**Escaping the Hold of the Past**

Willie Carson, the famous British jockey, was racing one day at Pontefract. He was happily leading on the rails. A furlong and a half from home he thought he heard something at his back and, glancing round, he saw the shadow of a horse coming up behind. Determined that he should not be beaten, he spurred on and was first at the finish line. He looked round again and saw that the nearest horse was fifteen lengths behind--he had been racing his own shadow for the last part of the race.

**Possible Preaching Angle:**

*Sometimes we are haunted by the memory of a mistake, a regret from our past. It is as if there is a shadow looming over us, preventing us from going forward. God has forgiven our past and calls us to move forward into his future (Philippians 3:13).*

Commentator Gordon Fee recalls the famous “miracle mile,” the first time two milers ran under four minutes in the same race. Roger Bannister and John Landy competed in Vancouver, B.C. in 1954. Landy had led all the way, but coming off the final turn toward the finish line he looked over his shoulder to find out where Bannister was, only to be passed on the other side and beaten to the tape!

[Gordon Fee, “Philippians,” IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 155.]

You can’t worry about what is behind you. You need to lean into the run and give it all you got, keeping your gaze on the finish. And what a finish it will be. What is our goal? What is the prize? It is the heavenward calling of God in Christ Jesus! There is nothing finer. Heaven will make it all worth it, you just wait and see!