

# Following the Signal

*"Happy are people of integrity who follow the law of the Lord. Happy are those who obey His decrees and search for Him with all their hearts. They do not compromise with evil, and they walk only in His paths...Make me walk along the path of your command, for that is where my happiness is found"* (Psalm 119: 1-3, 35).

A driver who ignores traffic signals is "an accident looking for a place to happen." Anyone cheating on red or stopping absent-mindedly on green is a danger to himself and to others. Although a series of red lights can be annoying when you're eager to get to your destination, an accident can bring even greater pain.

The Scriptures, too, have some "red lights" that should control our lives as Christians. They are the prohibitions against behaviours that are detrimental to our walk with the Lord and our growth as Christians. Some "red lights" include thoughts such as envy, pride, hatred, lust, irreverence, and selfishness while others have to do with outward behaviours such as sexual immorality, abuse and addictions.

*"Don't live in darkness. Get rid of your evil deeds. Shed them like dirty clothes. Clothe yourself with the armour of right living, as those who live in the light. We should be decent and true in everything we do, so that everyone can approve of our behaviour. Don't participate in wild parties and getting drunk, or in adultery and immoral living, or in fighting and jealousy. But let the Lord Jesus Christ take control of you, and don't think of ways to indulge your evil desires"* (Romans 13:12-14).

Many people believe that we can live the way we desire and still have a growing relationship with the Lord. It isn't true. *"God is light and there is no darkness in Him at all. So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness. We are not living in the truth"* (1 John 1:5-6).

When the Holy Spirit alerts us to the presence of "red light" thoughts and behaviours in our lives, we should immediately hit the brakes.

Likewise, as we move into the heavy traffic of daily living, we must quickly obey the "green" signals of kindness, humility, love, worship and purity.

*Live creatively, friends. If someone falls into sin, forgivingly restore him, saving your critical comments for yourself. You might be needing forgiveness before the day's out. Stoop down and reach out to those who are oppressed. Share their burdens, and so complete Christ's law.* (Galatians 6:1-3 MSG)

God created us to feel satisfied when we started and accomplished good work. It is God's plan for us that we move away from the sidelines of life into full satisfaction. That comes from being close to God, loving our neighbour, and serving with all our heart in our work, our church, and our neighbourhood. God wants us to stop living a passive self-centered life and move forward into the satisfying life He has prepared for us.

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* (Ephesians 2:10 ESV)

*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms* (1 Peter 4:10 NIV)

God's stops and starts in the Bible are designed to help us. They are not meant to stop us from having a good time. They are meant to protect us, correct us and direct us on the road of life. They help us avoid serious accidents and even fatality. We should be as fearful of ignoring a command of Scripture as we are of running a red light.

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. How is my life better when I exchange "red light" thoughts and behaviours for "green light" thoughts and behaviours?
2. In what ways have God's guidelines protected me or directed me on the road of life?
3. What one thing can I do this week to begin changing my negative thoughts and behaviours for positive ones?