

Sermon Notes

Backward or Forward - Prov 1:32

January 24, 2021

I. Introduction

- a. in SD, we all know that feeling... no standing still in life... we're either going backward or forward... what's cure for backsliding... knowledge of God...
Jer 5:6... "a wolf shall destroy them... for their backslidings are many..."
Hosea 11:7... "my people are bent on backsliding from Me..."
Jer 3:22... "return, you backsliding children... and I will heal your backsliding..."
Hosea 14:4... "I will heal backsliding... I will love freely... my anger is gone..."
Col 1:9-10... "live a life worthy of the Lord... growing in the knowledge of God..."
2Pet 3:18... "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior..."
- b. challenge to move forward... forget about what is behind... get deeper level of commitment... if I can't get your attention now, society will get it later... pray...
Phil 3:12-18... "not that I have already reached the goal... but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ... this one thing I do... forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead..."

II. Backward or Forward

- a. can't move forward... can't prosper... without intimacy with God...
Josh 1:7-9... "meditate on it (Him) day and night... only then will you prosper..."
Psa 1:1-3... "delight in Lord's instruction... meditate daily... whatever prospers..."
2Cor 3:5... "not qualified on our own... only power and success from God..."
- b. one of greatest dangers in life... physical, intellectual, spiritual is complacency...
feeling of satisfaction with our own abilities that prevents us from trying harder or trying to change and improve things... slogan *it's good enough*...
Prov 1:32... "the complacency of fools will destroy them..."
Prov 10:4... "lazy (slack, idle) hands cause poverty... diligent hands bring wealth..."
Zeph 1:12... "punish men who are complacent and say the Lord will do nothing..."
Eph 4:18-19... "excluded from life of God... because of blindness of heart... they became callous... gave themselves to lust, every kind of impurity, and more..."
porosis... cover with a callus; dulled perception; not changing, inflexible, rigid...
- c. complacency is dangerous... *it's good enough* is dangerous... *no matter what, I am fully satisfied with my personal effort*... satisfied with my knowledge of God... don't need to worship more, read bible more, pray more, study more...
- d. stop... not under law, we're under grace... doesn't mean we don't do anything... not about salvation... but constantly growing in our relationship with God...
Rom 6:14-15... "sin won't rule... because we're not under law, but under grace..."
1Cor 15:10-11... "by grace... I worked harder than any... not I, but grace in me..."
Eph 2:8-10... "saved by grace... created in Christ to do good works..."

Be fair to God, to life, and to yourself. Let down all your barriers of fear and make this a life adventure. You are going to find God, life, yourself. You are going to put your feet upon The Way. Break with the old and begin the new. E. Stanley Jones

- e. complacency is destructive... not only because of the sin it leads to... but because it's not what God wants for us... not part of His will or desire for our lives...
John 10:10... "I have come to bring you life... and life more abundantly..."
Eph 3:20... "He can do exceedingly abundantly more than we ask or imagine..."
1Thess 5:18... "this is God will (to bless mankind thru Jesus) for you in Christ..."
3John 2... "wish above all things... you prosper and be in good health..."
 - f. are you experiencing life that exceeds measure... is over and above... more than necessary... much more than all... no, then not experiencing all God has for you... complacency... *it's good enough*... will cause us to settle for less...
 - g. don't confuse with godly contentment... *being satisfied while you are improving and progressing to next level*... fully satisfied in Jesus, not ourselves... need to be so full of God that the things of the world have no chance of getting in...
2Cor 9:8... "God is able to make all grace abound to you... always having all sufficiency (contentment) in all things... have abundance for every good work..."
Phil 4:10-13... "not that I was ever in need... have learned to be content with whatever I have... know how to live in every situation with plenty or little..."
1Tim 6:6-8... "godliness with contentment is great gain... having food and clothing, with these we shall be content..."
autarkeia... perfect condition of life, nothing is needed, independent of circumstances...
 - h. satisfied with how you look, but eat better and exercise to be healthier... satisfied with apartment, but waiting on God for house... satisfied with \$10 an hour, but work hard to get promotion and raise... what conduct leads to destruction... not moving forward... not pressing ahead... thinking we have already obtained it all...
Phil 3:12-21... "pattern your life after mine... learn from those who follow our example... I have told you before with tears in my eyes... there are many whose conduct shows they are enemies of the cross... headed for destruction..."
 - i. easy to get complacent... easy to stop trying harder... easier to slide down the ice than climb back up it... either moving backward or forward... it's your choice...
2Pet 1:1-10... "these promises enable you to escape corruption... make every effort to respond... add to your faith: goodness, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, kindness, love... more you grow like this, more productive you will be... those who fail to grow like this (complacent)... are short-sighted and blind..."
- Do what is easy and your life will be hard. Do what is hard and your life will be easy. People need to become uncomfortable with their mediocrity. Les Brown**
- j. get complacent with sin, *I'm under grace, I'm forgiven*... with pain, *always been like this, I can handle it*... with debt, *just want to be able to pay my bills*... with brokenness, *everyone in my family gets abused/divorced/addicted*... no, no, no... that is not what God has for you... He has an abundance of good things to give...
Psa 36:8... "they are filled from the abundance of Your house..."
Psa 66:12... "went thru fire and flood... but You brought us to great abundance..."
Jer 33:6... "I will bring health... I will let them experience abundance of peace..."
 - k. many churches/christians are satisfied... *it's good enough*... thank you for not being one of them... we are content, not complacent... as long as people need love, peace, joy, healing, salvation... AL will fearlessly preach good news... pray...
Rom 1:16-17... "not ashamed of gospel... power of salvation to all who believe..."
Rom 10:14-17... "how can they believe without hearing... we bring good news..."
Heb 10:24-25... "let us not neglect meeting together... but encourage each other..."

