

Reading the Road Signs

Colossians 1:21-23

When we read or hear warnings like this, it **isn't** our cue to say, "I hope she's listening," or "That doesn't apply to me"

What?

God's warning signs along the way keep us secure day by day

God's promises **and** warnings work together to keep us secure—

These **warnings were written to believers**

The warnings often **come with promises or encouragement**

Philippians 2:12-13, ESV—Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, ...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure

When we willingly believe God's promises, He saves us

But it is possible to **believe with superficial faith**

Genuine saving faith **continues** to believe and obey both **the promises and the warnings**

It's like **the promises are out front, drawing us forward, and the warnings are behind, guarding from falling away**

The warnings are one of **God's primary means of making sure that all who believe are secure**, since they believe His warnings and avoid the danger of superficial faith

The warnings aren't saying that we can lose salvation; **they warn us that faith can be superficial faith that doesn't save**

Genuine faith believes that **we must depend on God for both initial salvation and daily "running the race"**

Connection with Jesus—

Matthew 10:28-31, ESV—And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell

So falling away represents **eternal destruction**

He said this **to His disciples**; but immediately He says—

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows

The Big Question—What about people who have fallen away?

If their words or lifestyle denies Christ, then the faith of these people did not prove to be genuine

God intends for this person to **read or hear such a warning, which will prompt genuine, saving faith** in their heart

So What?

The warnings are to give us security, not destroy it

When we read or hear such a warning, that's our cue to **"examine ourselves, to see if we are in the faith,"**

So we ask ourselves, "Is my life producing the fruit of the Spirit?" "Am I growing in doing good, loving God and others?"

The last word—the Preacher of Hebrews

Hebrews 6:9-10, ESV—Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do

Now What?

View God's warnings as His means of keeping us on the "straight and narrow" path

Respond when you hear or read such warnings by examining yourself