

Which Road Am I On?

2 Peter 1:8-11

Phil de Martimprey

10/10/24

For many of us it has been very helpful these last few weeks as we have been thinking practically about our spiritual growth. I would imagine most of us have experienced moments of encouragement and also conviction as we have considered how we might make every effort to add to our faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly-affection, and agape love. These have been impactful times of personal reflection and evaluation. In our study today, the Apostle Peter uses clear and powerful language to describe two very different roads a believer could choose to follow.

Road of Ruin - 2 Peter 1:8-9

First we will think about the life and future that awaits the believer who fails to grow and increase in the 7 character traits of verses 5-7, and fails to integrate the truths about Jesus into their relationship with HIm. The way that Peter describes the situation is far worse than simple apathy or a “spiritual pause”. The believer failing to grow is ineffective and unfruitful, two terms used to describe the idea of uselessness. Though they have faith in Jesus, their spiritual life has little to no value and effect in their own life, in the lives of the people around them, and in the future. Peter goes on to describe them as being nearsighted and blind, living their lives AS IF they had never placed their faith in Jesus at all. That is what he means by “having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins”. It isn’t that this person cannot remember their conversion, it is that they are living as though it never happened at all. What a devastating picture to consider. That we could live in such a way that ignores and deny’s our most important reality, that our faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus has brought us back into relationship with our loving creator God, and has given us new life! Though it is a harsh picture, no doubt many of us have walked this road for periods of our lives, letting our attitudes and actions reflect the worldly culture around us. There was simply no distinction between us and the unbelievers around us. Maybe you realize that this is you today. That you have been walking steadily on the road of ruin. Thank God for His mercy and grace that welcome us back the moment we want to step off this road of ruin and walk the road of rewards.

Road of Rewards - 2 Peter 1:10-11

Whereas the one on the road to ruin is ineffective, unfruitful, blind and with spiritual amnesia, the one on the road of rewards is effective, fruitful, building on their justification and living in a way that proves and confirms their faith and protects them from failure, and on top of that, they get to look forward to a future celebration of their faithfulness and growth when they enter the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Messiah.

What a vision for our present and future! There is little to no doubt that all of us wish to travel on the road of rewards as opposed to the road of ruin. But I also know an equal reality that for many of us it is a real struggle at times. We live in and have been deeply influenced by a culture of immediate gratification, consumerism and self-

indulgence. Peter encourages us to: make every effort...supplement our faith...be self-controlled, steadfast, godly..increase in these qualities...be diligent...and practice. These actions are counter to the message of our culture, and oftentimes very difficult to implement. Yet, these are the prescribed steps that will so clearly put us on the road of rewards. For some of us this might seem very overwhelming right now, and for those I would bring these words of encouragement to you. Know that your spiritual formation is not just up to you and your own strength of will. Verses 3-4 makes it clear that through the gracious gifts of Jesus we have been given all the tools that we need to escape the corruption that is all around us. Some of these gifts are the Holy Spirit living within us, the Word of God, and our loving church family. We are far from alone in this journey, and if we will begin to take steps in this direction, we will experience just how wonderful all of these gifts are, and the countless blessings that come from walking this road! For those of us who can honestly and thankfully say we are on the road of rewards, let us not grow weary nor complacent on the journey, for it is equally possible for us to lose focus, to compromise and to slip into spiritual lethargy. Both roads send out invitations to us, and I pray that we would hear and walk, however slowly it may be, on the road of rewards.

Grace News and Needs

-
- ***Business Meeting: Next Sunday, Nov 17th @ 4pm. Bring a finger food to share***
 - ***Operation Christmas Child is here! See Charmaine on the patio to get involved.***
 - ***VOM Needs for November: Individually Wrapped Disposable Antiseptic Wipes***

For more information on our events and ministries, visit www.gccramona.com