming from a place of acceptance (**Hebrews 12:1**).

But when you give up, there comes a sense of defeat or resignation (**Galatians 6:9**).

Letting Go involves releasing control of a situation. You still have a vested interest in the

outcome, but you release that outcome to God.

When you give up, you release your hope in the situation and no longer care how it turns out.

When you let go of something, there is often a sense of freedom attached to it and it gives peace.

On the other hand, when you give up, there is a sense of failure attached to it and brings with it, shame and sadness.

Letting Go makes one usually think about what is ahead. People who give up may be stuck looking behind.

It becomes difficult to move ahead because they often wrestle with their decision to give up.

Let us take a look at several key areas of our lives that we need to let go.

And also understanding that letting go of such situations doesn't mean we have given up on them.

LETTING GO OF YOUR PAST

Sometimes, we find ourselves in the present, but living in the past.

Some of us have been affected by things we never expected, such as the death of our loved ones. And we often cannot let go of that grief, the pain, and the regrets.

- But we must let go of them. It doesn't mean you didn't love them. It doesn't mean you have given up on them.
- Letting go of the hurts doesn't mean you have betrayed the feelings you once shared. It doesn't mean you have forgotten them. You did not give up on them, you only moved on.
- Moving on is not always betrayal. Moving on is not giving up.
- Some of us have become so twined with our past grief that we have fallen into Functional Depression – A state where we mask

depression in a functional state.

- For some, it is the failures that we cannot forget. They haunt us day and night. We feel like the worst persons on earth. You must stop. Let go of the burden of that failure you are carrying. It doesn't mean you have given up on your journey (*Proverbs 24:16a*).
- It doesn't mean you have not learnt your lesson. It actually means you are ready to try again.
- Some of us lack the right orientation to deal with failure. We have not dealt with a lot of failures that are holding us back.
- Some of us have failed in ministry, let it go. Try again. It doesn't mean you have given up on your calling.
- Some have failed in academics. Let it go. Try again. It doesn't mean you have given up on education.

- Some have failed in relationships. Let it go. Don't let your past issues eat you up while you still live. It is holding you back from truly succeeding. Forgive yourself. Let it go. Try again.

LETTING GO OF YOUR PURSUIT FOR THINGS

People around us are chasing after the good things in life.

And many don't know when they have enough—they are constantly grasping for more.

Joy does not result from prosperity. It is an inner quality that springs from our hearts, not our circumstances.

A writer, Paul Tripp, tells about an experience during his doctoral studies.

He worked part-time jobs to pay his bills and his tuition. He was hired to work as a gardener on an estate.

Here's what happened one day, in Tripp's own words.

"It was obvious what was happening, but not to him. What he was trying to do would never work. I was his gardener, and I was at the base of his property, near the entrance, when he drove in with yet another new car. I had seen him do this same thing again and again. In fact, he was quickly running out of room. As he hopped out of his expensive new toy, he asked me what I thought. I said, 'I don't think it's working.' He said, 'I don't know what you're talking about, it's a brand-new car.' I said, 'I think what you're trying to do will never work.' He said, 'I have no idea what you're trying to say to me.' I asked, 'How many cars is it going to take before you realize that an automobile has no capacity whatsoever to satisfy your heart?' Disappointed, he said, 'Boy, you're raining on my parade.'"

- There is nothing wrong with aspiring to be great. But there is everything wrong with pursuing money at all costs. Some of us have become so

vested in our businesses and jobs that they have become a weight that draw us back. We no longer have time for God. We make our decisions considering our businesses first.

- Some are seeking for public validation. We want to become popular and rich so we blend with the world's demands. Stop. Let go of that pursuit. It doesn't mean you have given up on success and financial settlement. The danger of not letting this go is when you get to the cliff top.
- Life has two extremes that can take away the soul of a man. When we hit rock bottom and when we reach the cliff top. Both are dangerous and it only takes the grace of God to come out of them.
- Pray you don't get to hit rock bottom. But pray harder you never reach the cliff top.

- The cliff top is the height of fame and money. The cliff top is where you have gotten the things you thought would give you happiness but you are still sad. ***Micah 6:14***
- The cliff top is lonely. When you don't let go of your pursuit for things, you will end up at the cliff top. Let it go now. It doesn't mean you have given up on fulfilling your dreams.

LETTING GO OF WRONG RELATIONSHIPS

Not all relationships are bound to stick. The problem is that we want to force things.

Truth is, any friendship that didn't stand the test of time, must have displayed its red flags.

But when we are lost in love and our pursuit for a sense of belonging, we ignore these red flags and try to force relationships to work.

It is okay to let some people go. It is okay to let that relationship go. It doesn't

mean you have given up on the person. It doesn't mean you have given up on love. It doesn't mean you have given up on friendship.

It means you understand that two cannot work together except they agree. ***Amos 3:3.***

- You find yourself in a toxic relationship, let it go. You have not given up on love or the person. You find yourself in a manipulative relationship, let it go. It is a weight that is drawing you back.
- Sometimes you may even invest in people, try to mentor people to, try to help people, but they will reciprocate in a devastating way. They may even attack you. And you will become sad and weary because it doesn't make sense. You begin to wonder how helping people or investing in their lives became antagonistic.
- Know this; some people don't need help. Or put it

this way, not everyone wants you to help them. You will try all you can, but they will respond in a negative way to whatever you are doing for them. It's okay to let that relationship go. You are not giving up on them. You are actually helping them.

LETTING GO OF CONTROL

This is a critical weight we often find difficult to let go. This is because it is in the nature of man to want to control things.

We like to have the final say on how things should go. But letting go of control does not mean you have given up on that problem.

It does not mean you have given up on trying. God only wants you to understand that you can do nothing on your own.

You have to let Him work. We have many unanswered prayers because we have refused to release control.

- To release control, you must go to the place of

prayer. It is in the place of prayer you learn of God.

- When you release control in the place of prayer, God reduces you to nothing so he can make you somebody.
- When you release control in the place of prayer, you become spiritually free to tell God how you feel. You become bare before God. You will be open to Him. You will discover you can tell him about your doubts of His promises to you. ***Hab. 1:2 - 4, Matt. 27:46.***

God has so much to offer us, but if we are already full of ourselves or the things of this world, then we have no room to receive what God has to offer.

In fact, we may be so satisfied with what we have that we don't even feel the need for anything else.

CONCLUSION

There is blessing in letting go. It is never easy to do.

And it is a daily decision, not just once for all. But it is God's way to a fuller and more blessed life.

It is God's formula to a more enriched and purposeful life.

Remember in the Christian race and the race of life, there are many baggage that can hold you back.

They may seem like what is keeping you going, but it is a lie. They are dragging you back without knowing.

Do not be afraid to make those big bold decisions. You can let them go. It really doesn't mean you have given up. It means you are ready to move forward.

May God help us to let go of the weight that draws us back in Jesus Name. Amen.