

WHY RIVERS ARE CROOKED

Austin Mobley



No doubt you have noticed that just about every river on the face of the earth is crooked. One may go along in a straight course for a few miles, but soon it is winding and twisting again. It is said the river Jordan is over two hundred miles long,

but if it went on a straight line from where it begins to where it ends, it would be only about eighty miles in length.

Have you ever wondered how rivers get crooked? They get that way by **following the path of least resistance**. They always hunt the easy way, and always are on the downgrade. When a stream comes to a mountain, or even a hill, it goes around it.

People get crooked the same way rivers do - by **following the path of least resistance**. In other words, by always hunting easy jobs, or easy ways to get along. This desire to get by without work and effort causes many sins. It makes one neglect the church, the Bible, and prayer. It encourages dishonesty, stealing, and telling of lies. It is a sad day in anyone's life when he decides to try to get by in the world of the church without effort. It is not ease, but effort, that brings out the finer qualities in us. Looking for a soft job is a job for soft men.

The Bible shows many examples of how men became sinful by following the path of least resistance. Cain did the easiest thing (Gen. 4:1-8). Lot made an easy decision (Gen. 13:5-13), which eventually cost the lives of his family. Aaron did the easy thing in not opposing the idolatry of Israel (Ex. 32:19-24). God plagued the people because they made the calf. Felix followed the easy way by waiting for a "convenient season" to obey the gospel, but instead, lost his soul (Acts 24:25). Demas followed the path of least resistance by returning to worldly practices, and thus forsook God (2 Tim. 4:10).

There are no elevators in the House of Success; you must toil up the steps, one at a time. ✍

"YOU ALL"

Here in the southeastern part of the United States, it is a normal part of polite speech to refer to more than one person as "you all," or by the shortened form "y'all." This idiomatic form of speech may sound strange to those of other regions, but it is a natural part of southern conversation.

The closest the Bible gets to this "southern" language is the King James Version of Matthew 26:27 when Jesus gives the disciples the cup and tells them to "drink ye all of it." The New King James Version translates it with the more basic "Drink from it, all of you."

The apostle Paul used the phrase "you all" in his writings, but not because of a language peculiarity. He used it as an expression of Christian unity and fellowship. His every "you all" was a reference to some local portion of "all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:2).

He used it as he informed brethren that they all were mentioned in his prayers:

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy (Phil. 1:3-4)

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers (1 Thess. 1:2)

I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world (Rom. 1:8).

He also wished his love and the blessings of God upon His brethren:

My love be with you all in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 16:24)

Now the God of peace be with you all (Rom. 15:33)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all (2 Cor. 13:14)

Peter also wished "peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus" (1 Pet. 5:14). All faithful Christians should know that they share in a unique relationship with God and one another. All of us are striving together for the same goal. How appropriate it is that the Bible ends with John's desire that "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (Rev. 22:21).

MWG