

# THE PROCLAMATION

PROCLAIMING LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES... ISAIAH 61:1



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 CrossWay Fellowship  
Church

[www.crosswayfellowshipchurch.org](http://www.crosswayfellowshipchurch.org)



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Hello everyone!

Tick tock, tick tock. A sound we are all too familiar with. We have all made the comments, “there is not enough time in the day” or “where did the time go” or my favorite “time flies when you’re having fun.” As days come and go we tend to look at it in a negative light. We see more gray hair and wrinkles and wish we could make time stand still. But in this message you will see that every new day brings something very special to our lives...brand new mercy, compliments of our Lord Jesus Christ!!

I pray that as we leave another year behind and begin a new one, that each one of us will find ourselves “forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.” (Philippians 3:13)

In Christ’s love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Walton".

Pastor Dennis Walton

Come worship with us!

- Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
- Sunday morning worship 10:50 a.m.  
(Children’s Church provided)  
(Nursery provided)
- Sunday evening worship 6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday worship/Bible study 7:00 p.m.  
(Youth classes of all ages provided)

# “Yesterday Ended at Midnight”

Have you ever been sound asleep in your bed and suddenly wake up because you sense someone is staring at you? For me and my wife it's usually our ten year old son shining a flash light in our face. Then when we pry our heavy eyes open just enough that the blinding light sends our pupils into shock, he asks the question, “are you awake?” At that point I don't care if he did just see Sasquatch outside his window I just want him to get out of my face with that spotlight. You can see how that is not a pleasant way to start your day.

So here's another scenario. Have you ever woke up in the morning only to have all the pains, heartbreaks, disappointments, failures, and mistakes of yesterday instantly invade your thoughts? Like an “in your face” wake up call, yesterday has you dreading today before your feet ever touch the floor. Do you think to yourself, “I just don't have the strength to re-live all of that again?” Well I have fantastic news for you. Yesterday ended at midnight!

Midnight officially closes out one day and ushers in a brand new one every twenty-four hours. As I type this it is December 3, 2012, which means that yesterday was December 2, 2012. Think about it. There will never be another December 2, 2012 again. It is over. And so is everything that happened in it. Its pains, failures, and heartaches are all over. And therefore, today has a lot of potential. Each day I have two choices. I can either approach today with anticipation that I will be renewed and my life put back on course. Or I can just throw my hands up, drop my bottom lip, and sag my shoulders with the attitude that today will just be more of the same. The only part of yesterday that can haunt you today is the part that you continue to dwell on.

Some of you may remember the old song “*One day at a time*”. One of the lines says, “yesterday is gone... and tomorrow may never be mine.” That is so true. There is no way to get yesterday back and I may never see tomorrow. That means that the only day that matters is today. The song goes on to say, “one day at a time sweet Jesus, that's all I'm asking from

you.” Well here's the good news. That's all He's asking of us too! That we live for Him one day at a time. He has never brow beat someone because of their yesterday and he has never expected them to sit and wring their hands worrying about tomorrow. He died on that cross so that we might say, **“This is the day that the Lord has made, I will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalms 118:24)**

Let me ask you a theological question. Why are you not dead yet? According to the Bible the payment for your sin is death. You know you have sinned so why aren't you dead and in Hell right now? The answer is found in **Lamentations 3:22-23**. **“It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning...”** Please excuse me for a second while I shout!!!!!!! You're not dead and in hell right now because when the clock struck midnight God offered you a fresh batch of mercy! And He does it every day! Every morning His mercy is new and He does not hold yesterday against us if we have repented and forsaken our sin. So if He is not hung up on your yesterday, then why are you? I like the way Max Lucado puts it: “you could empty the Pacific Ocean using a thimble before you could empty out God's love for you.”

