

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

Written by Bob Stone

Someone has said, "If you want revival, go into your prayer closet; take a piece of chalk; draw a circle around yourself; and pray until revival comes to that circle, to the person in the circle, to you." After you draw that circle, there will be many choices and hindrances as you walk into everyday life. The first set of choices will be the path you walk on each day.

Two Paths to choose from:

Right paths

Project:

1. Underline the name of each path.
2. Put a "B" next to its benefits.
3. If any prerequisites are required to travel on these paths put a "P" next to them.
4. Put a "C" next to any characteristics of those who travel on this road.

References to the right path:

Ps. 16:11—*You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

Ps.23:3—*he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

Ps.25:10—*All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant.*

Ps.119:35—*Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.* Prov. 2:8-9—*for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.*

9]

Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path.

Prov.4:11,18—*I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. 18] The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of*

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

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day.

Is. 2:3—*Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

Is. 26:7—*The path of the righteous is level; O upright One, you make the way of the righteous smooth.*

Heb. 12:13—*"Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.*

Sinful paths

Project:

1. Underline the name of each path.
2. Put a "B" next to its *benefits*.
3. If any *prerequisites* are required to travel on the path, put a "P" next to them.
4. Put a "C" next to any *characteristics* of those who travel on sinful paths.

References to the sinful path:

Prov. 2:12-15—*Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, 13] who leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways, 14] who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, 15] whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways.*

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

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Prov. 13:15—*Good understanding wins favor, but the way of the unfaithful is hard.*

Prov.14:12—*He whose walk is upright fears the LORD, but he whose ways are devious despises him.*

Prov.15:9—*The LORD detests the way of the wicked but he loves those who pursue righteousness.*

Is. 59:8—*The way of peace they do not know; there is no justice in their paths. They have turned them into crooked roads; no one who walks in them will know peace.*

Matt. 7:13—*"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it."*

Summarize characteristics of the sinful path and of those who travel on them.

Walking on the sinful path.

Deut. 29:19—*When such a person hears the words of this oath, he invokes a blessing on himself and therefore thinks, "I will be safe, even though I persist in going my own way." This will bring disaster on the watered land as well as the dry.*

Other passages to read: Jer. 7:14; Eph. 2:2; Phil. 3:18; 1 Pet. 4:3, 2 Pet. 2:10; 3:3; Jude 18.

Often choosing the right path is a daily occurrence. Once we take the right path, we should expect something.

Helps and Hindrances to being revived: Helps

We will have our Helper with us along the road/path.

Ps. 28:7—*The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song.*

Ps. 40:17—*Yet I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; O my God, do not delay.*

Is. 41:10-11—*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

11]

All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish.

Is. 50:9—*It is the Sovereign LORD who helps me. Who is he that will condemn me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up."*

Heb. 13:6—*So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"* [Psalm 118:6,7]

We will have the assistance and help we need.

A voice will guide. Is. 30:21—*Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."*

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

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Through the difficulties, He will lead in unfamiliar paths...guide...be light...not forsake us. Is. 42:16—*I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.*

Many obstacles will be removed from our pathway

1. The valley will be raised and the mountain lowered: Is. 40:4—*Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.* Also:
49:11; Zech. 4:7

2. God will break down gates, cut through bars of iron: Is. 45:2—*I will go before you and will level the mountains I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron.*

3. Our path will be a spiritual highway:

Prov. 15:19—*The way of the sluggard with thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway.*

Prov. 16:17—*The highway of the upright avoids evil; he who guards his way guards his life.*

Is. 35:8—*And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. 9] No lion will be there....But only the redeemed will walk there, 10] and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*

Isa. 43:19—*See, I am doing a new thing...I am making a way in the desert and streams in the waste land.*

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

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But even with the obstacles removed, there will still be other...

Hindrances to spiritual progress.

We must be aware/prepared for these.

1. a love of the world:

Lot's wife, Gen. 19:26—*But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.*

Demas, II Tim. 4:10—*for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica.* Looking at Demas, what might be the effects of a love of the world on our relationships? Today, what might be the result on our lives if we continually look back to the world we have escaped from?

3. using wrong equipment, e.g., Saul's armor delayed David.

1 Sam. 17:39—*David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walk- ing around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off.* Using David's situation as an example, how might others impede our spiritual progress?

4. **the discouraged men who opposed the building of the wall of Jerusalem.** Neh. 4:10—*Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall."*

5. unbelief hindered the Lord's work in Nazareth

Matt. 13:58—*And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.*

6. worldly possessions kept the rich young man from discipleship

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

Written by Bob Stone

Matt. 19:22—*When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

7. inappropriate family ties may prevent someone from following the Lord. Luke 9:59—

He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

8. weights as well as sins. Heb. 12:1—*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

Stumbling blocks

1. Obstacles should be removed: Is. 57:14—*And it will be said: "Build up, build up, prepared the road! Remove the obstacles out of the way of my people."*

2. Unfaithful leaders can become stumbling blocks: Mal. 2:7-8—*"For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction—because he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty.*

8] B

ut you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi," says the Lord Almighty.

