



The Ancient Path, Jeremiah 6:16

The Ancient Path

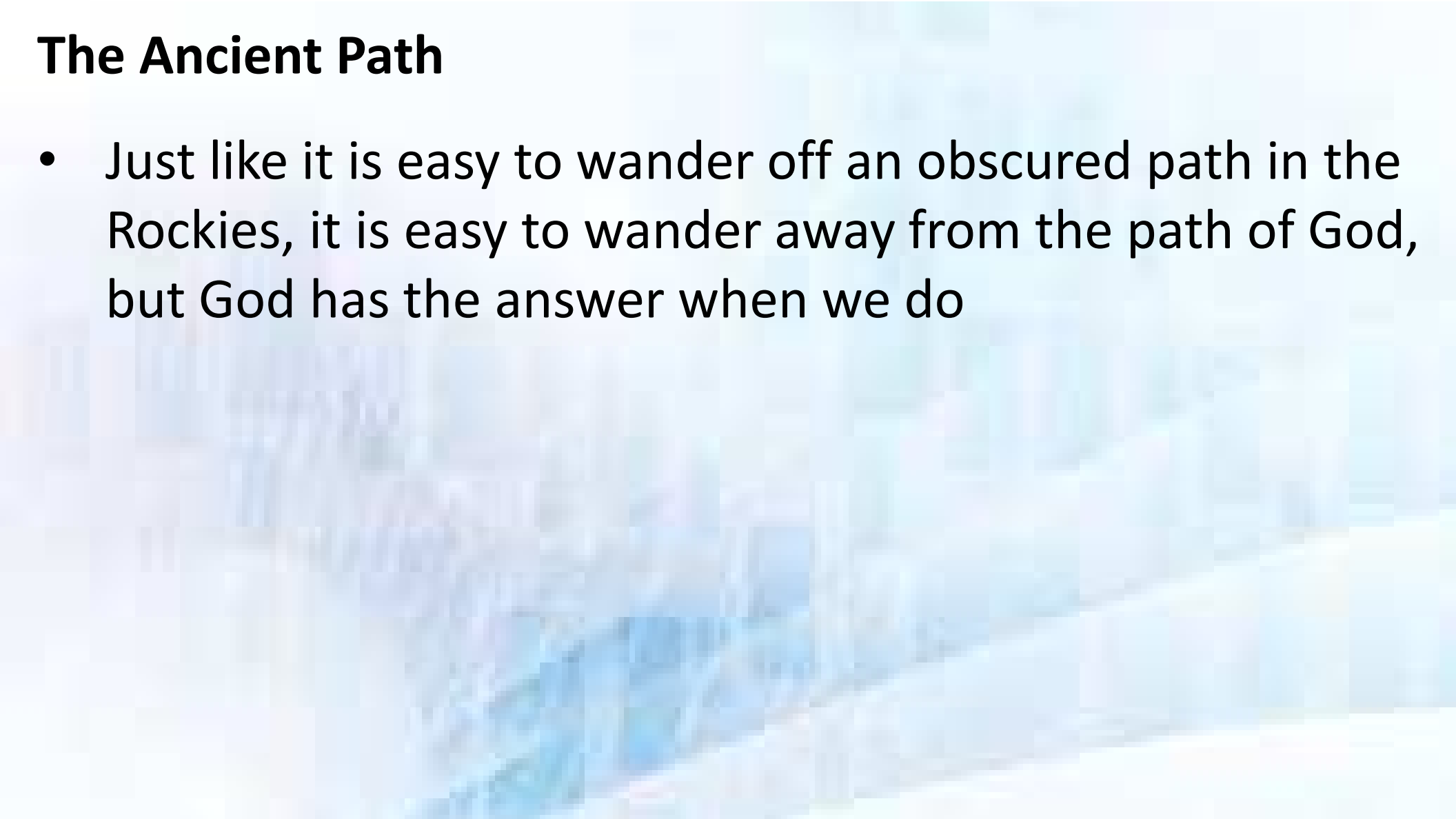
- Hiking the Rockies on our Colorado building trip
- Sunday afternoon hiking trail instructions
 - Stay on the trail
 - Stay with the group
 - Follow the instructions of the one leading you
 - Don't remove or disturb anything from or around the trail

The Ancient Path

- God said it like this in **Deuteronomy 5:33 NLT**, “Stay on the path that the Lord your God has commanded you to follow. Then you will live long and prosperous lives in the land you are about to enter and occupy.”
- Jesus said in **John 14:6 NLT**, “I am the way and the truth and the life (*the path*). No one comes to the Father except through me.”

The Ancient Path

- Just like it is easy to wander off an obscured path in the Rockies, it is easy to wander away from the path of God, but God has the answer when we do



Scripture

- **Jeremiah 6:16 NIV**, This is what the Lord says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, ‘We will not walk in it.’”
- **Jeremiah 6:16 NLT**, This is what the Lord says: “Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. But you reply, ‘No, that’s not the road we want!’”

Where Judah is at

- Judah and their Kings have been under intense political and economic pressure from Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon
- King Hezekiah had reversed the religious changes some kings before him made
- Manasseh re-instituted polytheistic worship and reversed the religious changes made by his father Hezekiah

Where Judah is at

- He established the free adoption of foreign cults, and the bitter persecution of God's prophets
- So zealous was he in his worship of the foreign gods, he is said to have participated in the sacrificial cult of Moloch which consisted of sacrificing young children or passing them through fire
- The book of Kings suggests that he may have executed supporters of his father's reforms

Where Judah is at

- Jerusalem has been under siege for several months because they have departed from their covenant with God
- Why would God allow this to His chosen people whom He describes as the “apple of His eye”?
- He is being true to His word

Where Judah is at

- He is being true to His word
 - **Deuteronomy 28:1-2 NIV**, “If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. 2 All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God”

Where Judah is at

- He is being true to His word
 - **Deuteronomy 28:15 NIV**, “However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you.”

