

Getting Off Course

We bought a new car in August of last year. It has a feature that warns me whenever I begin to get out of my lane when driving. Whenever I merge into another lane without using my signal, the car vibrates, the steering wheel stiffens, and a "lane departure" message pops up.

This feature has made me more conscious of my driving and the need to make sure that I stay in my lane! This feature makes me think of our spiritual journey to the spiritual Promised Land. As we make our way to the city of God, is it possible for us to get out of the right lane? Can we get off course? It certainly is! What are some spiritual lane departure signs?

Departure Signs

- Dying Zeal – The church in Ephesus had left their "first love" (Revelation 2:1-4). Their love, zeal, passion, and enthusiasm for the Lord had greatly diminished. This was a huge sign that they soon would no longer be recognized by the Lord as His people (Revelation 2:5). Do you remember when you first became a Christian? Do you remember how excited and passionate you were about worshipping, learning, and evangelizing? Do you still have the same level of passion and zeal today? If not, it could be a sign that you are getting off course!
- Wrong Focus – Sometimes people will be tempted to leave the Lord and because they say, "there are hypocrites in the church." Christians misbehaving has been a sad reality since the beginning of the church (Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Galatians 2:11-14). The ungodly actions of Christians shouldn't affect how we respond to the sacrificial death of Jesus (Romans 5:6-8). When we focus on everything bad in the church, we may become tempted to compromise the truth and join a friendly but religiously wrong group.
- Minimizing Sin – The church in Pergamum began tolerating things that should have been intolerable (Revelation 2:12-15). They were tolerating sin. They were tolerating false teaching and teachers. They were tolerating sexual immorality. If we are not careful, our culture can rub off on us. We can start compromising and changing how we view sin. We can begin minimizing the seriousness of sexual sins, misuse of the Lord's money, immodesty, and filthy entertainment.
- Spiritual Arrogance – The church in Laodicea was lukewarm (Revelation 3:14-17). They had become spiritually indifferent and bankrupt and didn't even know it! Their spiritual assessment of themselves was way off! This same thing can also happen when we become content with our spiritual progress and are unwilling to evaluate ourselves with the word of God.

Getting Back on Course

- Take heed. Warnings don't do us any good if we fail to heed them. The word of God is a spiritual mirror (James 1:19-25). It reveals the truth about how we look spiritually. It exposes our flaws, problems, and imperfections. When the spiritual mirror reflects where we need to improve, we would be wise to listen (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).
- Take action. Jesus called on churches that had gotten off course to repent (Revelation 2:5, 16; 3:19). Repentance involves change and reformation. It involves humbling ourselves before God and begging for His forgiveness.
- Stay focused. Avoid drifting and stay focused on Jesus (Hebrews 2:1-4; 12:1-2). Love and serve Jesus. Allow your appreciation for His sacrifice to guide every decision you make in life.

Conclusion:

Do you need help getting back on course?

- Shawn Jeffries