



# The Good News Messenger



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## **The Crossing Roads**

By: A. S. Chancellor

Life is full of decisions and we are all responsible for the choices that we make. However, the most important decision in anyone's life is the choice of following after God. Life is made up of many roads, and we are the lonely pilgrims traveling down those roads. When God creates us and sets us into existence, He has a purpose for each one, which is why each of us is so different. HE gives certain personality traits that will help us as we fulfill our purpose. We don't have to follow God or use those traits as He would have us to. These types of decisions are the factors that determine which road we travel on.

Throughout life, we are called to decide many things, some of which determine how our lives turn out. For me, finding and listening to Jesus were two of the best choices I have ever made. As a pilgrim, I went along life's road, following others, and doing what I could to please them. Do you know how hard it is to try and please more than one person at a time? It's impossible. Going around trying to please your "friends" by doing what they like (even if you know it isn't right) and then having to lie to cover up so you can please your parents, is one of the hardest things ever. Many people tend to live just this way. At work they are one person, they may be very work oriented, but when they get home, they will not lift a finger to help anyone. These very same people are once more changed when they get around friends or other family members. It is such a sad life. They are constantly looking over their shoulders to see who is there, so that they can "put on" the appropriate "face". God has something much better in mind for His children. Do you know that YOU are a child of God? Even if you are not saved, you are still His creation. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were His "special people," but now you can be a part of those special few too. Christ came down from his throne above to suffer and to bleed and to die so that you might have the opportunity to select the "better road."

As a warning, I must admit that although this road is the better one, it is most likely not the easiest. Although both roads are full of potholes and rough-spots, the broad road, the "popular" road is the easy road. Following a great crowd, that is easy. You might see this almost every day. Something happens, and a multitude of people run to see what happened. Sometimes you may find yourself going after the crowd to see the event. That is easy, you get caught up in the moment, and you want to see what the excitement is all about. It is the same on the roads of life. Many people fail to find God because they want to be like everyone else. They don't want to be different. My friend, this road is different, but if different was ever good, it is in this case. Yes, this road is steep, and yes it is rocky, but the difference is that on this road you are never alone. We have all been there when we were in sin, traveling along in the pitch-blackness of night, no one around. You get scared and you really realize what it is to feel alone. My friend, God is ALWAYS a companion on the road to glory. He is there, and he will comfort and strengthen you.

We all will come to the crossroads; some will choose God's way, and some their own way. Which will it be for you? The Bible says that at the end of the other road is eternal damnation and death. Be encouraged, pilgrim. Seek the way God would lead you, and you, too, will find out that his way is best.

## **"As A Little Child"**

Taken from Stories for Home Folks by Mabel Hale.

It began in the morning before the child was up. The mother had found some evidence of carelessness—afterward it looked insignificant—and going in immediately to call the child she took time to give her a sharp reproof for her neglect. The child had turned to greet the mother with the brightest of smiles, which faded with the reproof.

When the child washed her hands and face she wet the bottom of her sleeves, and dripped some water on the floor, and was reproofed for that.

At the breakfast table she fidgeted about and spilled something on the table cloth, and when she was scolded for that she stuck out her lips in a pout and was sent away from the table.

When mother combed her hair for school she wiggled and shined under the operation until mother gave her a little slap to quiet her.

When it was time for her to dress for school she was determined to wear a different dress from that which her mother wanted her to wear, and she acted so naughty and spoke so saucily that her mother in desperation turned her across her knee and gave her a spanking. She left for school a few minutes afterward, flouncing out without a good-by kiss, and her face turned away from her mother. Mother watched her out of sight and then sat down and cried.

"What kind of a mother am I to have a morning like this? Surely if I knew how to manage I could have avoided some of this friction."

After this the whole morning was reviewed. Again she saw the sunny smile that had turned to greet her, and the cloud that had obscured it as she scolded her, and the merry chatter that had accompanied the washing act, which had given place to moody silence after she was reproofed for mussing her clothes. The bright eyes and merry laugh at the table that had given place to frowns and pouts after the scolding about the spot of jam on the tablecloth next haunted the mother. She had been nervous and weary that morning, and she had pulled the child's hair. "I would have made a bigger fuss than she did if it had been my hair that was pulled," the mother confessed. And the trouble over the dress, was it not really the climax to all the other trouble? If things had gone smoothly till then would the child not have been willing to do as she was bidden? "I believe she would, and I am sure I am the one really to blame for the whole trouble. Oh, my child, my little child!" and the mother's tears flowed freely.

