

What Might Have Been

"What Might Have Been" by Little Texas

Sure, I think about you now and then
But it's been a long, long time
Well I've got a good life now, I moved on
So when you cross my mind

I try not to think about what might have been
'Cause that was then
And we have taken different roads
We can't go back again
There's no use giving in
And there's no way to know
What might have been

"What might have been." Oddly beautiful song and powerful phrase. No explanation needed. You hear it, and memories begin to flood. Most here have asked the question, in one way or another. You've either witnessed or been a part of broken marriages, families, friendships, and dreams. I was talking with Jordan the other day, trying to sort through things out loud together. She asked me if I struggle with a "what might have been" mindset. Of course, there are always things you'd like to change. I'd like to look at these pictures (in the presentation) without thinking about the division and death that was to come. "What might have been" can haunt you. And regret. Boy, is that rough. We all have regrets. I've seen lovely people struggle with deep regrets. Marriages broken. Friendships fade. Family separated. Churches fracture. I've experienced some myself. This happens, but I'm convinced God doesn't want us to live with a "what might have been" mindset.

Forgiveness:

- **Moses:** Numbers 20:10-13. You know what's really sad - this was the last year of his life. He'd been through so much. Then you think of Deuteronomy 34. I wonder if Moses felt it when he looked across the Jordan into the Promised Land. I'm sure that was hard for Moses, but I really hope he wasn't overcome with a "what might have been" thought. Because he was loved by God. He died and entered the rest.
- **David:** 2 Samuel 12:7-15. This occurred when David was performing his best as a King. You think about the turmoil throughout the rest of his rule. Many bible students have observed David's gift as a King, but failure as a father. Then you read 1 Chronicles 29:26-30. I read that he died at a good age. I hope he experienced a peaceful passing and wasn't overcome with his failures as a husband, father, and King. We all sin. It's wasting my breath to say, just don't think about it, so I'll instead say, don't let it consume you. God has pardoned your iniquities.

What Might Have Been:

- **The Young Ruler:** Mark 10:17-22. This is sad because you see the love Jesus has for Him, and because the man is right there, but walks away. So close, but so far away, as we say. I wonder if

this man ever turned back to Jesus? We know what came between him and Jesus. Why does this happen? You can't even argue that the man couldn't identify the problem. Jesus identified the problem and offered a place by His side, but the man walked away. Sincerely, I hope this man came to his senses and didn't have to regret walking away from what might have been.

- **You:** No Scripture to reference. Your novel is in the making. Listen, there are certain events that we can't change. I don't know if anyone dies without some regret or "what might have been" thoughts. But we can avoid so many if we're willing. I, for example, watched my father regret his choices in marriage. I remember being in his home in 2009. Jordan and I hadn't even been married 2 years. As I entered his house, I found my dad crying on the couch. I looked at him. He was frail and looked much older than his age (59 at the time). Obviously, when asked what was wrong, he talked about how he missed the relationship he had with his sister (which was broken at the time), and in particular, how he missed my mom. At that point, they had been divorced for around 15 years. He said she was his best friend, and the worst thing he ever did to her was to marry her. I get what he meant, and at the time, it seemed sweet and deep. However, as time went on, that statement didn't sit well. I'm not sure if he hadn't learned his lesson or was just overly emotional that day, but the worst thing he did wasn't marry her. The worst thing they did to one another was removing Jesus from the center of their marriage. Had they done so, their marriage could have flourished. Perhaps he would have taken care of himself, our family wouldn't have fractured, and if he still died early in life, he would have done so with his wife by his side. Do you think I want that in my life? Do I think I check all the boxes for Jordan? That no man could check more? Or vice versa? No other man would match my faith or have a stronger leader? No, I don't think that highly of myself. But I can tell you that, by God's grace and guidance, we will continue to enjoy a marriage with deep roots. I can confidently say that I'm blessed with a very strong and happy marriage. I don't want to sit around for the rest of my life listening to depressing "what might have been" country songs. Raising children is a challenge. I already regret things. Time flies by so quickly. I truly empathize with parents who feel they failed their kiddos, for whatever reason. No one should wish that on their worst enemy. But, it doesn't have to stay that way. We can be there for our kiddos now (whether grown or still young). It's still "today", as the Hebrew writer put it, so there's still hope. If you want to have a better marriage: have it. If you want to prepare your children to love God and fight spiritual battles while helping their neighbors, do it. Is there something you're failing at? Pray to God, armor up, and change. Today. There's no reason you can't. You may just need another reminder and some encouragement. Life doesn't have to be depressing and overwhelming. You don't have to go back to the mud and wallow in it. Can it be hard? Sure! Be Christians do hard things and enjoy the peace that surpasses understanding. When was the last time you've been at peace? What is it that you're not willing to let go of? Why won't you? Where do you think that leads? If you want liberty offered by Jesus, then put your hands out.
- **Jesus:** He's the only one who lived without regret, at least on His part. He knows "what might have been" for all who ignore Him. But praise be to God that we don't have to worry about "what might have been" had Jesus not given Himself for us. We're blessed above all people, because Jesus loved His Father (and us) to the end. He always did what was right, so we wouldn't have to worry about life without God because of sin's consequences.