

# The Old Paths

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## “Life Changes In A Matter Of Seconds”

Jarrod Jacobs

While watching the Olympic games on Thursday night (8/19), one commentator said that “90 seconds” could change the life of a competitor. Why did he say this? It is because the outcome of that particular competition could prove the difference between one winning or losing a gold medal in that event.

That statement that “90 seconds” would change everything in the life of this athlete really hit home with me. Just as in athletic events, so also in life, unexpected events can change a person’s life in a matter of seconds. A case in point is that just prior to the statement made by the man on the Olympic program, someone had a car wreck just east of our house! No doubt the driver never imagined his life would be changed so quickly as he drove (and then wrecked) on 405!

Knowing how life can change in a matter of seconds, can we not better appreciate such statements as, “*To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*” (Heb. 3:7-8, 15)? Does such a statement as, “*behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*” ring true or ring hollow with us (II Cor. 6:2)? There is no guarantee of tomorrow! The truth is that our lives can change in a heartbeat!

As we think about our lives, I hope we realize that these

changes can be for the better or they can be for the worse. Life changing in a positive or negative way can happen within a matter of seconds, that is a fact. Many times, changes take place very quickly in our lives. Therefore, it is necessary that we be diligent in recognizing such changes.

### *Changes For The Worse*

How many times in our lives could we catalog events which made life worse for us? Many times, these events occurred in a matter of moments. Perhaps we misjudged the room needed to park, and hit someone’s car. Perhaps a friendship is strained or lost completely due to a careless word said. In mere moments, a life-long friendship is damaged!

In connection with these things, how many occasions has there been when due to a “moment” of weakness, we sinned in the sight of God? “*Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death,*” you know (Jas. 1:15). Some people, in the heat of passion, anger, or wrath, often say and do things that result in sin. Here, “90 seconds” may have seemed like an eternity for the one who acted in such a way. Paul taught that if we are angry then, “*sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath*” (Eph. 4:26). Anger, wrath, and malice needs to be put away from us (Col. 3:8).

Jezebel’s plan to lie about Naboth and have him killed seemed to have been formulated in

a very short amount of time (I Kings 21:7). Yet, look at the terrible consequences for both Ahab and Jezebel (I Kings 21:19, 23).

Think of the damage that is done at times because of an uncontrolled tongue! James declared that the tongue is “*an unruly evil, full of deadly poison*” (Jas. 3:8). At times, “90 seconds” is more than enough time to spread falsehoods, innuendos, and rumors! May this kind of behavior be put far from us!

The Holy Spirit teaches us to flee fornication and the like (I Cor. 6:18). Within a few fleeting moments, two people’s lives can be changed in such a way that it will effect their life on earth as well as their eternal home if they do not repent (Heb. 13:4)!

Yes, life can change in a matter of seconds. Just as the commentator noted: “90 seconds” could change one’s life forever.

### *Changes For The Better*

Just as one can change his life for the worse within a matter of seconds, so also can a person change it for the better! Certainly, this is what we would encourage folks to do. For instance, have we ever thought about the time it takes for one to be baptized? I believe it could be said that in “90 seconds,” someone could be baptized for the remission of sins, and from that time forward, his life is forever changed (Acts 2:38). While the actual event of baptism takes a short amount of time — a matter of seconds — the consequences of this action continue for the rest of one’s life!

For someone to take a stand for the Lord’s work, resisting temptation in one form or another, requires but a few seconds, but think of the good which comes from that (Jas. 4:7-8)! Daniel took only

a few seconds to voice his objection to eating the king's food, but what a difference that made in his life (Dan. 1:8)!

To contrast James' warnings about the sins one commits with the tongue, the Bible also declares that men can use their tongues to speak righteous, godly, and edifying words. Paul put it this way: *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers"* (Eph. 4:29). To the Colossians, Paul said, *"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man"* (Col. 4:6). *"The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious ..."* (Ecc. 10:12). What good could be accomplished if we would spend a few moments in speaking righteous and helpful words to others!

### Conclusion

Friends, we never know what good or evil can be done in a few moments. In just "90 seconds," many great things can be accomplished that would change the rest of our lives. In just "90 seconds," we can make decisions that could effect not only our lives, but the lives of our friends and family. Let us be aware of our decisions this week, and see how our lives can change in a very short amount of time. Truly, *"now is the day of salvation"* (II Cor. 6:2)! What will you do with this day? If the Lord allows you to live for another week, think about what you can do and say to help others, and to bring your life in a closer relationship with the Lord. Who knows what eternal good can be done in the decisions that take but moment or two to make!!

## Pointed Paragraphs

by R.L. Whiteside

From: The Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy

"For ye were going astray like sheep." The idea expressed in the original Greek is not that they were going astray, but they were astray. When a living thing is astray, it is lost; at least, it is not in its proper place, not where it belongs. Sin is not the proper element for people; they do not rightly belong there; it is not their natural habitat. Righteousness is man's natural habitat; that is where God originally placed him. When he wanders off into sin, he is on foreign soil. (p. 118)

The Hebrew kingdom never would have been divided if all had adhered strictly to the law of God. People do not divide when all are determined to do right. When churches divide, there is unrighteousness somewhere. (p. 118)

Every time we judge a doctrine or another person, we judge ourselves. In condemning evil, we declare ourselves righteous. In condemning righteousness, we declare our sinfulness. In other words, every judgment we deliver shows what sort of person we are. Our judgments on others reveal our own

standards. The character of the Jews was revealed in their blaspheming the gospel. (p. 101)

(See: Matt. 7:1-5; Rom. 2:1; etc. -JJ)

### Think On These Things:

#### Psalm 99

The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved. The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people. Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy. The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob. Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy. Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them. He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them. Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions. Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.

#### Changes Made Weekly To:

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**Sunday Evening Worship** \_\_\_\_\_ **6:00 pm**

**Wednesday Evening Bible Study** \_\_\_\_\_ **7:00 pm**

Don't forget the call-in radio program on **WBIO, FM 94.7**, Sunday afternoon from 12:30-1:00 pm. **Call: 683-9246 (WBIO)** with your Bible question.

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*"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Jer. 6:16)*