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After a break for the Christmas Holidays, *Viewpoints* gears up for a new year.

## Viewpoints

*Observing events in our modern world from the viewpoint of our ascended Savior.*

### A New Year's Procession ~ January 10, 2014

*Resolutions are good, but not enough. Jesus offers a New Year's procession.*

[Online Version & Archive](#)

What surprises may be waiting to greet you in this New Year 2014? Maybe sins from the past?

In May 2009 Eric Naposki was living in Connecticut. He had apparently put a safe distance between himself and Newport Beach, CA. And by the time May 2009 had rolled around, he was probably thinking that he had successfully distanced himself from a crime he committed almost two decades earlier in Newport Beach. But the past has way of catching up, in spite of 2,800 miles distance and 17 long years.

Long story, short: Eric is now in jail for murder. And his crimes are currently being paraded in the media because this fear of having the past catch up to the present is universal. That the law has a long arm, grips people and sells newspapers.

The worry that one's past will catch up to the present is not limited to murderers. Here's a quote from an anonymous woman sharing her fears in an online forum.

I was admittedly a horrible person 10+ years ago. I said and did some awful things to people. Some they know of, some they don't. I am constantly petrified that these things they don't know are somehow going to catch up with me one day. These people are my good friends and trust me, they would NEVER forgive me if they knew... I am losing my mind worrying about it. I can't admit it to them because they will want to literally kill me, but I can't hold it in any longer. Has anyone else ever had their past creep up on them???

The Bible prophesies that part of Christ's first coming was to proclaim "the day of vengeance of our God" (Isaiah 61:2). This is an encouraging promise of strength and hope for all who have been victimized: that God will exact justice with holy and eternal vengeance. But at the same time, this message raises the ax of the law so that it hangs over everyone whose past could catch up to the present with devastating results. Have you lied (like the woman above) and now wonder when your fabrications will be discovered? Have you cheated on your taxes and worry about being audited? Have you cheated on your spouse?

John the Baptist, who preached that "the ax is already at the root of the trees...!" (Matthew 3:10), is also the one who pointed to Jesus and preached the relief and rescue that comes

through him in repentance. Repentance is when one is moved by the Spirit of Jesus to confess one's sin, without excuses and without whitewashing the facts. And repentance also includes faith in Jesus, believing that by his suffering and death our sins are paid in full. So in repentance is the trust that where we deserve condemnation, "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

"But," someone might counter, "even though Jesus forgives me, the people I hurt might not; and the consequences of my sins can still have terrible earthly results, much like Eric Naposki's lifelong imprisonment, even if he's truly repentant."

Friends, this question is the point of this week's meditation that's timed for the beginning of this New Year 2014. For we can make resolutions, and leave sins behind in the past as we seek to honor Christ's gift of New Life by living new and different lives. But we may still be worried about the earthly consequences of past sins catching up to us. And if this is so, please take another look at Jesus and his love. For when Jesus forgave you, he also personally applied all his promises to you.

So if, in fact, your sins of the past have set in motion some earthly consequences that come to fruition today or tomorrow, even these earthly consequences are controlled by Jesus' love. He will help you stand up under this weight, even as he torques these earthly consequences to your eternal good.

This is what Jesus did for his Apostle Paul, whose past sins caught up with him. But even as earthly consequences caught up with Paul, Jesus applied this merciful torque that turns all things to good. This is why Paul writes: "**But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ!**" (2 Corinthians 2:14).

So what surprises may be waiting to greet you in this New Year 2014? Whatever they may be, we're resolved in repentance to keep our focus on Christ as he leads us through time in his triumphal procession!

*Source Material* (Links may become inactive over time.)  
[Newport Beach Murder: The Past Catches Up](#) @ ocregister.com

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*Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz*

