

LETTING GO OF PAST PAINS

Awhile ago I got caught up looking at my past – things like my traumatic childhood and my experience with psychosis. At first it was kind of interesting to look back and see where the anxieties that had been plaguing me had come from. Anxieties had been causing some big and – even embarrassing problems. I found myself hurting all over again. I felt like the little child I used to be, and I even behaved a bit like one.

- How do you feel when you think back to your past? Did you have a good childhood or was it traumatic?
- How has your past affected who you are today?

There is great value in looking back. Psychologists have us do that all the time to help us see what has made us into the people we've become. We look back to learn.

In *The Sacred Journey*, Frederick Buechner writes, "it is mainly for some clue to where I am going that I search through where I've been; for some hint as to who I am becoming or failing to become that I delve into what used to be." Looking back is good if it carries with it a positive purpose.

- Can you too forget the past and reach for what God has in store for you?
- What can you learn from your past and use to create a better future?

God isn't concerned with who we were or what we did in the past. The important thing to Him is what we do with today and tomorrow.

- Can you see how God has shaped you through your life experiences?
- ...Or are you having trouble seeing that? Why?
- Can you think of a way you can live for today and tomorrow?