"What does she think of me? How will this affect her school work this morning? Will she feel as nervous and unstrung as I do? Oh, if I only had her here long enough to send her away with a smile!"

Thus the mother mused, and being a woman who knew and loved the Lord, she knelt and asked God to give her more wisdom and grace for motherhood. But her whole morning was clouded, and it was with a feeling of dread that she looked forward to the coming of the child at noon. Could she make her understand?

She was at the window watching when the child came in sight, and there was no sign of drooping there. The child flung the curls back from her face as happy and carefree as ever her mother had seen her. Mother met her at the door and held out her arms to the little pilgrim. The child sprang forward and clasped her mother about the neck, saying, "O Mama, I have been thinking all the morning what a good mother you are. You are the best mother in the world," and she kissed her over and over. Hand in hand they walked into the house, and glancing up the child exclaimed, "Mother, why are you crying? Have I been naughty?"

*(continued on Page 3)*

## A King Listens to Paul's Story

Acts 25, 26

From Egermeier's Bible Story Book

After Felix went to Rome a new governor was sent to take his place. This new governor was called Festus.

Now, Festus was also a Roman as was Felix. He was unacquainted with the Jews and knew little about their customs, religion, and such things. He went to Jerusalem three days after he arrived in Cæsarea; for there he could learn more about the people he had come to govern, as Jerusalem was the Jews' chief city.

Several days later, after Festus had returned to Cæsarea, he called for Paul, who had been in prison all this time, more than two years. And men who had come from Jerusalem stood up to speak false things against Paul. But none of those things could they prove. The Jews still wished to have Paul taken to Jerusalem, hiding their reason. As Festus wished to please the Jewish people he said to Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and be judged there before me, concerning these things of which the Jews accuse you?"

Paul replied, "Against the Jews I have done nothing to offend their law. If I have done anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die. I appeal to Cæsar." Festus knew that every Roman citizen had a right to ask this privilege, of appearing before the great ruler of all the Roman Empire, Cæsar, so he answered, "You have asked to be sent to Cæsar, at Rome, and your request shall be granted."

About this time some distinguished visitors came to Cæsarea to see the new Governor. They were Agrippa, the governor of the country east of the Jordan River, and Bernice, his sister. This Agrippa was sometimes called a king. During their visit Festus told them about Paul. He told how the Jews had accused this prisoner of some offense concerning their religious law, which he could not understand. He said also that in his trial before the Jews, Paul had spoken earnestly about one named Jesus, who he said had risen from the grave.

On the next day Agrippa and Bernice entered the judgment-hall with Festus. Then Festus gave his command and Paul was brought.

Festus rose to introduce this prisoner to the King. He said, "Before you stand this man whom the multitude of Jews in Jerusalem have declared is not fit to live any longer. But when I found that he had done nothing deserving of death, and when he had expressed his wish to be taken before Cæsar, in Rome, I determined to send him there to be judged. Now, however, I have no charge to make against him, therefore I have brought him before you people and especially before you, King Agrippa, that you may hear him and know for what purpose he is being held in bonds."

Agrippa now spoke and said to Paul, "You are permitted to tell your own story before us."

Paul rose up, stretched out his hand on which hung the heavy chain, and said:

"I am glad, O King, that I may speak for myself today before you, and tell why I am accused by the Jews. I know that you understand the customs and questions which are among the Jews, and you will understand my words.

"From my youth the Jews know my life, for I was brought up in their city. And if they could, they could testify that I lived among the strictest of the Pharisees, keeping the law of Moses as carefully as any of them tried to do. And now I am accused by them because I believe the promise which God made to our fathers, concerning Jesus Christ, whom God raised from the dead.

"The time was when I, too, thought I ought to persecute those who believe in Jesus of Nazareth. And this I did, shutting in prison many of the saints who lived in Jerusalem. I even received authority from the high priest to persecute the saints who lived in distant cities. I was on my way to Damascus to persecute the Christians there when I saw a vision from God. It was at midday, O King, when suddenly I saw on the road a light from heaven, more dazzling than the noonday sun, and the brightness of it frightened me and my companions. We fell to the ground, then a voice spoke to me in the Hebrew language, saying, 'Saul! Saul! why are you persecuting me?' I cried, 'Who are you, Lord?' and then the voice replied, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.' That voice commanded me to stand on my feet while I received Jesus' orders.

And that voice told me I should tell of Jesus, not only to the Jews, but to the Gentiles as well.

