

# The Journey of Life: The Roads We Travel — Part 2

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | June 5, 2019



The journey of life can be tough. There are many roads, not all equally healthy. In part 1 of this series we examined Walking in Ignorance, Illiteracy and Infancy. Consider the remaining paths below as you decide the way you will walk through life.

## **Walking the Line**

One short step away from those who walk in infancy is the rule-keeper, a person who thinks he thinks for himself but who is actually doing nothing more than following a list of rules. These individuals put their trust in rule keeping; they focus on the rules — the do's and the don'ts. They *appear* loyal, devoted, and committed, but their focus is primarily behavioral not transformational.

As a result, they are often tattletales, seeking to find fault with others in the church and reporting them to authority figures, or spreading tales about the wrongs others are doing. They will often argue with other Christians about whose rules are the right rules and cause division and fragmentation when people don't agree with them on the rules. These rule-keepers are often the most rigid, thoughtless, and inflexible Christians. They also have little tolerance for others.

These individuals seem to do be doing okay when things are going well in their lives, but, sadly, they have little ability to handle adversity when it arises. When stress suddenly hits — a child diagnosed with cancer, a loved one injured in a car wreck, or the loss of a job — when they have “kept all the rules,” they collapse into doubt: “I don’t understand. I go to church. I have my devotion every morning. I pay tithe faithfully. I eat only the approved foods. I don’t watch the wrong TV shows. I don’t curse, or drink, or use tobacco. I have been doing everything God says; this isn’t supposed to happen. I am supposed to be blessed.”

What happens next? They will either double down into more rigid rule keeping, believing there must be some secret sin they must overcome — thereby further growing their list of rules to keep — or they become disillusioned and simply give up.

The only healthy approach is to realize that God doesn’t run His universe on a rules-based system. As the Creator, God’s laws are the protocols upon which reality works. Learning the truth about God and His methods and entering into a relationship with Him in which one is loved for who they are (a child of God) and not for what they do (keep the right rules) puts a person on the right road — the road to wellness. In that trust relationship, one learns it is about renewing the heart with love for God and for others, not keeping a list of rules.

Rule-keepers focus on walking the line, on carefully managing their behavior according to the rules, while failing to understand and experience God’s transforming love and methods. I encourage you to understand the reality of God’s universe, experience God’s transforming presence in your life and avoid getting ensnared into the hopeless and discouraging life of rule-keeping.

## **Walking in Confusion**

Some struggling through life’s problems are confused. They say to me, “I just don’t know what to do or who to believe. There are so many different churches, teachings, religions — how do you know what to believe? How can you know what is true?” The younger generation is being told there is no absolute truth, that everyone’s truth is their personal truth, which only instills more uncertainty.

They may have been told that “the Bible is the only source of truth,” but this answer doesn’t work for such individuals because they know there are thousands of different Christian groups who argue back and forth about Bible truth while all claiming the Bible supports their views. So, even if you get them to accept the Bible as truth, they will ask, “Which Christian group is right about what the Bible teaches?”

Some people have told me that they were raised Christian and have since tried Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, or agnosticism but have never found lasting peace. They are deeply confused about what to do or what to believe. And when life’s difficulties arise, they are easily overwhelmed and discouraged.

My approach has been to teach them to love truth, to develop an attitude of wanting to know what is true and to apply it to their life when *they* understand it. I teach them to start by developing an understanding of God’s design laws. These are the protocols upon which reality is built to operate. These design laws are constants; they never change — so they are powerful touchstones that we can turn to in order to test the various doctrines, belief systems, or ideas being promoted. God’s design laws include: the laws of physics, gravity, and health — but more important, the laws of love, liberty, and worship:

**The law of love** is the principle of giving upon which all life is built to operate. Any organism or system that refuses to give will die. (See my article [“The Little Horn, God’s Law, and How You have been Deceived.”](#))

**The law of liberty** is the design protocol required for love to function in relationships. Love only exists in the atmosphere of freedom. Violate freedom — for instance, threaten to kill someone who doesn’t love you — and love will be damaged, rebellion will be instilled, and individuality will be eroded. (See my presentation [“God’s Principle — The Law of Love and Liberty.”](#))

**The law of worship** is the principle of modeling; i.e., by beholding we become changed. We actually will become like the God we admire and worship, neurobiologically and characterologically. This is why it is critical to come to the truth about God. If we believe lies about the Creator, worshiping a God who is other than love — a tyrant who uses his power to torture and kill — then rather than being restored to true godliness we are damaged to become more selfish, fearful, and tyrannical.

