

THE GEARS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

“Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart,

with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment.”

Mat 22:37-38

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CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

In life, just as with driving vehicles, different people move at different speeds and gears. Some steadfastly move forward with determination and a clear picture of their destination. Others, distracted by their environment, slow down consistently, even moving to neutral lost in their thoughts. Finally, some never get anywhere because they keep being sidetracked by the things of the world, oftentimes going backwards.

As we become believers and have committed to love God through following Christ, we obviously must discover how this is achieved through the Word of God. Then, we must we move forward in our daily walk with the Lord, in knowledge, discernment and wisdom.

Interestingly, we find that some move forward steadfastly, others move along but oftentimes switch to neutral lacking determination and commitment, and finally some move backwards attracted by the world's distractions and temptations. That doesn't include a great majority who are eternally parked in the world's attractions.

Considering our Christian walk, are we steadfastly moving forward for Christ, do we move to neutral consistently, or are we mostly moving backwards? In other words, are we in drive, neutral or reverse Christian mode?

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“And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside;
and the birds came and devoured them.
Some fell on stony places, where they did not have

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much earth; and they immediately sprang up
because they had no depth of earth.
But when the sun was up they were scorched,
and because they had no root they withered away.”

Mat 13:4-6

ARE WE FOR GOD OR THE WORLD?

Have we ever tried to drive our car backwards to reach a destination? If we did, we would probably never get anywhere as we'd be in a crash in no time. Yet, we have people who profess to be Christians, yet their lives demonstrate a much closer attachment to the world than to God.

It could be compared to a person who received the revelation of the truth of salvation through Christ, then confess to believe, yet never make a true commitment to move forward. While they realize they have found the truth, they simply can't give up the world's attractions and surrender their own will to God's.

Paul gave us this warning in Hebrews 6:26-27: "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment." In Hebrews 6:4-6 he adds "For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ... if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame."

Are we living the Christian life on God's terms, or think we still can on our terms? We sure can't fool God!

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“Nevertheless I have this against you,
that you have left your first love.
Remember therefore from where
you have fallen; repent and do the first
works, or else I will come to you quickly
and remove your lampstand
from its place, unless you repent.”

Rev 2:4-5

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**ARE WE CHRISTIANS
IN NEUTRAL GEAR?**

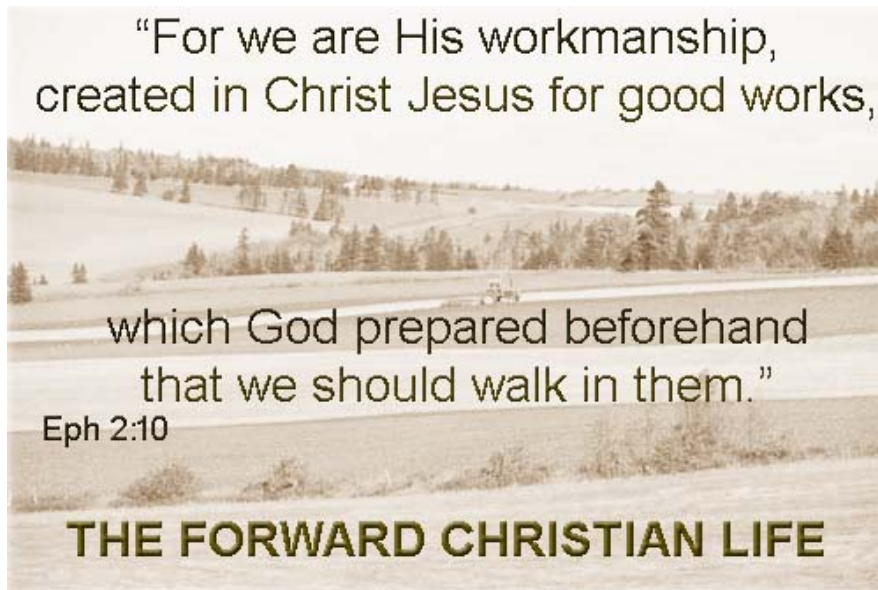
Is our Christian life at a standstill, or perhaps in neutral? Do we only count on God's blessings, without ever moving forward in our commitment to follow Christ? Do we understand that following Christ requires we put our gear in forward drive to become useful to the Lord and be His witnesses to the world?

Paul in Gal 4:9 challenged believers this way: "But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how *is it that* you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?" As a parallel, are we like people conducting personal business while at the employ and paid by someone else? Jesus in Luke 9:62 said, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Either we move forward in the kingdom or we'll eventually find ourselves looking back and become useless to God.

To the angel of the church of Laodicean, this clear warning should get us serious about our commitment: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth." (Rev 3:15-16)

God is not to be taken lightly!

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The Word of God teaches us clearly that true Christianity involves moving forward in our faith, learn what God expects from us, and that we are all appointed by Christ to be His witnesses to a lost and dying world. Christ's last words were to proclaim the message of salvation, and it is not reserved for evangelists only, but applicable to all believers.

While we may not all be called to go overseas or address crowds, we are all called to reach out to our world; our neighbors, our families, our friends, with the message of salvation. And this is done through our Christian walk as well as sharing the message of Christ. Paul in Col 3:2 said, “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” Then in Eph 6:11 gave us the tools to succeed this way: “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Not sure how to go about it? Well James 1:5 says this: “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”

Not sure if you're able to? “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Philip. 4:13)

How do we know if we're in forward gear? Jesus said, “Therefore by their fruits you will know them.” Mat 7:20

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