

THE CHURCH IS AT THE CROSSROADS

March 29, 2020

Jeremiah 6:16 NLT

This is what the Lord says: "Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. But you reply, 'No, that's not the road we want!'"

The old way involved unhealthy crutches.

Jeremiah 17:5-6 NLT

This is what the Lord says: "Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans, who rely on human strength and turn their hearts away from the Lord. 6 They are like stunted shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future. They will live in the barren wilderness, in an uninhabited salty land.

How do you know if something serves as a crutch in your life? You reach for it, instead of God, to make yourself feel better.

Good things become bad things when we lean on them rather than the Lord.

The ancient way involves leaning only on the Lord.

Jeremiah 17:7-8 NLT

But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. 8 They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit.

God often uses crisis to reveal our crutches.

When God knocks your crutches out from under you, He's not trying to bring you pain, He's trying to bring you close.

John 15:1-4 NLT

"I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. 3 You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me."

One of the most romantic things God does is take you through a season where there are no alternatives. For it is there you learn He is your best option.

Question:

When times are toughest, what unhealthy crutches do you most consistently lean on?

The old way involved unnecessary busyness.

Earthly busyness always gets in the way of Kingdom effectiveness.

Busyness is often a symptom of an addiction to the word "more."

The ancient way involves Godly simplicity.

Proverbs 13:7 MSG

A pretentious, showy life is an empty life; a plain and simple life is a full life.

Luke 10:38-42 NKJV

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." 41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. 42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

The Godly path leads away from the traditions of man and priorities of the world to embrace the timeless patterns and truths of God's Word.

Questions:

- 1) What are 2-3 "busy" things you need to do less of every week?
- 2) What are 2-3 "simple" things you need to make a part of your weekly schedule?

The old way involved living your best life.

How do you know you're self-centered? The bulk of your decisions benefit you more than anyone else.

The ancient way involves you dying daily.

When is a Christ-follower most like Christ? When they are dying.

Galatians 2:20 NLT

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

Just as death in life is certain for every human, so death to self is for every believer.

Luke 9:23-24 NLT

Then he said to the crowd, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. 24 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it."