

# What If You Could Pick Your Destiny? | What If? #4

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Have you ever given directions to someone? If you really wanted to help the person, you made sure that your directions were perfectly clear so that they could safely arrive at their destination. The Bible shows us that in life each of us must choose between two paths that will determine the destiny of our lives.

The Bible describes these paths in different ways: the good path, righteous path, or narrow path, and the evil path, wicked path, or broad path. For today, think of these two paths like this: the self-directed path and the God-directed path. The self-directed path is the one where you make choices based on your feelings and desires, and you fight for control of your life. The God-directed path is the path that is submitted to God and his way of looking at the world. The Bible teaches us some startling truths about these two paths.

## Most people take the self-directed path

The most popular path is the one of our own choosing. People aren't too interested in God's plan for their lives, so they choose their own path.

***Proverbs 4:14-15** Don't do as the wicked do, and don't follow the path of evildoers. Don't even think about it; don't go that way. Turn away and keep moving.*

While we don't typically think of most people as wicked or evil, the Bible reveals that the natural human bent is toward pleasing ourselves and walking away from God. This path is attractive because it is all about us and our wants.

## The self-directed path comes with painful consequences

Although popular, the self-directed path is the more destructive path to take. This is why the Bible is so adamant that you must avoid it. This is the path of addiction, pain, and loneliness.

***Proverbs 4:16-17** For evil people can't sleep until they've done their evil deed for the day. They can't rest until they've caused someone to stumble. They eat the food of wickedness and drink the wine of violence!*

No one self-consciously wants to go down this path, but once you are on it long enough, you don't want to leave it.

***Proverbs 4:19** But the way of the wicked is like total darkness. They have no idea what they are stumbling over.*

The self-directed path leaves you far from God and far from what will make you happy in life. You can't really tell right from wrong once you've gone far enough down this path.

## The God-directed path is a guide for life

The end of the self-directed path makes the God-directed path a much better option for each of us. The God-directed path comes with Godly wisdom, which gives us a guide and rule for life.

**Proverbs 4:10-13** *My child, listen to me and do as I say, and you will have a long, good life. I will teach you wisdom's ways and lead you in straight paths. When you walk, you won't be held back; when you run, you won't stumble. Take hold of my instructions; don't let them go. Guard them, for they are the key to life.*

Throughout the book of Proverbs wisdom is personified ([Proverbs 4:6](#)) as a guide, a valuable teacher, or one who can help you avoid some of life's greatest snares. The self-directed life offers one pitfall after another. The God-directed life keeps you close to your Creator.

## The God-directed path leads to a joyful life

Far from being a life of burden or rule-following, the God-directed life will actually lead to greater happiness than you have ever imagined.

**Proverbs 4:20-23** *My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.*

The best thing that you can do for yourself is to bring godly wisdom into your life ([Proverbs 4:7](#)). If you find yourself on the self-directed path, the only alternative is to turn back to God and begin listening to his wisdom for your life. The best way to stay on the God-directed life is to guard your heart. Your heart, in the Bible, is the place of your deepest values, motives, and desires. When you come to God, he renews your heart and fills it with the things that bring true joy.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Watch the video together or invite someone to summarize the topic.
2. What is your initial reaction to this video? Do you disagree with any of it? What jumped out at you?
3. How good are you at remembering directions or giving directions to people?
4. Briefly describe both the God-directed path and the self-directed path.
5. Read [Proverbs 4:14-15](#). Why do you think the writer of Proverbs is so strong in his warning against choosing the self-directed path?
6. What is your reaction to the idea that most people are on the path that leads away from God?
7. Read [Proverbs 4:19](#). Have you ever felt like you were caught up in a life like this? Explain.
8. Read [Proverbs 4:10-13](#). List some of the benefits of wisdom that you find in this passage and throughout the chapter.
9. How is wisdom the key to life?
10. Read [Proverbs 4:20-23](#). What does it mean to guard your heart? How will guarding your heart keep you close to God?
11. Write a personal action step based on this conversation.