One of the most amazing things about the human body is its ability to heal itself. If you cut yourself, give it several days and the skin will grow back together. In time you won't even remember that injury. If you fall and break your arm, God designed your body to weld the bone back together in about six weeks. What great wisdom God had when he created us! If he would not have created our bodies to heal then we would be a broken, bloody mess forever. Think about it. Remember the first time you wiped out on your bicycle pretending to be Evel Knievel? That skinned knee would still be bleeding today, 30 years later. And every cut, scrape, and scratch since then. Your body would look like hamburger. Or what about the broken leg you got playing football, pretending to be Jerry Rice? It would

still be broken today, 30 years later. And every broken bone since then would leave you walking like the Scarecrow on the Wizard of Oz.

It wasn't God's plan to leave us broken and wounded so he heals us from the pains of yesterday. And not just physical wounds, but emotional wounds, mental wounds, and spiritual wounds as well. There is absolutely no pain caused by yesterday that God's grace cannot heal you of today!

Let's take a closer look at a familiar story we read about in **Acts 16:22-26**. Paul and Silas were great men of God that had been thrown into prison for preaching about Jesus. Their bare backs were beaten bloody, they were chained up hands and feet, and then they were locked up in the coldest, darkest dungeon in the prison. Now this was the perfect recipe for a full-fledged pity party. Most of us would have whined and griped and spent hours asking God why He let this happen to us. But Paul and Silas did not. What did they do? They had church! They began to sing praises unto God. They turned that jail cell into a sanctuary. We have the luxury of reading the whole story so we know how it turns out. We know God caused an earthquake that snapped their chains off like they were made out of Laffy Taffy. But they didn't know that was going to happen. For all they knew they would die in that prison. But they praised God anyway. And did you notice what time it was when they prayed and sang? It was at MIDNIGHT! Why didn't they sing at 10:00 or 11:00 or 11:30? Why did they sing at midnight? I can just see them sitting there with their heads, feet, and arms in the stockade when they hear the faint sound of a bell ringing from outside in the courtyard, announcing the midnight hour. Paul whispers to Silas, “hey buddy, you know what that means don't ya?” Silas says, “yep, I sure do. Yesterday was a rough day for us but it is officially over. It's a new day!” The new day brought something to those guys that each new day still brings to us today...hope. The Bible says that faith is the substance of things hoped for. Hope always goes forward, never backwards. Would it make sense to

say, "I hope that I wouldn't have made that mistake yesterday?" Of course not, that's dumb. We usually say things like, "I wish I would have...I wish I wouldn't have..." Wishing we would have done things differently in the past is a waste of time. We can definitely learn from the mistakes of yesterday but we can never go back and change them. At midnight wishes die and hope revives.

If Paul and Silas would have decided to lay there on that cold, dirty cell floor and relive the agony of yesterday over and over again, wishing they would have done things differently, they would have never left that prison. But they refused to let yesterday determine what today was going to be like.

I hope this is sinking in to some of you that may be desperately clutched in yesterday's death grip. I believe there is a lesson in this story that can change your life if you will grab hold of its message. Your past can become a prison to you and the longer you dwell on it the longer it will hold you captive. Refuse to let yesterday determine what today will be like. If you'll turn loose of yesterday then yesterday will turn loose of you. Then embrace today and hold on to hope!

This past year we all enjoyed the highly anticipated Summer Olympics. The talent that those athletes have is absolutely amazing to say the least and they never fail to captivate us. But there is one important lesson they must learn before they can be successful and win the gold. As I was watching the gymnastic teams do all their twisty twirly flippy floppy high flying tricks, one of the girls made a boo boo. She flopped when she should have flipped. Her response was remarkable. She immediately jumped back up and continued her routine. Her face was like stone with determination. You couldn't have broken her concentration with a bull horn. It was like she didn't even know she messed up. The remainder of her routine was flawless. Most people would have crumbled to pieces having made a mistake like that with the whole world watching. How did she finish so well after having messed up like that? It was because she was properly trained to focus on the remainder of the

routine, and not keep thinking back to the mistake. What do you think would have happened if she would have kept dwelling on the mistake she just made? You guessed it. It would have snowballed. One mistake would have led to another, which would have led to another, which would have led to another. That could really be a bad deal for a gymnast, especially on the uneven bars. One too many mistakes in that routine and she could sling herself out into the bleachers. Yelling, as she tomahawks across the room, "I can't believe I messed uuuuuuuup!"

