



# TODD LEVIN MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

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A monthly teaching publication to our partners and friends

## THE GOD OF A SECOND CHANCE

Dear Partners and Friends,

I have a word from the Lord for you today, “**God is the God of a second chance!**” Don’t let the enemy continue to hit you over the head with past failures and shortcomings. Nobody is perfect. “**All have sinned and come short of God’s glory.**” (**Romans 3:23**) Though satan may try and keep you down, discouraged or even confused at times, he is still the eternally defeated one. He seems to remember things out of convenience, i.e. whenever he wants to use it against you. Have you ever noticed that? My goodness if satan would take one good look at himself in the mirror, he’d realize he has no room to talk. After all, look where he ends up – in the lake of fire. Imagine your adversary with this huge old trophy displayed in a glass case before all of his demons in Hell and on it is written, “Satan – the Eternally Defeated One.” So friend, when the enemy reminds you of your past, remind him of his future!

Christians do stumble and fall at times and have found it difficult to get back up on their feet again. They’ve asked God for forgiveness only to find themselves right back in the same dilemma. “Will I ever get out of this rut?” “Will things ever change?” “How can I break this habit?” “Can God ever use me again?” “Will God forgive me for robbing him?” These are only a few questions that have haunted some people for months and even years. You may have wondered, “How can I be all that God has called me to be? I still have problems with anger, unforgiveness, money or even immorality.”

Perhaps you have just come through a troubling time in the area of finances, marriage or even health matters. The enemy would love to discourage you and tell you that, “**God’s Word doesn’t work – at least not for you.**” You’ve laid hands on the sick and prayed but nothing much happened. You’ve prayed for financial breakthrough only to find out the next day that you lost your job. Every time you make a decision to walk in love and forgiveness towards your wife, husband or even next-door neighbor, the challenge arises and the flesh wins. You may have asked yourself, “What is it going to take to get the victory over this area (health, finances, attitude, habit) and then keep the victory?” Feeling disappointed or discouraged in life, what should one do?”

Jesus stated in **John 8:44**, that the devil is the father of all lies. The fact of the matter is though God’s Word is true, people don’t always know how to *get the Word to work* in their own

life and get the results they need. When it's all said and done, it appears that their faith didn't get the job done, and once again they find themselves on the ground having lost another round.

The Word of God states in **Proverbs 24:15,16**, reading from the Living translation:

*“O evil man, leave the upright man alone and quit trying to cheat him out of his rights. Don't you know that this good man, though you trip him up seven times, will each time rise again?”*

Notice he said that the upright, or just man will **“rise again.”** As you are reading this you may not feel like rising back up due to condemnation, guilt, inferiority and past failures. But remember, **“God is the God of a second chance!”** And you know what? Not only is He the God of a second chance, He's also the God of a third chance, and a fourth chance, etc. If you didn't get the victory in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, stay in there until you do. Remember, the battle is the Lord's but the victory is yours. You can do it! Not in your own strength, but through Christ's!

*“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”*

**Philippians 4:13**

*“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.”*

**II Corinthians 2:14**

Friends, you can take God's Word to the bank. Don't ask your feelings if God still loves you; if God has forgiven you; or if God is still with you. The Word tells us that God's nature is love and He hasn't changed. (**I John 4:8; Malachi 3:6**) So regardless of how you feel or what you have done, God still loves you. You are going to make it!

Charles Spurgeon was driving one day past a farm, and he saw a weather vane with these words, "God is love." It caught his attention and he started to drive by but then decided that he was going to ask the meaning of it. Charles asked the farmer, "Do you mean that God's love changes like the weather changes?" Ah no sir. What we mean is that whichever way the wind blows, God is still love. Hallelujah! God's unchanging, never-ending love is reaching out to you right now where you are!

In studying the life of Paul before he was saved, we can see that this man caused serious harm to Christians by persecuting and helping to imprison them. (**Philippians 3:6**) Paul later referred to himself as the “chief of sinners.” If anyone could have had an inferiority complex because of his past, it would have been Paul. Thank God He was given another chance.

*“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”*

**1 Timothy 1:15**

Let me take a little side journey for a minute. In looking back over Paul's life, at both the good and the bad, Paul recognized the one thing that would help him reach his full potential in Christ. He made a decision in spite of all that was said and done, that He was determined to finish his course. Notice what he said:

*“But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”*

**Philippians 3:14**

### ***KEEP PRESSING ON***

“Forgetting the past and pressing on ahead” is what will make a difference in your life. Sometimes there is a tendency to live in the past and not to let go. Have you ever found yourself holding on to the past? It’s one thing to **remember** your past, and a different story to **live** in your past. Let’s thank God for the “*good old days*” and the “*good old times*,” but then let’s move on. If you live your life out of a rear-view mirror, you’ll never get very far will you? God’s plan for you has a future. The Gospel is about your future, not your past.

