

The Principle of the Path 3: Your Situation Is *Not* Unique

The Principle of the Path: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be
 Andy Stanley – Thomas Nelson (March 21, 2011) – ISBN-10: 0849946360

POTP #1: The Principle Applies to YOU

1. What You Choose Determines Your Outcome

- Paths Lead to Predictable Places
- Choices of Paths Lead to Predictable Places

2. This Is a Principle

- It Is Not a Law or Command to Follow (You cannot break it or avoid it.)
- It Is a Universal Truth (Applies to everyone everywhere, known or unknown)

3. Your Choices Regarding a Principle

- You Can Learn a Principle, and Leverage It
- You Can Ignore a Principle, and Regret It

4. The Principle of the Harvest (You REAP what you SOW.)

Gal 6:7-10 ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

5. Results of Embracing the Principle of the Path (Avoid regret and wasted time)

POTP #2: Why Bad Things Happen to Smart People: The Principle Introduced

1. Know the Difference Between Solution and Path

- Solution = Quick Fix
- Path = Time and a Change of Direction

2. What Is Usually Needed: A Change of Direction

I've talked to many individuals who want to discuss their problems. But they don't really have problems. They have chosen to live in the wrong direction. They don't need a solution. They need a new direction. (p.12)

3. Decisions Are Simply Steps on a Chosen Path

What we experience as unrelated isolated events are really steps in a specific direction. And like every physical path you've ever ventured down, this path has a specific destination. (p.13) "It will work out somehow" is self-deception.

4. Direction –Not Intention– Determines Our Destination

The direction you are currently traveling—relationally, financially, spiritually, [etc.]—will determine where you end up in each of those respective arenas. This is true regardless of your goals, your dreams, your wishes, or your wants. The principle of the path trumps all those things. (p.15)

5. Your Choice: God's Path or Your Own?

You don't have problems to fix; you have directions that need to change. It is time to begin living in the right direction. (p.17)

- Ps 17:5 Uphold my steps in **Your paths**, That my footsteps may not slip.
- Ps 23:3 He restores my soul; He leads me in **the paths of righteousness** For His name's sake.

The Principle of the Path #3: Your Situation Is NOT Unique

1. 3 Truths About Getting _____

- We don't get lost on _____
- We never know _____ it happens
- The _____, not my intentions, determines where I end up

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2. A Look from the Window (Proverbs 7:6-27)

(POTP 19-20) My observation... humans have a propensity for choosing paths that do not lead in the direction they want to go. For much of our decision making, we lean hard into our intentions and pay very little attention to the direction of the path we've chosen. I see it all the time. Even with very smart people.

It breaks my heart how many people I speak with who don't connect the dots between the choices they make and the outcomes they experience. They've come to believe the popular notion that as long as their intentions are good, as long as their hearts are in the right place (whatever that means), as long as they do their best and try their hardest, it doesn't really matter which path they take. They believe somehow they will end up in a good place. But life doesn't work that way.

	⁶ For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice, ⁷ And saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, A young man devoid of understanding,
	⁸ Passing along the street near her corner; And he took the path to her house ⁹ In the twilight, in the evening, In the black and dark night.
	¹⁰ And there a woman met him, <i>With</i> the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart. ¹¹ She <i>was</i> loud and rebellious, Her feet would not stay at home. ¹² At times <i>she was</i> outside, at times in the open square, Lurking at every corner. ¹³ So she caught him and kissed him; With an impudent face she said to him: ¹⁴ "I have peace offerings with me; Today I have paid my vows. ¹⁵ So I came out to meet you, Diligently to seek your face, And I have found you. ¹⁶ I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of Egyptian linen. ¹⁷ I have perfumed my bed With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. ¹⁸ Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; Let us delight ourselves with love. ¹⁹ For my husband <i>is</i> not at home; He has gone on a long journey; ²⁰ He has taken a bag of money with him, <i>And</i> will come home on the appointed day." ²¹ With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, With her flattering lips she seduced him.
	²² Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, ²³ Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, He did not know it <i>would cost</i> his life. ²⁴ Now therefore, listen to me, <i>my</i> children; Pay attention to the words of my mouth: ²⁵ Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways , Do not stray into her paths ;
	²⁶ For she has cast down <u>many</u> wounded, And all who were slain by her were <u>strong men</u> . ²⁷ Her house <i>is</i> the way to hell, Descending to the chambers of death. (cf. Prov 5:21-23)

3. Questions to Ask:

- *Are there disconnects in your life?*
- *Are there discrepancies between what you desire in your heart and what you are doing with your life?*
- *Is there alignment between your intentions and your direction?*

The principle of the path is operating in your life every minute of every day. You are currently on a financial path of some kind. You are on a relational path. You are continuing down a moral and ethical path. And each of these paths has a destination. My hope is that by becoming aware of this powerful principle, you will have the wisdom to know which path to choose and the courage to stay the course. (p.34)