

**Intro:** Would you get out of the ditch?

When my daughter was small we lived in a house with a ditch right next to the road. She remembers me yelling at her get out of that ditch before a car comes along and hits you and squashes you.

Was I trying to hurt her, or deprive her of the stuff in the ditch? NO! But I was trying to move her away from danger.

So many of the commands of the Lord are to keep us from harm and to test out faith by doing what he says. He wants us to get out of the ditch.

Several times in Proverbs, we are told us to STAY AWAY from evil.

Proverbs 1:10, My son, if sinners entice you, DO NOT CONSENT. Later, beginning in verse 15 My son, DO NOT WALK in the way WITH THEM. KEEP YOUR FEET FROM THEIR PATH, (16) For their feet run to evil And they hasten to shed blood.

Proverbs 3:7 ... Fear the LORD and TURN AWAY from evil. (8) It will be HEALING to your body And REFRESHMENT to your bones.

Proverbs 3:29 DO NOT DEVISE HARM against your neighbor, While he lives securely beside you.

Proverbs 4:14-15 Do not ENTER THE PATH of the wicked And DO NOT PROCEED in the way of evil men. (15) AVOID IT, DO NOT PASS BY IT; TURN AWAY FROM IT and pass on.

Proverbs 4:27 Do not turn to the right nor to the left; TURN YOUR FOOT FROM EVIL.

How do you stay away from evil? How do we get out of the ditch?

1 Method is to not THINK EVIL in your heart.

If you don't THINK it, you won't DO IT.

Jesus said, "For out of the heart come evil THOUGHTS, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.

But God gives us ANOTHER BETTER METHOD that really works.

STAY AWAY FROM IT.

How do you stop adultery? Put some distance between yourself and the person you are attracted to.

How do prevent being a thief? Get away from people who talk about stealing.

How do you stop murder? By walking away from the person making you so mad. You heard God. Turn your feet.

How do you turn from sorcery, those illegal mind-altering drugs? You stay away from everyone who does illegal drugs or sells them.

How do you stop drunkenness? Walk away from everyone who drinks. You turn your feet away from places that sell alcohol.

In these few moments we can clearly see that God's command to stay away from evil will PREVENT families from being destroyed. They will get you out of the ditch! You won't do hard-time for being a thief. You did not murder anyone. You maintained a mind that functions correctly and dependably. You stayed away from alcohol and you still had fun, but you didn't look so stupid, you didn't tell any secrets; you didn't lose control and hit someone; you were not abusive to your wife or kids; you didn't have a car wreck that ended someone else life and carry the guilt of their death.

God's commands in Proverbs to STAY AWAY from evil are for OUR GOOD, OUR PROTECTION. They are not intended to deprive us.

Take a moment to think about how God has been protecting you through his commands? It is worth your time.

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We are grateful for your time, your thoughts, your support and your prayer.

We are always glad when you stop by and visit with us

Come back tomorrow. We will drink some coffee and visit.

Until then, goodbye for now.