People who walk in confusion are those who cannot differentiate truth from error, who get overwhelmed by the plethora of divergent ideas, and who haven’t understood God’s design laws. If you want to break out of this cloud of confusion, I encourage you to pursue God’s design laws and to harmonize Scripture with those laws and how life actually works.

## **Walking Alone (wandering away)**

Some people have gained a knowledge of God and know his methods and principles; they have understood His character, laws, protocols, and how life is to be lived. They have experienced His peace in their lives and feel confident in their abilities to practice God’s methods; and so they set out on their own to live godly lives. They create routines for life, not focusing on rules, but on the principles of God. But then, slowly at first, they stop spending time with God. They haven’t purposely chosen to rebel against God; they would be shocked to think that they are anything but a loyal follower of God. However, over time, their life got busy with responsibilities and, somewhere along the way, they lost touch with God without even noticing. Then one day they burn out, find themselves overwhelmed, have problems that have piled up and feel crushed under the weight and stresses of life.

Those who walk alone have gotten busy with life, or mission, or responsibilities and have slowly wandered away from God. If you find yourself in this situation, choose to spend time with God every day — take walk in nature, meditate regularly on His word, sing songs of praise, and join in Bible study and Christian fellowship. I encourage you to reconnect with your Creator and Savior today.

## **Walking in Rebellion**

These are people who have had a knowledge of God but for various reasons have chosen to reject that truth and replace it with some lie:

**For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to**

be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles (Romans 1:21-23 NIV84).

You must understand that in these last days some people will appear whose lives are controlled by their own lusts. They will mock you and will ask, "He promised to come, didn't he? Where is he? Our ancestors have already died, but everything is still the same as it was since the creation of the world!" **They purposely ignore the fact** that long ago God gave a command, and the heavens and earth were created (2 Peter 3:3-5 GNT).

Such people never find peace, health, or happiness because peace, health, and happiness are only possible in harmony with God and His methods for life. Sadly, there is little to do for people who willfully reject truth and choose lies other than to set them free to reap what they have chosen — which will be pain and suffering. Sometimes, in that suffering, people will realize that the path they have chosen (to reject the truth about God) is the wrong path and return to God, as in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

## Walking with God

Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away (Genesis 5:24 NIV84).

This is the goal; this is the way; this is the only path of health and life — to walk with God so closely that this world of selfishness is cut out of our hearts and we are fully united with God, such that we are ready to walk right into heaven!

Each and every day, spend time with God. Use the integrative evidence-based approach: read the Scripture, always harmonizing it with God's revelations in nature and how life actually works. Spend time meditating on each of God's design laws. Contemplate the God who built reality and the protocols He instilled in His creation. Meditate on nature — look at the beauty, symmetry, constancy, and the immeasurable complexity and diversity. Spend time contemplating the life of Christ and realize that you are watching our Creator — meditate on His character, methods, and principles. Talk with God daily and open your heart to Him, spending quiet time listening to Him.

Each day, tell God, "Father, I want a heart and mind that is sensitive to truth because all truth leads back to you. Help me see, comprehend, and assimilate your truth at the earliest possible moment that I am capable. Expand my mind to discern ever deeper insights into your kingdom and methods. Change me; take away the longing for selfishness and worldliness and instill your love for life, health, goodness, and people. May it no longer be my fearful self who lives, but may your character of love live in me!"

Tell God of your heartaches, anger, resentments, hurts, frustrations, aspirations, longings, and desires — but then in humbleness ask God to clean them up, to run all your longings and emotions through His cleansing love, to improve and strengthen the healthy desires, and to remove and eliminate any destructive desires.

Always give Him thanks — for who He is, for how He governs (upon the laws of love and liberty), for the evidences He has provided, for what He has achieved through Jesus for our salvation, for His love for

you, and for His eternal love that never ends and never fails.

Then share with others your love for God and the truth you know about God. Make life a journey in which you walk with God every day, knowing that no matter how difficult your road, you will never travel it alone!