

Small group discussion and individual reflection - episode 4

It's Not How You Start, It's How You Finish



Have you noticed that the people who aren't following the rules seem to be winning in the game called life? I mean, look at who's driving the nice cars, wearing the expensive jewelry, expensive clothes, and they seem to have all the power.

Why in the world should you and I consider following Jesus if the real path to everything we want is out on the streets, hustling to get all of it on our own? Besides, nobody is helping us, so we might as well go take what we want and need? Right?

Well, hold on a second. Maybe we aren't seeing it for what it really is. As a matter of fact, the Northwest Indiana Times Newspaper published an article in February 2014 stating that the average life expectancy of an active gang member is 20 years, 5 months. Thinking that the only way to have everything in life you really want is to forget God and go get it any way you can is not a new idea. That idea goes back as far as the Old Testament in the Bible.

Take a look at these verses in Psalm 73...

Psalm 73:2-3 says, "But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind. Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment. Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches.

But then the writer of this Psalm realizes the truth when he sees how the story ends when we choose our own path over God's plan for us.

Psalm 73:18 says, "Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward, you will receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. But for me, it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all your works."

Discuss this in a group or with a friend. Have you ever looked at others and envied the way they seem to be getting everything in life they could ever want?

Is it better to live your life your own way, or is it better to trust God and allow Him to bless us and bring success?

Write a prayer to God on the back of this sheet, committing to Him that you will be faithful to Him and seek His blessing on your life, instead of trying to have success all on your own.

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