Where Judah is at

- He must allow drastic actions to be taken to ensure His prophecies about the Messiah coming from Judah are met
- **John 4:22 NLT**, “You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews.”

Where Judah is at

- The pressures on Christians today are great and at times, oppressive
 - Pressure to compromise, accept sin as normal, blend in, be quiet
- Like Judah you may find yourself at crossroads that God has bought you to, losing His sense of peace and presence
- The prophet Jeremiah gives Judah and us the counsel needed at our crossroads

Stop, be still and honest with the direction of your life

- **NLT**, “Stop at the crossroads and look around.”
- **Psalm 46:10 NIV**, “Be still, and know that I am God.”
- We live in a hectic society
- Meg Ryan, “I don't think we realize just how fast we go until you stop for a minute and realize just how loud and how hectic your life is, and how easily distracted you can get.”
 - Fast, loud, hectic, distracted are great words describing our society

Stop, be still and honest with the direction of your life

- Imagine you are lost in the Rockies, fear creeping in, you will go deeper into your lostness by just running without knowledge
 - They tell me the best thing you can do is be still and let help come to you but that is so very difficult to do
- This is a good command not just for those whose life is unraveling but all Children of God

Stop, be still and honest with the direction of your life

- Stop and be brutally honest with yourself on the direction your life is going, the decisions you are making, the influences you have allowed in your life, the priorities of your life
 - What compromises have you allowed in your life tainting your Christian walk?
 - What pressures are you surrendering to that lead you away from your commitment to God?

Stop, be still and honest with the direction of your life

- Stop and be brutally honest with yourself on the direction your life is going, the decisions you are making, the influences you have allowed in your life, the priorities of your life
 - What sin has found it's way into your life to ease the pressure?
- Stop and be brutally honest with yourself

Ask and seek directions to the good way

- **NLT**, “Ask for the old, godly way.”
- This sure sounds boring to our culturally tuned hearts
 - We like new, shiny, exciting everything
 - There is always a new way to live, think, diet, list to follow, device needed
 - But they will never fully satisfy you , you will always seek more

Ask and seek directions to the good way

- They will never bring what you truly are seeking, “*Rest for your souls*”, peace, security, comfort, joy
- **Philippians 4:7 NLT**, “Experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”
- What is this old, godly, ancient way?

Ask and seek directions to the good way

- **Hebrews 13:8 NIV**, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”
 - So, this ancient path begins in yesterday and extends throughout eternity
 - This path has not changed course or altered its direction because it is the same yesterday and today and forever
 - Nor will it change direction tomorrow, it is secure and leads to our heart’s true desires

Ask and seek directions to the good way

- The ancient way is simply faith or trust in God's character, word, and direction for life
 - Adam/Eve – stay away from the tree in the middle, it will kill you
 - Noah – build an arc in the middle of the desert
 - Abraham – follow me and I will make you a great nation

Ask and seek directions to the good way

- The ancient way is simply faith or trust in God's character, word, and direction for life
 - Israel – follow the commands I have given you
 - Today – **John 6:28-29 NIV**, “28 Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” 29 Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”
- One single path that runs the entire time of humanity without error, without corruption

Keep making decisions that allows you to consistently walk in the good direction

- It's not enough to just identify the path or even agree that it is the good and perfect path
- **NLT**, "Walk in it. Travel its path."
- Decisions must be made that allow you to walk and travel its path thus receiving all God's blessings

Keep making decisions that allows you to consistently walk in the good direction

- So often we want to have God's blessing on our path without making the decisions that keep us on His path
- We will often make decisions that we think will make it easier to live today but pulls us away from the ancient path
- We ask the questions, "How much sin is too much? Do I really want to think God thoughts? Will I miss out?"

Keep making decisions that allows you to consistently walk in the good direction

- You must concisely, overtly make decisions where you
 - Decide who you are as a born-again child of God
 - Decide what influences you will allow in your daily walk with God
 - Decide what thoughts you will entertain
 - Decide who will you allow to have a voice in your life

Keep making decisions that allows you to consistently walk in the good direction

- Judah's choice, **NIV** "But you said, 'We will not walk in it.'", **NLT** "But you reply, 'No, that's not the road we want!'"
- **Message**, "Go stand at the crossroads and look around. Ask for directions to the old road, The tried-and-true road. Then take it. Discover the right route for your souls. But they said, 'Nothing doing. We aren't going that way.'"

God did not give up on Israel, but He did allow judgement to fall upon His chosen people because of the consequences of their decisions

- Remember, God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, He will not change
- What makes you think He will allow an exception for you
- God's patience, mercy, grace, and forgiveness is legendary
- But so is His justice, truthfulness, honesty

God did not give up on Israel, but He did allow judgement to fall upon His chosen people because of the consequences of their decisions

- Tennis has a statement, *“The ball is in your court”*
- Jeremiah 6:16 is God’s way of saying, “The ball is now in your court”
- Decide carefully because some decisions have consequences for today, tomorrow, and some are eternal



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