"Because I have obeyed the command I received in that heavenly vision, O King, I am now being persecuted by the Jews who will not believe in Jesus. Again and again they have sought to kill me, but God has thus far delivered me from their plots, and he has given me strength to tell to all who come to me that Jesus is indeed the Christ of whom Moses and the prophets wrote."

Festus beheld the earnestness of this chained speaker and he decided that Paul must be crazy. Not wishing to listen longer to speech he could not understand, he cried out, "Paul, you are not in your right mind. Too much learning has made you crazy!"

But Paul answered calmly, "I am not crazy, most noble Festus, but am speaking words of truth and soberness. King Agrippa knows these things of which I speak, therefore I talk freely to him." Then, turning to Agrippa, Paul said, "King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe."

Agrippa answered, "Almost you persuade me to be a Christian." And Paul replied, "I would to God that not only you but all who hear me today were such as I am, except this chain."

But the King was not ready to humble his proud heart and become a Christian. He rose up at once and went aside with Bernice and Festus and others to discuss Paul's case. He said to Festus, "This man has done nothing worthy of death or even of imprisonment. If he had not asked to be sent to Cæsar he might be set free at once." But now it was too late to change the arrangement, and Festus could not set Paul at liberty.

King Agrippa was almost persuaded, but did not make that choice. Have you been almost persuaded, but put off that decision for later? Felix told Paul "Some other day I will call again for you" when the choice was before him. Are you pushing God away? Are you telling him, "Some more convenient day?" The Bible tells us that "Today is the day of salvation." The time for salvation is *now*. Don't miss out on heaven, and all the help, comfort and blessings that God gives us, by putting this decision off. God has the power to deliver you from sin and wrong. He can save you and keep you. Choose God today! You'll not be sorry.

### Almost Persuaded

By: Philip P. Bliss

"Almost persuaded" now to believe;  
 "Almost persuaded" Christ to receive;  
 Seems now some soul to say, "Go, Spirit, go thy way,  
 Some more convenient day On thee I'll call."

"Almost persuaded," come, come today;  
 "Almost persuaded," turn not away;  
 Jesus invites you here, Angels are ling'ring near,  
 Prayers rise from hearts so dear, O wand'rer, come.

"Almost persuaded," harvest is past!  
 "Almost persuaded," doom comes at last!  
 "Almost" cannot avail; "Almost" is but to fail!  
 Sad, sad, that bitter wail, "Almost" but lost!

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

~Isaiah 35:8



## The Road Not Taken

Robert Frost

Two Roads diverged in a yellow wood, And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood And I looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth; Then took the other, as just as fair,



And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,  
And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no steps had trodden black  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads to way,

I doubted if I should ever come back. I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence: Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-  
I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.

### Choosing a Road

By: A. S. Chancellor

As I read this famous poem by the poet Robert Frost, I think of two roads in life. One a sinful road, the other is the way of Christ. Although at the point that we must decide to follow Christ or not, both roads may look similar. Yes, if one looks down them then one can see the differences, but the end is no where in sight. You see sin doesn't start out bleak and dark, no it starts out just like one would imagine the Christian way should look. Sunny and happy, that's just the thing, the Devil wants you to have that illusion, he wants you to think that both roads can end in the same result, but he is wrong, he is lying to you. If one could see down to the ends of these roads, the story would be much different. Sin kind of just slowly takes you deeper and darker and worse and worse, it doesn't happen all at once. At the end of that road I suspect you would see trees with no leaves, because they are without life, instead of the leaves on the ground it would be dead broken branches. The sky would be dark and all around you would be cold as if there was no hope, for at the end of that road, there is no hope. Now look down the other road with me, the end is brighter than the beginning, the trees have even more life, you would hear birds singing and you would feel the warmth of the sun. We have tried to paint a picture of two different roads for you, one ending in sorrow and defeat, and the other with joy and victory. You would think that knowing this more and more people would choose the road of victory, but it is sadly not so. This road IS the ONE LESS TRAVELED BY. You see at the beginning the world would urge you to take the well traveled road, and even though they both look like the same road in the beginning it is the changes that both roads go through in the middle that often is looked at. Down one road, you can see a multitude of people all of which having fun, but down the other you see a few lonely travelers that look sad. So the road with the multitude is the one chosen. That is the road of sin. They "look" happy because they are doing whatever they want, although in truth they are acting because they are in bondage to sin. The few sad looking travelers are sad, for they see the things that the multitude does not, they see the pain and torment that their friends and family (the multitude) will face unless they choose Christ's way. Sinner, my friend, if you are traveling along life's way and you cannot see these things in front of you, know that they are there. It is not to late search for Christ look for Him in the Bible and look for Him in people that you know, when you find Him, He will invite you to come to His road.