If only we could learn to apply that lesson in life. Just because we mess up doesn't mean life is over. We still have a lot of routine left. You still have a life to live, a family to raise, a job to do, a God to glorify. The more we focus on the mistakes of yesterday the more we suck the joy out of our lives and those we love. Let me encourage you here. No matter how bad you have screwed up in the past, you can still finish well!!

As I type this I am looking at a tape dispenser that is sitting on my desk. You know as well as I do that when it comes to dealing with Scotch tape, it's a disaster waiting to happen. That stuff gets all tangled up the more you mess with it. One side sticks to the other and by the time you get it untangled, the other side is all wadded up. It gives me a headache just thinking about having to wrap Sweetie's Christmas presents in the next week or two. I usually start out my present wrapping endeavor with the Christmas cheer of Don Cratchett and by the time I'm done messing with all that Scotch tape I'm cursing Christmas like Ebenezer Scrooge. But I'm finally learning after all these years that, rather than waste 20 minutes trying to fix the tape knot, it's better to just tear it off, throw it away, and start over. (*Oh think of all the headaches that would have saved me if I would have figured that out in Elementary School!*) The point to my simple minded little story here is that I want you to see that this is exactly how God handles our sin. He doesn't expect us to somehow undo all our past mistakes. That would be a hopeless and impossible task. Through the blood of Jesus Christ He just rips them off, throws them away, and lets us start over.

Do you ever feel like you are the only passenger on the train of regret? Or have you ever looked at a Godly person in your life, or read about a hero of faith in the Bible, and thought to yourself, "I wish I could be like them." Take Moses for example. When we think of Moses we automatically think of his victories, like when God used him to part the Red Sea, or when he hit the rock and water gushed out, or the thunder and lightning of Mt. Carmel when God personally handed the Ten Commandments to him. A guy like that couldn't possibly have any regret, right? Wrong! What we fail to realize is that the people we consider to be spiritual giants have had major failures and disappointments just like we have. They know very well the pain of regret. The difference is that they overcame it by forgetting yesterday and trusting God today.

Since we are on the topic of Moses let's take a look at **Acts 7:20-36** where we read a brief recap of his life. One day Moses saw an Egyptian beating up a Hebrew so he stepped in to help the Hebrew man, killing the Egyptian in the process. So he buried the Egyptian in the sand, hoping nobody saw. The next day he saw two Hebrew men fighting and he stepped in to break up the fight and make peace between them. The men said to Moses, "who are you to judge us? Will you kill me like you did that Egyptian yesterday?" Ouch! Talk about a brick to the forehead! The mistake of yesterday that he thought was behind him was now staring him in the face once again. So what did he do? He did what many people are still doing today. He ran. Rather than face yesterday, he ran from it. He went to a far away country and hid for forty years. Forty years! I wonder how many people reading this Proclamation right now can relate to that. You are still, after all these years, running from the pains of the past. You have believed the lie that you'll never have peace about your past and that you will be crippled by it the rest of your life. Well that wasn't the case with Moses and it's not the case with you! God spoke to Moses from a burning bush and yanked him out of the despair of yesterday and thrust him into a wonderful future. Once he was willing to come out of

hiding and move on with his life, he found out that his best days were ahead of him. Only then did he get to experience the amazing miracle at the Red Sea. And right now I am your burning bush. God is speaking to you right now to encourage you to let go of yesterday. It is a new day and your best days are ahead of you! Take it from a guy that has some pretty dark yesterdays in his past. There was a time in my life that I thought I would never have victory over my mistakes. But I can honestly say that God has delivered me and given me direction and vision for my future that gives me the strength for each new day. Moses was no better than you and neither am I. We just trusted God to help us overcome yesterday, and you can too!

