

How Did We Get Here?

Have you ever wondered how you have gotten to the exact point in life where you are now? If not, allow your mind to take a trip back through time and observe the path that you have traveled these many years. Go all the way back to your childhood. Do you live in the same town now as you did then or did you move away? Whatever happened to that boyfriend or girlfriend you had when you were younger? Did you marry him or her or did you meet and wed someone later in life? Did you finish high school and go on to college? What happened next? Can you remember the jobs you had? Can you bring to mind all the different people you met? Along the road to where you are right now, did you experience any tragedies? Were there any illnesses or deaths in your immediate family? Did you suffer job loss, family break-up or personal sickness?

No matter what road any of us have traversed to get to where we are, the truth is that each of us is here as the result of decisions. In our younger days, our lives were shaped primarily by the decisions of our parents. As we aged, we began making our own decisions. Suppose each of us drew up maps of our lives with the starting point being our birth. This map would contain countless numbers of roads, not just one. Each road would have numerous intersections, each representing a different path we could choose to take or, in our younger years, others took for us. If such a map were to actually exist, we would likely find it populated with more roads than the most finicky cartographer could draw. If we could see that map, doubtless we would notice intersections that now we wish we would have negotiated differently. Instead of going one way, a way that turned out badly, we would have gone another way.

Basically, along the road to where we are now, we have made good decisions and we have made bad decisions. We have made regrettable choices and we have made stellar choices. The path we've traveled is amazing and the adventure goes on moment by moment as we blaze our trails into adulthood and our winter years.

There's one factor in our personal histories that has not yet been mentioned, that factor being God. Some would look at where they are now and say they got there simply by the natural course of living. To them, there is no rhyme or reason to life. We are nothing more than the spewed out slime of primordial ooze to them anyway. To their minds, we're all headed for a big, black hole of non-existence. Others would look at where they are now and say that fate got them to that point. Their lives were pre-planned. They have no control over their actions. Every choice they've made, they've made because it was meant to be that way. Some would say this with a recognition of a mystic, unknown superior force guiding the universe while others would say that it is God who is behind it all, Himself having predestined each of us to the course we have taken, are taking and will take.

God is indeed involved in His creation. Paul told the Athenians that God is "not far from every one of us, for in him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:27-28). Jeremiah wrote, "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:24). James made it clear that all blessings come from God above (James 1:17). That all of mankind, regardless of their belief or disbelief in God, is blessed by Him is evident from Jesus' statement in Matthew 5:45. "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

How did you and I get to where we are at this very moment? Regardless of the path each of us has taken to arrive here, right now we are at the point in our lives where we can be of our best service to God. Our past has shaped us and given us experiences from which we can draw and become stronger in the faith and more influential in the lives of others. Our future is unknown, but here and now we can shape our future and make it even more fruitful in God's service.

It's important for us to see where we are. In taking the time to scan the history of our lives we can see the goodness and providence of God on every hand. Beyond that, however, is the necessity of seeing where we could be if only we will remember that God will be with us just as surely now as He has been with us in the past.