*“For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”*

**Jeremiah 29:11 (Living)**

Some people do not want to leave their past. They like it the way it used to be. “I think the church was better off when so and so was the pastor.” “I think the praise and worship was better when so and so was leading.” “I was born in this house and I will die in this house! I’m not going anywhere.” Then of course there was Lot’s wife who didn’t want to leave her past and move on. Unfortunately because she looked back at her past, she ended up staying in her past. She missed what God had planned for her future. The choice was hers. She chose her own destiny. Some say that Lot had marriage problems and as they were leaving Sodom, he said, “Honey, did you turn off the lights before we left.” Of course she turned around to check and the rest is history...

One thing we need to remember is that change is necessary in order to move forward in God’s plan for our lives. I didn’t say it is always welcomed, but it is necessary.

Then there are those who are thrilled to leave their past. As we’ve mentioned about Paul, He said, “*This one thing I do (make a point of), forgetting what was behind, and pressing forward to what is ahead.*” I’m sure Lazarus was thrilled to have a second chance in life. Peter having denied the Lord publicly three times and overtaken with guilt was surely thankful when the Lord had forgiven him and then used him in the first outpouring of the Holy Ghost in Acts chapter two to reap a harvest of souls for the Kingdom. It’s not so much what you have done that counts, but what you are becoming.

*“But we Christians have no veil over our faces; we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him.”*

**2 Corinthians 3:18 (Living)**

I don't know about you, but I'm very interested in my future. I already know where I've come from, but I'm more excited about where the Lord is taking me to. My eyes are wide open. My heart is receptive. I have ears to hear what the Spirit of God is saying. I cannot afford to live in my past at the expense of my future, and neither can you! If you wish you had another chance in life, in God, in ministry, in marriage, then take it right now. **He is the God of a second chance!**

In **Mark 10:46-52**, we read about a man by the name of Bartimaeus who was blind.

*“And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, what wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.”*

When Jesus called for blind Bartimaeus to be brought unto him, his future was about to change. When Bartimaeus cast his cloak down he knew never again will I sit here as a blind beggar – Jesus the Healer is about to give me another chance in life as a new man!

In **John** chapter **8** the Pharisees brought unto Jesus a woman that was caught in adultery and were trying to accuse and humiliate her in public. Jesus told them all, *“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.”* Being convicted in their own hearts, they all left one at a time and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

*“When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”*

**John 8:10-11**

**Jesus gave her a brand new start in life! He is the God of a second chance!** Lets take a look at **Philippians 3:10-17** from the Message translation:

*“I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward – to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back. So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us”*

Paul was **determined** to remain focused on his goal. What have you had your eyes on lately? The Holy Ghost instructs us in **Hebrew 12:2** that we should be, *“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”* Have you been looking in the right direction? Because the Lord is ever present to help in time of need. He is reaching out where you are right now to strengthen you, to heal you, to forgive you and comfort you. God's Word promises us that:

*“For He (God) Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. (I will) not, (I will) not, (I will) not in any degree leave you helpless nor forsake nor let (you) down (relax My hold on you)! (Assuredly not!)”*

**Hebrews 13:5 (Amplified)**

*“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.”*

**Jeremiah 33:3**

Maybe you feel like you’ve been knocked down this year. The good news is that **you’re not knocked out!** In spite of life’s troubles, knowing the persecution that the Apostle Paul himself had experienced, He still remained focused on the goal – JESUS!

*“ We are handicapped on all sides, but we are never frustrated; we are puzzled, but never in despair. We are persecuted, but we never have to stand it alone: we may be knocked down but we are never knocked out!”*

**II Corinthians 4:8,9 (J.B. Phillips)**

Friend, you are still in the race! You still have purpose! Keep on Keeping on! Press on! **He is the God of a second chance!** Get up off of the ground, come out of the waters of self-pity. Cast off the garment of guilt and condemnation. Know that He has clothed you in His robe of righteousness. You have been accepted in the Beloved! **(Ephesians 1:6)**

In closing, I’d like to share this story with you that I have recently learned about. I’m sure you’ll enjoy it!

*“On a Saturday night several weeks ago, this pastor was working late, and decided to call his wife before he left for home. It was about 10:00 PM, but his wife didn’t answer the phone. The pastor let it ring many times. He thought it was odd that she didn’t answer, but decided to wrap up a few things and try again in a few minutes. When he tried again she answered right away. He asked her why she hadn’t answered before, and she said that it hadn’t rung at their house. They brushed it off as a fluke and went on their merry ways. The following Monday, the pastor received a call at the church office, which was the phone that he’d used that Saturday night. The man that he spoke with wanted to know why he’d called on Saturday night. The pastor couldn’t figure out what the man was talking about. Then the man said, “It rang and rang, but I didn’t answer.” The pastor remembered the mishap and apologized for disturbing him, explaining that he’d intended to call his wife. The man said, “That’s OK. Let me tell you my story. You see, I was planning to commit suicide on Saturday night, but before I did, I prayed, “God if you’re there, and you don’t want me to do this, give me a sign now.” At that point my phone started to ring. I looked at the caller ID, and it said, “Almighty God”. I was afraid to answer!” The reason why it showed on the man’s caller ID that the call came from “Almighty God” is because the church that the pastor attends is called Almighty God Tabernacle!”*

Your Friends and Partners,

*Todd + Eva*

