

No Regrets

Psalm 37:5,6

"If only..."

These may be the two most paralyzing words in the English language. Yet they're words we've all spoken; some of us may speak them quite often. One of the most common times we fall into the trap of regret that this phrase represents is when we've experienced a difficult loss. We become estranged from a friend, then wonder, "If only I'd been more supportive or encouraging." Our job is cut and we lament, "If only I'd taken that other job instead." A precious loved one falls ill and passes away, and we ask ourselves, "What if I'd just seen the symptoms earlier?"

Regrets like these can form a vicious, destructive cycle. Our focus on what we wish we'd done differently leaves us hesitant to face the challenges of today. And the weight of our remorse makes it difficult to recognize all the great things God has in store for us in the future.

The Psalmist had the right perspective in Psalm 37:5,6, when he encouraged God's people with a simple exhortation of trust in the Lord.

Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

Feelings of regret and guilt are common when we've experienced a difficult loss in our lives. In fact, working through these feelings is often necessary in dealing with the crisis. But we must never lose sight of this one marvelous truth, this perfect hope: We can trust God; we can trust Him enough to commit even the most difficult and painful experiences of our lives to His care.

Life is filled with "what if's." It's always easy to assume that the road unseen must somehow be better than the hard road we've travelled. But when we've placed our lives in God's hands, we can rest assured that the path He lays before us will be filled with blessings beyond what we could ever experience on our own. It may seem dark now, but as we rest in the Lord, the day is coming when our "righteousness [will] shine like the dawn" (verse 5).

Are you ever haunted by feelings of regret over a loss you've experienced in the past? Explain?

Why will committing your ways to the Lord, as described in Psalm 37, help you overcome the burden and consequences of this regret?

What steps do you need to take, if any, to commit this burden of regret completely to the Lord?