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## The Joyless Regrets Club

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## The Joyless Regrets Club

One person regrets not having addressed an act of injustice by an employer; another berates herself for backing out of an appointment with a counselor; still another recalls the opportunity he missed when he did not tell another of his love. All of us have missed many opportunities, but we do not have to become members of the Joyless Regrets Club.

In our culture, missed opportunities are often equated with permanent loss; as if there were only one chance to “get it right.” God does not abide by such a dismal rule. A road not taken, a prayer not said, a good deed left undone – these do not put us irrevocably on a lesser path than what we might have traveled. A missed opportunity does not have the power to turn us aside from the greatness we might otherwise have enjoyed. We who have many human limitations are yet made in the image of God, and are the subjects of unlimited opportunities.

Even though some of us have short lives, and others live many years, our human time-keeping is of no relevance in our relationship with God, who is eternal. What are a thousand missed opportunities compared to one “yes” to another, including God, that is wholly authentic and in accord with our humanity? For us who count victories and losses, it is easy to move in the direction of regrets. Yet there is no missed opportunity that can leave us at a disadvantage in our relationship with God. God’s positive orientation towards each of us is absolute and limitless.

Regrets about missed opportunities focus on what **we** have done or not done. If we look to God, we find that there are new or different options that are available in every set of circumstances and in all the possible states of mind and spirit of which we are capable. If we had wandered far, shunning one occasion of grace after another, God was not left behind. God was ahead of us all the way, providing yet another opportunity for us to accept or to reject. Regretting will not bring back a single option, and drains the joy out of life. Looking for the next opportunity allows for a joyful and appropriate dependence upon God’s love for us.