I'm going to leave you with these last scriptures that explain how David learned this valuable lesson that I am trying to teach you. The whole story of his failure is told in **II Samuel 11 and 12** but let me summarize it by saying it was a doozy. The nutshell is that he committed adultery and then tried to cover the whole thing up by having the woman's husband killed. You talk about being haunted by yesterday, now David was. Every spark of joy was drained from his life. None of his past times brought him pleasure anymore. Making money just left him feeling empty. When he spent time with his new wife all he could think about was how he had her husband murdered. The peace he once had with God was now just a distant memory. He never went to church because all he felt was conviction and he withdrew himself from his spiritual friends because being around people who were living in obedience to God made him feel like scum. His mistakes of yesterday absolutely made his life miserable and he writes about it in **Psalm 51:3, "my sin is ever before me..."** Can you relate?

But the good news for David and you and me is that when he truly repented for his sins and asked God for forgiveness, he received some of that "new mercy" we talked about at the beginning of this message. God said to David in **II Samuel 12:13, "The Lord has put away your sin, you will not die."**

Right now if you are not saved, you have the sentence of death upon you. Your yesterday may be bad

but your tomorrow is going to be much worse. But God wants more than anything to "put your sin away so that you will not die." He wants to help you leave yesterday behind and become a new creature. If you will stop living life your way and start living it God's way, then today can be much better than yesterday and tomorrow can be even better than today, but eternal life is going to be awesome!!

(You may also listen to this sermon, as well as other sermons, at our website, [www.crosswayfellowshipchurch.org](http://www.crosswayfellowshipchurch.org))

# Decision Time

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Life is full of decisions. We make them every day. But this decision is the most important one of your life. Whether God accepts you or rejects you will depend on whether you decide to accept or reject Jesus Christ.

You surely can admit that you have sinned in your life. We all have. And nature itself teaches you that there is a price to pay for your sins. If you commit a crime, you will pay the penalty for it with a fine, jail time, or even the death penalty. By disobeying God's law, we have all sentenced ourselves to death. But God loves us so much that He doesn't want us to die in our sins and spend eternity paying the penalty in Hell. Therefore, He sent His Son, Jesus, to pay the price for our sins so that we might be saved.

Imagine it like this. Let's say you commit a crime and are sentenced to die in the electric chair. But just as they are about to throw the switch, someone swings the door open and yells, "stop!" To your amazement, the person standing in the door way says, "let him go and I'll take his place." So the warden unlatches the straps, stands you on your feet, and lets you walk out the door. Then he sits the other person in the chair, straps him down, and throws the switch. That is what Jesus did for you and me when He died on the cross.

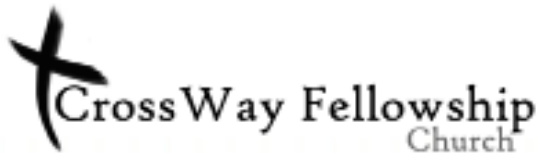
So now the question is, what are you going to do about it? Are you going to reject Jesus now and pay the penalty yourself on judgment day, or are you going to accept Jesus now and let his sacrifice on the cross pay your penalty for you?

If you will humble yourself and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, repent of your sins, and commit your life to serving Him only, then He will save you from your sins and write your name in Heaven. It will be the best decision of your life! Then get involved in a good Bible believing church where you can be baptized, learn the Word of God, and grow as a Christian.

Folks I'm nothing. I'm just a sinner saved by the grace of God. And my whole purpose in printing The Proclamation is to help you find what I have found...God's love is so sweet!



# Check us out on the web at [www.crosswayfellowshipchurch.org](http://www.crosswayfellowshipchurch.org)



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## Welcome

Founded in February, 2007, CrossWay Fellowship is an independent, non-denominational church located in Willow Springs, Missouri.

We would love to have you come and worship with us! Check our [about](#) page for more information about who we are, what we believe, and what times and days you can join us for worship. Until then, please listen to Pastor Dennis' sermons, updated weekly, [here](#).

## Contact Us

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Pastor Dennis Walton at [dennis@crosswayfellowshipchurch.org](mailto:dennis@crosswayfellowshipchurch.org).

## What's New

Continuing on last week's message, today's sermon is titled "[Unanswered Prayers Part II](#)". As Dennis pointed out last week, God's answer to our prayers is often "wait."

This week, Dennis encourages us during our period of waiting. If you missed the sermon last week, be sure to listen to Part I as well!

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