
The Principle of the Path 4: Why Are You Surprised?

The Principle of the Path: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be
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POTP #1: The Principle Applies to YOU

1. What You Choose Determines Your Outcome

- Choices are steps on paths that lead to predictable places

2. This Is a Principle

- 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...arenas. This is true regardless of your goals, your dreams, your wishes, or your wants. The principle...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. (p.17)

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

POTP #3: Your Situation Is NOT Unique – DISCONNECT

1. 3 Truths About Getting Lost

Not on purpose | We don't know when it happens | Road, not intentions, determines end

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

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...it doesn't really matter which path they take...somehow they will end up in a good place. But life doesn't work that way. (p.20)

3. Questions to Ask: Disconnects in your life? Desires vs doing? Intentions vs direction?

Prov. 5:21-23 For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He ponders all his paths. ²² His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, And he is caught in the cords of his sin. ²³ He shall die for lack of instruction, And in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

Why Are You Surprised?

Life would be so much easier the second time around if we had an opportunity to learn from our first time around. But we don't. Primarily because we only go around once. So we are left to make decisions without the benefit of the experience necessary to make informed decisions. (p.36)

The idea of making life decisions in arenas where we lack life experience should put a little fear in all our hearts. But I don't run into too many people paralyzed by indecision. Instead of carefully analyzing the destinations associated with the various path options offered, our tendency is to charge down the path of least resistance, oblivious to the obvious. (p.37)

Often they'll admit someone did try to get their attention with a word of caution, but they ignored the advice. They figured everything would somehow work out. Which, of course, is true. Everything somehow works out. Every decision has an outcome, and every path has a destination. And so there they are, exactly where they don't want to be—but exactly where their paths led them. And now life is complicated. Unnecessarily complicated. Unnecessarily, because the warning signs were all in place. (p.38)

1. The _____ of Looking Ahead and Acting on What You See
*A prudent [man] foresees evil and hides himself;
The simple pass on [and] are punished. (Prov 27:12)*

The PRUDENT

- a. _____ **Ahead:** The future is connected to my present choice
b. _____ **Accordingly:** Choose paths that miss danger

The SIMPLE

- a. _____ **Danger:** Same input; just doesn't connect dots
b. _____ **Dearly:** Punished by their refusal to act wisely

"Who would be so...naive?" you ask. Pretty much everybody at some point. Every time you eat something you know you will regret, you fall into this category. Every time you talk yourself out of exercising, you talk yourself out of a preferred future. Every time you light up a cigarette, lie to your spouse, or spend money you don't have, you act as if today is in no way connected to tomorrow. ... You know life is connected. You just don't live as if it is. You make decisions today as if today is isolated from tomorrow. (40-41)

I know what you might be thinking. Well, I know this guy who blah-blah-blah, and nothing bad happened to him! He didn't arrive at a bad destination. To which I would add, "Yet." But there are [earthly] exceptions. (45)

READ: (42-44) "This is a truth..." to "It is the way God designed the world to work."

2. The _____ About Paths & Consequences of Our Decisions
a. _____ **changes a relationship, not the outcome**
b. _____ **changes the way forward, not the past**
c. _____ **changes your path, not your consequences**