

Two Ditches on the Road

I. The Road (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

The Christian's goal in life is faithfulness to God.

Discipline and focus are necessary to reach the goal.

II. The Ditch on the Left (Philippians 3:12-20)

A life focused on earth's pleasures and possessions will not end in faithfulness to God.

III. The Ditch on the Right (Galatians 5:4-8)

A life focused on rules for righteousness will not end in faithfulness to God.

A disciplined life focused on Jesus will take us to our goal!

Application Questions - These questions are provided for your further study and application of the subject of today's message. Thoughtfully writing out answers to these questions will help drive home the point. They are designed to be discussed in your home, with other believers, and in a Life Group, for even more benefit.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. Paul compares the Christian life to running a race and urges his readers to "run to win." What comparisons of the Christian life can you make with running a race?

Paul says discipline and self-control are necessary. What are some areas in your life where this has been helpful, and where you could improve?

Paul also compares the Christian life to a boxing match. What parallels can you draw? How is this illustration helpful to you?

2. Read Philippians 3:12-20. What was Paul "forgetting" and what is he "reaching toward"?

Who, and why, are some people "enemies of the cross"?

What are some "forgetting" and "reaching toward" examples in your life?

3. Read Galatians 5:1-8. What is Paul's concern for his readers in relation to the Old Testament Law?

What does Paul say about combining law and grace? (See also Galatians 2:16, 3:3; 5:4-5)

Is legalism a temptation for you? How do you guard against it?

4. Think about your life on the road of faithfulness, legalism, license, and running "full throttle." Where are you in "the race"? Need any adjustments?