Results or Consequences

Isa 24:4-5... *earth suffers... people have twisted God's instructions...*

Some people get results, others get consequences. We can see that at work around us. Some people know how to live; they seem to work with the grain of the universe; reality works with them. They get results in harmonious, happy, effective living. Others are not harmonious, not happy, not effective; they are up against it. The nature of reality is not with them; they are working against the grain. They get consequences.

Is there something that always has the last word, no matter who has the intermediate word? A great many people don't believe that anything has the last word. A woman said to me, *it's all right to have immoral sex provided you can get away with it.* My reply was, *that is a big 'provided', for nobody gets away with it. The results register in you. You have to live with yourself, and the hell of being bad is a bad hell.*

I used to think that the passage, *be sure your sin will find you out,* meant, *be sure your sin will be found out.* It doesn't say so; rather it says, *your sin will find you out.* It will register in you, cause deterioration, decay; you will get consequences, in yourself.

Any attempt to manipulate the universe and make it do what you want ends in consequences. Young people are often looking for thrills, but often they don't understand that at the end of thrills, is *ills*. Ills are always behind thrills and always have the last word. It's not the beginning, but the end that counts.

Apparently, we are free to choose, but we are **not free to choose the results of our choosing.** Those results seem to be in hands not our own. There is something here, something we must come to terms with, or get hurt. Or suffer consequences. Can you do as you please and get away with it? Is there a way and not-the-way written into our world.

The universe will respond with **results or consequences.** If you obey The Way, you get results; if you don't, you get consequences.
Let's choose to be determined to get results.

O, God, I am seeking you. I want to come to terms with you. I know you will have the last word, so I also give you the first word in my life.
Help me as I grow into a deeper relationship with you this year.

E. Stanley Jones The Way Devotional - Week 1, Monday & Tuesday

Sermon Study

Backward or Forward - Prov 1:32 - January 24, 2021

1. Read **Jer 5:6** and **Hosea 11:7**. What does **backsliding** mean? Is it something you **struggle** with? Why or why not? **Who** is the cure? Read **Jer 3:22** and **Hosea 14:4**. **What** is the cure? Read **Col 1:9-10** and **2Pet 3:18**.
2. What **commitment** have you made to **move forward** spiritually? How do you do that? Read **Josh 1:7-9... Psa 1:1-3... 2Cor 3:5**.
3. How would you define **complacency**? Read **Prov 1:32; 10:4... Zeph 1:12... Eph 4:18-19**. Is **good enough** enough for you?
4. Read the **E. Stanley Jones** quote from the notes. What does that mean in relation to you moving forward in 2021?
5. How would you define **contentment**? How does it **differ** from complacency? Read **2Cor 9:8... Phil 4:10-13... 1Tim 6:6-8**.
6. Read **Phil 3:12-21** and **2Pet 1:10**. What things are we told **to do** in order to avoid complacency and **be productive**?
7. Does God want you to just settle for average... or does He have **something better** planned for you? Read **Psa 36:8... Psa 66:12... Jer 33:6... John 10:10... Eph 3:20... 3John 2**. Are you **settling**?

Do what is easy and your life will be hard. Do what is hard and your life will be easy.
Les Brown