

DON'T WALK THIS WAY!

Joe Slater

Walk in the light. Walk in truth. Walk in newness of life. Those are some of the positive paths God commends to us in His word. But the world contains many other paths – dangerous ones! We do well to stay off of them.

Preaching to the Zeus-worshippers at Lystra, Paul said that in bygone generations God had “*allowed the nations to walk in their own ways*” (Acts 14:16). Why would He do that, since “*it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps*” (Jeremiah 10:23)? Paul gives the answer in Romans 1:28 – “*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge God gave them over to a debased mind . . .*” When people turn their backs on God, He will allow them to go their own way. I plead with you not to walk that direction!

Walking in your own way amounts to the same thing Paul described in Ephesians 4:17 as walking “in the futility of their minds.” Futility (or vanity) indicates this way is empty and useless, devoid of truth. Why would you choose to walk that path?

Even professing “Christians” sometimes walk on perilous pathways. By contrast, Paul said that he and his fellow-workers had “*renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully . . .*” (2 Corinthians 4:2). Countless crafty “clergy” today are handling God’s word deceitfully, and they are pulling the wool over millions of eyes. Often motivated by money, they “*suppose that godliness is a means of gain*” (1 Timothy 6:5). Paul warned Timothy to avoid such characters. Surely we ought to heed that same warning!

The path described in God’s word leads to eternal life. For your soul’s sake, reject all others!

What Is The Devil Like?

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Pet. 5:8)

While trying to rock my son to sleep late one night, I happened upon a special program on television’s Animal Planet channel about lions and how they hunt their prey. What I learned made the above Bible verse come alive in a most vivid way! Consider some parallels:

Satan waits, lurks, and prowls around us!

Lions are most interesting and curious animals. I learned that over 80% of the time, lions sleep lazily in the sunshine – looking totally disinterested. But that is precisely how they lure in their unsuspecting prey until it is too close to get away. Similarly, Peter warns us to be sober and vigilant regarding the Devil of Hell. One of his greatest ploys is to do his work covertly and behind the scenes. Like the lion, he doesn’t attack recklessly – that would be too obvious. Nor does he reveal himself openly – but he lurks, waiting for the appropriate time.

Satan attacks us at our weakest point!

Lions never go after a whole herd. Rather, they watch for animals who wander a little away. Far from the influence and intervention of others, they are easy to take down. No wonder the Lord commanded Christians to assemble often! (Hebrews 3:13; 10:24-25) We are more vulnerable when we are away.

Satan is persistent!

Like a lion, Satan will not stop until you are dead! Lions have been known to wait for hours after a first blow draws blood. As the victim grows weaker and weaker, they prowl and follow behind – waiting for the right moment to finish the kill. And so is the devil. We observe that after trying to tempt Jesus, the devil went away, but only for a short while, “*...waiting for an opportune time.*” (Luke 4:13)

Satan’s favorite method: Death by choking!

Something I was surprised to learn is that lions kill by asphyxiation. I had thought that lions rip and tear into the vital organs of their prey with gashing blows. Actually, they go for the neck and clamp down hard, throwing the struggling victim to the ground. Then they wait while their prey gasps for life-giving air. By this point the end is inevitable and the lion has won. In that is a warning for us. We are repeatedly admonished against letting the cares and concerns of our physical lives distract us from our duty to God. (Mark 4:19; 1 John 2:15) Satan wants to “choke” the word from our heart causing us to fall away. (Luke 8:14) Let us all be on the lookout for lion, “*lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.*” (2 Corinthians 2:1)

--John West

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COST

Suppose I am visiting in your home and I notice a lovely vase on the coffee table. I pick it up and admire it, but suddenly it slips from my hand, falls to the floor, and breaks! “Oh, I’m so sorry!” I say, and I offer to pay for it. I know I have a fifty-dollar bill in my wallet, so I think I’m safe.

But you tell me there are only two such vases in the world, and the other one is valued at \$2,000! Am I any sorrier now than I was a few moments ago? Yes. I am \$2,000 sorrier! What made the difference? Knowing the cost.

Many people look carelessly upon Christianity, thinking it’s just another of the world’s great religions. But when we look at the Cross of Calvary and realize what our salvation cost, suddenly Christianity and the One whose life it represents take on a whole new meaning. So then, what value do you place on Jesus?

--George Vandeman (via *Bulletin Gold*)