

I DON'T ALWAYS LIKE THE PATH I AM TRAVELING

By Pastor Greg Hooker

“Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry” II Timothy 4:11).

My friends, ever so often I think it beneficial to step back as it were, and assess the impact and direction of one's life within the confines of our little world that God has graciously allowed us to occupy. Am I making a positive difference? Am I living a viable witness in front of friends and family? What could I do better to best serve and witness for my Lord and Savior? Is there sin in my life that would cause harm to the Gospel and bring disrepute on the name of Christ? Does my life do justice to the Christian life - which, by definition means: 'Christ-like'?

Sadly, many times my own personal assessments simply leave me ashamed and embarrassed. Consequently, I ask myself; 'how on earth did I deviate from the path Christ clearly laid out for me'? Where did I make the wrong turn? God's Word was my infallible roadmap, but somehow I failed to study and follow its directions. I simply got off course!

John Mark, the writer of the Gospel that bears his name, is an example of one who strayed from the path God desired for his life. What it was that Mark did, or did not do, is not specifically stated in the Scriptures, but he became a victim to 'back-sliding'. Not that he lost, or ever could lose his salvation; but Mark lost his focus on the Lord's mission for his life.

Be that as it may, the Apostle Paul informs us that Mark returned to the Lord's plan for his life and, once more, became "profitable for the ministry." In other words, Mark assessed his life and decided that the road he was on was paved with more trouble than it was worth. Blessings were missed while on his alternate path. Mark learned that the greatest path of blessings is the one begun at the moment he received Christ! So he returned and God used him greatly!

Dear Lord, as I take assessment of my own life I come up with a long list of undesirables. Rather than make excuses and rationalizations, I simply ask you to forgive me and set my feet on the path you would have me travel. Help me to stay the course, look straight ahead, and strive for the prize set before me.

In Jesus name, your son, Pastor Greg.