



Soul Food

By Ken Ortize
Teaching Pastor, Calvary Spokane Church

Back to the Future was the most successful movie of 1985. The hero, Marty McFly, was an unimpressive teenager, full of adolescence angst. Then suddenly he was catapulted into the past, with all the knowledge and advanced perspective of the future. Overnight this “uncool” kid became “uber-cool.” Most importantly, he was able to change the past and make it better.

The title is misleading. The movie isn’t really about the future; it’s about the past. The actual focus is upon our common desire to go back and fix the past so that both the present and future would be better. A kind of cosmic “mulligan.”

It stimulates an emotion we call nostalgia. Originally the word meant “acute homesickness,” but today it means “a tender and exaggerated longing for the past.” Nostalgia views the past with “rose colored glasses,” making it better than it really was.

Why does this happen? As we age, we can’t help but recognize that in a thousand different moments we could have done “life” better. With better information we would have handled any number of situations with more wisdom, kindness, love and patience. We begin to sound like my father who regularly complained, “If I had my life to live over again...”

But we can’t. In real life, there are no “do-overs.” What is done is done. And so, we wrestle with regrets! Yet regret can be so painful that subconsciously we choose to escape into a vision of our past that is a dramatic improvement on what really happened. Most likely we were neither as bad, or

as good as we remember. Which may be the hardest thing of all: We were normal, ordinary, unremarkable!

We cannot relive the past; nor should we try to rewrite it. Rather we should ask God to redeem it. He promises that He will: “I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten” (Joel 2:25). Even more, He promised through the Psalmist to make our last years our best: “They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green...” (Psalm 92:14)

So don’t settle for less than what God has for you. God “still” has a “wonderful plan for your life.” But it requires that I put my trust in Him, and follow Him.

Editor’s Note: You can connect with Calvary Spokane Church on their social media community, The City, at <https://calvaryspokane.onthecity.org>. You can also check out their many resources available including podcasts at www.calvaryspokane.com or call their office at 509-467-2860 for more information

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