Looking Back
Phil. 3:13

Introduction:
A. This is time of year when people look back and ahead.
   1. Romans named January for Janus (two faces looking in opposite directions)
   2. Business people both review and plan.
B. It is natural and often profitable to look back.
   1. In school, we review books, class work, etc.
   2. In business, we review year for profit, loss, taxes.
   3. In general, we review a day, month, year, lifetime.
C. It is good for Christians to look back at times. (cf. Heb. 10:32).
   1. Not to live in the past.
   2. But to remind us of three basic facts.

Discussion:
I. We Have Reason To Be Thankful.
   A. For being enlightened by the gospel of Christ. (Heb. 10:32)
      1. Without it we would still be in spiritual darkness. (Col. 1:12-14).
      2. Without it we would have no fellowship with God and saints. (1 John 1:7).
   B. For all of God's blessings.
      1. Spiritual (Eph. 1:3).
      2. Temporal. (cf. 1 Tim. 4:4,5; Matt. 6:33)
         b. Beneficial institutions: Home, government, freedom.
   C. For progress of church in Christ. (1 Thess. 1:2,3).
      1. Additions and restorations.
      2. Spiritual progress of many.

II. We Must Not Quit Serving God Now.
   A. We would lose all that we have put into the gospel. (Heb. 10:32-34).
      2. Every act of service and obedience.
      3. Every act of sacrifice and suffering for Christ.
   B. We would quit nearer to salvation than ever before. (Heb. 10:37; Rom. 13:11).
   C. We would lose the promise for which we started—heaven. (Heb. 10:34-39).

III. We Must Not Dwell on The Past.
   A. Past is a good teacher — but must not become a burden. (Phil. 3:12-14).
      1. No need to brood over past failures — correct by repentance. (Rev. 2:5).
      2. No need to gloat over past success — no room to boast. (Luke 17:10).
      3. No way to rely on past virtues to cover present vices. (cf. Ezek. 18:24).
   B. Past must be laid aside for race before us. (Phil. 3:13,14; Heb. 12:1).

Conclusion:
A. The way to improve past is to improve today — today is tomorrow's yesterday.
B. The way to correct past is to obey God today.