3. Hypocrites in the church declared to be stumbling blocks: Matt. 23:13 —*"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to."*

4. All need to watch against becoming stumbling blocks: Rom. 14:13— *"Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way."*

5. Love is the preventive of stumbling: I John 2:10—*"Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble."*

What actions have other believers taken that have caused or contributed to the spiritual stumbling of other believers? If you were inclined to be a stumbling block to another believer, what might you do? What should be our attitude concerning being a stumbling block to others?—Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 10:32; 2 Cor. 6:3. Who/what should we be most concerned

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

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about? (Those new to and/or weak in the faith; legalistic people; disputable matters—Rom. 14:1-15:3.)

Opposers

Examples:

1. Ezra 4:4—*Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building.*

2. Nehemiah. 4:8—*They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. 9] But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.*

From these two verses, what might be some direct equivalents to our potential opposition today? What is the answer to discouragement, fear, plots, fighting, trouble?

4. Zech. 3:1-2—*Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.*

2]

The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you!"

(See Acts 13:8-12)

Using the above verses as an example, what must we not forget about all opposition?

5. 1 Cor. 16:8-9—*But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, 9] because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.*

What do these verses from Acts say to us about what we should expect when effective doors of ministry open up to us today?

There are also many examples in Scripture of opposition to leaders, prophets and people

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

Written by Bob Stone

with visions. Some will seek to silence prophets and religious leaders. Is. 30:10 says, *They say to the seers, "See no more visions!" and to the prophets, "Give us no more visions of what is right! Tell us pleasant things, prophesy illusions.* (See Jer. 11:21; Amos 2:12; 7:13; Micah 2:6)

Partners on the Journey

Besides the Lord, what or who will enable us to keep on the right road with all the opposition we expect? Look at your potential companions along the road. As you travel your spiritual journey, you will have other voices, other perspectives, other people who will advocate and/or tempt you with foolish and destructive opinions, options and stops. Where will a balanced view come from? Who or what will keep you from making the bad choices on this journey? Who, for example, will help you when you are tempted with—or discouraged by—the following?

1. a love of the world
2. using the wrong equipment, actions, options
3. discouragement brought on by people who oppose you
4. unbelief hindering you
5. worldly possessions keeping you from discipleship
6. inappropriate family ties preventing you from following the Lord
7. weights slowing you down and your sin tripping you up
8. stumbling blocks in your path
9. increasing opposition

What might a friend do for you in each of these situations? What does that say to us about the need for a friend? We will be fighting alone against temptation and the fools who will want us to go along with them, unless we have a friend who is walking the journey with us. What section of Scripture might help us? If anyone should know about temptation, Solomon should.

Eccl. 4: 8—*There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless—a miserable business!* 9] *Two are better*

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

Written by Bob Stone

than one, because they have a good return for their work:

10]

If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

11]

Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?

12]

Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

What are the reasons for needing a friend as we journey? As far as work is concerned, a friend can enable/help us:

1. to find meaning and contentment in our work/toil—v. 8a.
2. to balance our work with other priorities (other enjoyment)—v. 8b.
3. to avoid meaningless and miserable work—v. 8c.

In general, Solomon declares two are better than one because:

1. we will have a good return for our work, ministry, service, wisdom, journey—v. 9.
2. if we fall down (and we will), our friend can help us up—v. 10.
3. if we are in danger; if we need the warmth of encouragement; our friend can help us find what we need—v. 11.
4. if overpowered by an enemy, temptation, a trial, or spiritual warfare, a friend can help us with prayer, counsel, and advice from the Word—v. 12.
5. if we need assistance—a rope to pick us up or keep us on the road, our friend and the Lord (a cord of three strands) is not easily broken—v. 12b.

It should be obvious; the path to the chalk revival is not to be traveled alone. The wise traveler will find a friend, a buddy beyond his/her mate to travel with them.

What are the characteristics of a faithful friend?

- **Prov. 17:17**—*A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*
- **Prov. 18:24**—*A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who*

Choosing and Keeping the Right Path to the Chalk Revival

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sticks closer than a brother.

- **Prov. 27:6**—*Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses. 9] Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of one's friend springs from his earnest counsel.*

- **Heb. 10:24**—*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.*

- **Heb. 10:25**—*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

- **Rom. 1:11**—*I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— 12] that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.*

- **Prov. 13:20**—*"He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm."*

What are the characteristics of a faithful friend from the above list? (Make a list) Which ones mean the most to you?