### Crooked Paths

It puzzles me; but, Lord, Thou understandest,  
And wilt one day explain this crooked thing.  
Meanwhile, I know that it has worked out Thy best -  
Its very crookedness taught me to cling.

Thou hast fenced up my ways, made my paths crooked,  
To keep my wand'ring eyes fixed on Thee;  
To make me what I was not, humble, patient;  
To draw my heart from earthly love to Thee.

So I will thank and praise Thee for this puzzle,  
And trust where I cannot understand.  
Rejoicing Thou dost hold me worth such testing,  
I cling the closer to Thy guiding hand.

## "As A Little Child"

(continued from Page 1)

"No, darling, no. Mother loves you very dearly," and she pressed the little hand more tenderly. Somehow she could not bring herself to cloud the child's happiness by so much as mentioning the morning's troubles. But deep in her heart a prayer went up to God, "O Lord, help me to be like a little child, to hold no malice, to forget my wrongs, to love in spite of the faults of my loved ones, to be as forgiving as this little child."

And the child hurried to the bowl to wash her face, and was careful of her clothes, and came to the table in the same merry mood. If she did have some mishaps the mother forebore scolding, and with a bright word corrected the difficulty.

When the child was off again to school the mother mused, "How much unnecessary worrying I put in about the effect of my scolding upon her. Her merry little heart rose above it."

But as she thought further she promised herself to control the scolding habit better. She knew it was not right for her child to be punished because the mother had tender nerves. And most earnestly she prayed for wisdom to be a good mother.

## Scripture Corner

### Call to Decision

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. ~ *Joshua 24:15*

And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. ~ *Ruth 1:15-18*

From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. ~ *John 6:67*

### As Thou Goest, Step by Step, I Will Open Up the Way Before Thee

Proverbs 4:12

*When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.*

From the notebook of Arthur E. Ritchie

Child of my love, fear not the unknown morrow,  
Dread not the new demand life makes of thee;  
Thy ignorance doth hold no cause for sorrow  
Since what thou knowest not is known of Me.

Thou canst not see the hidden meaning  
Of my command, but thou the light shall gain;  
Walk on in faith, upon My promise leaning,  
And AS THOU GOEST, all shall be made plain.

One step thou seest -- then go forward boldly,  
One step is far enough for faith to see;  
Take that, and thy next duty shall be told thee,  
For STEP BY STEP thy Lord is leading thee.

Stand not in fear thy adversaries counting,  
Dare every peril, save to disobey;  
Thou shalt march on, all obstacles surmounting,  
for I the Strong, WILL OPEN UP THE WAY.

Wherefore go gladly to the task assigned thee,  
Having my promise, needing nothing more  
Than just to know, wher'er the future find thee,  
In all thy journeying I go BEFORE.

## What Old Bill Could Not Do

By: C. W. Naylor

Old Bill M -- was a drunkard. Everybody knew it. People expected to see him stagger as he walked; that was the common thing. As a young man he had been the leader among his chums, and people thought he would make his mark in the world. He had excelled most of his companions, but alas! it was not in the things that make men noble and great. As people said, "The drink was getting him." He was a familiar figure in each of the three saloons in A --. He was popular, for he was good-natured and jolly. He was still the leader of a company, who called themselves the "bunch". Each night they made the rounds of the saloons, then at a late hour staggered homeward.

Yes, Old Bill was a drunkard. He had tried many times to quit. His friends had warned him and advised him to quit. His wife had begged him a hundred times, with tears running down her face. He had promised again and again, had tried, over and over, to master the habit, but it held him fast. One night when he went home, drunk as usual, he found his wife seriously ill. Three days he watched by her bedside, and then the end came. In her dying hour she laid her hand on his and asked him once more for her sake, and his own, to quit drinking. Bill promised with hot tears falling like rain, and he meant it with all his heart.

