

Path Determines Destination

Joe Slater

God created us as free moral agents; we choose the path we take in life, for good or for ill. While most of us relish our freedom, the down side is that we must take responsibility for the choices we make. I like the way Joe Fitch put it: “When you choose the road, you also necessarily include the destination.”

Most people give little or no consideration to the destination when selecting their path. Immediate gratification clouds our thinking. How much thought do you suppose the Israelites gave to their destination when they started down the path of idolatry and immorality? Even when the prophets warned them of captivity in Assyria and Babylon, the people scoffed. When it finally happened, God’s people found themselves being marched off to foreign lands with nobody to blame but themselves. They had unwittingly chosen their destination when they selected their path.

God had set before His people a clear choice: obey and live, or rebel and die. Through Moses, God pleaded with Israel: “*I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life . . .*” (Deuteronomy 30:19). Unfortunately, the people evidently thought they could walk the wrong path, but still arrive at their desired destination. It did not work then, nor will it work today!

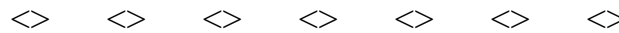
Actions have consequences; causes produce effects. Sin results in eternal spiritual death (Romans 6:23). No one in his right mind would choose to go to Hell. Yet multitudes make that very choice by selecting the broad, easy way that leads to destruction.

Question: Do you want to suffer eternally in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone? What sane

person would answer, “Oh, yes, definitely!”? Instead, we instinctively want to live forever. However, most people reject the narrow, difficult path that leads to eternal life; and in doing so, we reject the destination we claim to seek.

Just before Jesus was crucified, He told His apostles, “*And where I go you know, and the way you know*” (John 14:4). When Thomas objected that they knew neither where He was going nor the way, Jesus responded: “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*” (14:6). When we choose to follow Jesus, we choose the destination to which He leads (Heaven). Opting to walk some other path involves rejecting that beautiful home of the soul – unintentional rejection, perhaps, but rejection nonetheless.

What destination do you want? Have you chosen the path that leads to it?



A Call For Change

“*He must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me*” (Luke 9:23). You already know Jesus made an extreme sacrifice for you. As many times as we have been asked this question, we need to keep it in the front of our minds: “What changes have you made in your life because of His sacrifice?”

Is your commitment to Jesus shown only by a one-time decision and weekly church attendance? Or does the sacrifice of Jesus Christ mean more to you than that? I hope it does! If you honestly examine yourself, does it look like you are a one or two day per week Christian? If so, it is time for a change! Nothing should take precedence over it. Today, how can you make certain that your Christianity impacts all of your days, not just a couple of them?

Chad Ezelle (via *Voice of Truth International*)

Always and in All Ways

The word “always” means “at all times, invariably, perpetually” (Webster’s). For the Christian, there are some things that we need to be doing always and in all ways.

Always having God on our minds. “*I have set the Lord **always** before me*” (Psalm 16:8)

Always doing the Lord’s work. “*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, **always** abounding in the work of the Lord*” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Always passionate. “*But it is good to be zealous in a good thing **always***” (Galatians 4:18).

Always thankful. “. . . *giving thanks **always** for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Ephesians 5:20).

Always praying. “. . . *praying **always** with all prayer and supplication*” (Ephesians 6:18)

Always rejoicing. “*Rejoice in the Lord **always**. Again I will say, rejoice!*” (Philippians 4:4).

Always speaking properly. “*Let your speech **always** be with grace, seasoned with salt*” (Colossians 4:6).

Always seeking what is right. “*See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but **always** pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all*” (1 Thessalonians 5:15).

Always at peace. “*Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace **always** in every way*” (2 Thessalonians 3:16).

Always prepared. “*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and **always** be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you*” (1 Peter 3:15).

If we are doing these things always and in all ways, we have an “always” assurance: “*Now thanks be to God, who **always** leads us in triumph in Christ*” (2 Corinthians 2:14)

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