



## I. THE PARABLE OF THE PATH

A. There are two paths we can travel

**Proverbs 4:18-19 (NIV)** <sup>18</sup> The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. <sup>19</sup> But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

- In the parable of the path, your direction, not your desire, will determine your destination

**Proverbs 4:20-23 (NIV)** <sup>20</sup> My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. <sup>21</sup> Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; <sup>22</sup> for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body. <sup>23</sup> Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

**Proverbs 4:24-27 (NIV)** <sup>24</sup> Keep your mouth free of perversity; keep corrupt talk far from your lips. <sup>25</sup> Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you. <sup>26</sup> Give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways. <sup>27</sup> Do not turn to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.

B. Whose responsibility is it to stay on the path?

- **Christianity is often difficult because we don't appreciate the fundamentals**
  - Worship
  - Prayer
  - Generosity
  - Forgiveness

C. Increase our faith

**Luke 17:3-4 (NIV)** <sup>3</sup> So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. <sup>4</sup> Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them."

- Forgiveness is a fundamental of God's kingdom

**Luke 17:5 (NIV)** <sup>5</sup> The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

## II. OFFENDED IS A PATH TO PRISON

A. There's no such thing as an offense free life

**Luke 17:1 (NKJV)** Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe *to him* through whom they do come!"

The Greek word offend: Skandalon. This word originally referred to the part of the trap to which the bait was attached. The word signifies laying a trap in someone's way.

- An offense is an event, but offended is a path, so don't take the bait



B. Don't take the bait

**Matthew 24:10-12 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. <sup>11</sup> Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. <sup>12</sup> And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

C. When it's personal

**Matthew 18:21-22 (NLT)** <sup>21</sup> Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" <sup>22</sup> "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!"

- This isn't about keeping score, but losing count

### III. FORGIVENESS REQUIRES FAITH

A. There will be, or are, people that you can't forgive on your own

**2 Corinthians 5:7 (NIV)** For we live by faith, not by sight.