Two days later he followed her body to the church, and as he took his last look at that still form, he vowed with all his strength of will never to touch drink again. He walked silently back to his home, but it was not home anymore. He was heart-broken. What would he do? How could he bear it? Presently two of his comrades came out to sympathize with him. After talking a while, one pulled a bottle from his pocket, saying, "Here, Bill, take a bit to brace you up." "No, Jack," he answered, "I'm going to quit the stuff, I promised her I would." "That's all right," said Jack, "but you need a little now for your nerves." He lifted the bottle to his own lips, then held it uncorked in his hand. The odor entered Bill's nostrils, the old appetite asserted itself, and before he knew it he had seized the bottle. A minute later it was empty! When Bill next came to realize what was happening, it was a week later. He had been drunk all the time; he did not even know what day it was; but when he realized what had happened, he was stricken with remorse. He knew now, as never before, that drink was his master.

Two years passed. His few belongings had been sold to pay the funeral expenses; the remainder had gone for drink. Another family lived in the home now. Mr. Wilson, a kind neighbor, had given him a home, and he worked for him when he was sober enough. One evening as he was making his way to the saloon as usual, he heard singing. "That's strange," he muttered; "wonder what's going on?" He turned and walked toward the singing and soon found a large tent filled with people. "Queer-looking show," he thought as he approached the entrance. A pleasant-faced young man stepped up to him and said, "Come in, Bill, and I will get you a good seat." He mechanically followed the usher in. The singing was good, and he enjoyed it. Presently a man arose and, with tears running down his face, related that he had been a drunkard, and that after years of trying to overcome the habit, he had finally turned to God for help. Bill understood the struggle part, but not the rest. He knew what it meant to fail, and as he pondered he thought of his wife. Did she know how he had broken his promise? Did she weep over him now as she used to?

Some one entered the pulpit and talked for a long time, but Bill did not hear anything he said. Bill was thinking, thinking. There was a man who had "beat the drink," and he said the Lord had helped him. Bill wondered if the Lord would help him. When the preacher finished, the first man rose again; Bill straightened up and looked keenly. "Yes," he thought, "he has been a drinker all right, and a hard one; his face shows it." The speaker was inviting men to Christ for the help they needed.

Old Bill never quite knew how it happened, but he suddenly found himself up in front holding the stranger's hand and telling him that he wanted help to quit drink. Side by side they knelt while the saved man earnestly poured out his heart to God for the drunkard. Old Bill did not know how to pray, he had never tried in his life, but he wanted help; all his soul longed for it. He listened to the other man praying. He was asking for just what Bill needed; his heart joined in. Yes, he wanted to quit drinking; he wanted to be a good man, but he had to have help. The other man prayed as though God were right close by, and Bill felt that He

must be, so he said: "Yes, God, I'll quit it if you'll help me. I'll be a man if you'll help me, but I can't do it by myself!" That was all, but he meant it, and he felt that God would help him. A strange, quiet peace came into his heart, and he really felt happy. He went home sober that night.

Some of the "bunch" outside the tent had seen Bill go forward, and soon the news was in all the saloons. "He'll be back by Saturday night," they said. But he did not come back. Instead he was in the meeting telling the people what wonderful things God had done for him. He did not want strong drink anymore at all, he declared. The "bunch" did not believe this. They laughed and made many prophecies; they waited week by week, but Old Bill came to the saloon no more. Two years passed; Bill lived a joyful Christian life and never tired of telling what the Lord had done for him. He went out to a country schoolhouse, where he organized a Sunday-school and labored zealously and successfully.

There were many temptations. At first the "bunch" laughed and made him the butt of many rude jests, then they laid plans to trap him. One day one of them stuck an open whisky-bottle under his nose, saying, "Smell it, Bill; ain't it a fine odor?" Bill stepped back, all smiles, and said quietly, "Well, Tom, drink was my master a long time, but I have a better Master now." He went on his way unobtrusively but steadily, and finally won the respect and confidence of all.

At last the end came; Old Bill was dead. There was a peaceful smile upon his face, for his sun had gone down in splendor. The "bunch" followed him to the grave. They could not quite understand even yet what had happened to him. It was a wonderful change, and his life had won their respect, and they followed him silently to his last resting place. After the burial they stood talking it over in a little group by themselves. "I thought the drink had him sure," said one; "I don't see how he beat it." "It was not Bill who did it," said a quiet voice behind them; "it was Jesus Christ." They turned and saw the pastor walking away. "Guess the parson must have it right," said one of them. "It was a pretty good job, too."

My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother. Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

~ Proverbs 6:20-23

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Spanish interpretation is available in the services.

### Service Times:

Wednesday Prayer Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Young People's Service	4:45 p.m.
Sunday Children's Service	5:00 p.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 p.m.

We have literature available for those who would like to study the Word of God in the confines of their home. Let us know if you are interested by contacting us at the above telephone number, address, or website.

