



Run the Ridge

“For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”

James 2:26 (ESV)

“For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

The Apostle Paul | Galatians 1:10 (ESV)

After rounding a high peak, our trail veered off to the left and cut around a rock outcropping. A 360° forever view of mountains and valleys opened... gorgeous! Mesmerized, I glanced to one side, a steep drop, 1000' I'd say. My breath left me. (My stomach detests edges!) Craving relief, I looked to the other side... another steep drop! My heart

skipped a beat. We'd have to run the ridge and it made me anxious. The ridge would require my rigorous attention. Allowing my thoughts to be overtaken by those steep drop-offs would ruin everything...

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

Humbly walking with God takes you along such a ridge, a spiritual Ridge with steep drop-offs on both sides. Down one lies a dearth of good works – apathy. It's victims falling when self-love successfully persuades, "Life's hard enough already. I'm busy... tired. Not my thing. That's for someone else, not me..."

Down the other lies selfish ambition. Often masked in false humility, it eagerly twists Kingdom service into me-service. Ever so softly, a victim's self-love boasts, "Look at me, I'm making a Kingdom impact. Surely the Lord will be proud of me... Imagine if others were more like me!"

No one is immune... no matter the slope, "it's all about me."

Reflect: Which downward slope is drawing me off the Ridge right now?

How many are at risk of having "dead faith" ... of slipping down that

steep slope called apathy? You've heard of the 80/20 rule where 80% of the work is handled by 20% of the people? Should this apply, there'll be a huge pile of victims crumpled in a pit at the bottom of this side of the Ridge.

"By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." The Apostle John (1 John 3:16-18)

Clearly, the Lord calls all of us to serve others. Can God's love abide in one who opts not to do good works?

Consider: The Ridge is the path of my Mission.

Once one begins to serve others, what a slippery slope ambition is! Kicked off with good intention, good works draw you closer to the Lord and the witness of him bearing Kingdom fruit. You're on the Ridge! The Lord is working through you! Kingdom Ambition leads you there...

"In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God... and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel..." The

Apostle Paul (Romans 15:17-20)

Paul knew how to Run the Ridge. Proud? Yes! Not of himself; he marveled in the Lord. Ambitious? Yes! To carry out his Mission (bringing the gospel to the Gentiles.) Doing so cost Paul everything, most significantly his ego...

Likewise, humbly allow the Lord to use you. Make your Mission your Kingdom Ambition. Beware of the cost. Money, time, opportunity... perhaps... but mostly your ego! Self-love protects, boosts it, and if you're not attuned, before you realize it, your Kingdom Ambition has been hijacked and you're falling down the slope of selfish ambition.

Imagine: I'm rigorously focused on my Kingdom Ambition – My Mission.

Liken staying on Mission to bowling, the lane being the Ridge, the gutters the steep slopes. Do you set out with thoughts dwelling on the gutters? No, your focus is on the strike point! Sure, from time to time the ball finds itself in a gutter, whether left or right. But, as you ready yourself for the next frame you reset your focus on that strike point.

Your Kingdom Ambition – your Mission – requires that you follow the straight path down the center (the Ridge) towards a strike. When apathy or selfish ambition begin to pull your thinking down the slopes, call it out! Then humbly reset your focus on your Mission and...

Run the Ridge

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach's Questions

- Am I serving the Lord's Kingdom right now? If not, what will I do to get started?
- How has my self-love attempted to use Kingdom service to build my ego? Call it out.
- What will I focus on daily so I stay on the Ridge?

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

Humbly refocus on my Mission today!

"If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more... But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you."

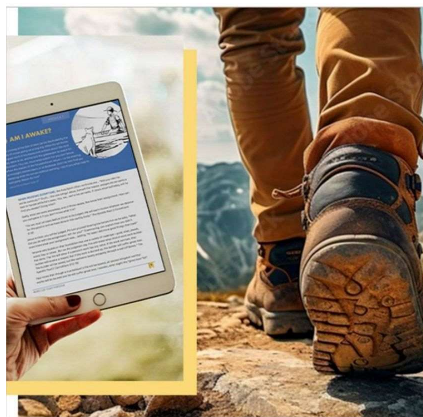
The Apostle Paul | Philippians 3:4-15 (ESV)



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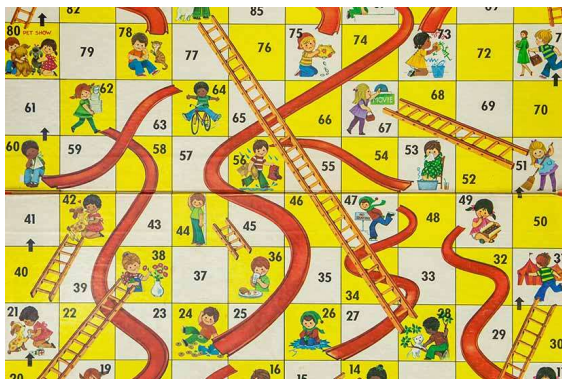
~ DAN B.
Life Mission: Shaping radical existence in the everyday



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I remember playing the board game Chutes and Ladders as a kid...one of my favorites! But boy, it was a killer sometimes. You're nearing the goal, the big "Blue Ribbon" of... [Keep reading](#)

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