

From: Guardrails, Week 1
Fear of God: Life's Greatest Guardrail

OPENING

1. When was a time where you really appreciated a guardrail in front of you (i.e. the top of the Sears Tower)? Could you imagine climbing over the guardrail and potentially suffering the consequences?
2. What would it have felt like if that guardrail wasn't there at all and the danger was just exposed? Would you be able to feel comfortable and continue on with the activity, or would you have gone somewhere else?

SERMON DEBRIEF

1. Phil mentioned that we live in a 'guardrail-free' society, where at best we have some cautionary yellow lines like: drink responsibly, or consolidate your debt. Where in your life would you really have appreciated a guardrail when there was perhaps only a 'yellow line'?
2. Phil then took us to Proverbs 27:12 and pointed out that a *prudent person foresees danger*. Have you been able to foresee danger in your life? Do you see any danger up ahead right now?
3. Next in v.12, the wise person takes precautions. What precautions could you have taken in the past? What do you need to be cautious of right now?
4. Phil asked, "***What road are you on today...and where is it taking you tomorrow?***" How would you answer?
5. Dan Kelly shared his story. What do you remember most from that story?
6. Is there anything you're attempting to hide from others? Is there anything you're doing that is hurting those around you? Phil pointed out repentance is more than just saying, "I'm sorry," it is making a U-turn and heading in a new direction. Is there anything you need to repent of?

DIGGING IN

Read the text and context of this passage.

1 John 2:1-6

Background: The author of The Gospel of John wrote more than many of us are aware of! John wrote three other letters in the New Testament. The letter of 1 John was written to those who already believed in Jesus Christ for the salvation of their souls. John's letters often address Christian people who are ignoring some important 'guardrails.' In this passage, John challenges us to wonder if we are truly following Christ if we are continually ignoring His guardrails.

1. In verse 1 John reveals his reason for writing: that we may not sin. What kind of baggage do you have with that type of sentence? At a church which proclaims, "No perfect people," do you feel a supportive environment where we can admit our failure, and out of that place of imperfection seek to become more holy?
2. Whew! At the end of verse 1 and in verse 2, John reminds us that while he desires us to be free from sin (that we follow the guardrails God has given us in order to receive the blessings that come from holy living), he reminds us that if we fail we have Jesus Christ and His forgiving and saving work... big enough for the whole world! Does this assurance give you courage to reach out or seek help and try to be holy? To be less afraid to fail?
3. John has just given us some courage, and earlier has pointed out that if anyone claims to be without sin they are lying (1 John 1:8). But now John is going to challenge us! John says that the one who claims to know Jesus (or be a Christian) and does not keep his commandments (or follow His guardrails) is a liar! That statement will make *all* of us feel uncomfortable for a moment. In what ways or at what times have you been a Christian on the outside, but been beyond the guardrails?
4. Church is not a holiness contest, but John points out that if we keep Christ's word we can be confident we are "in Christ" (verse 5). When you look at your life do your actions give you confidence that you know the Lord? Or are there some guardrails that you need to take more seriously?
5. John ends this section by pointing out that Christians will live like Christ (verse 6). What do you need to do to live more like our loving, humble, sacrificial savior? (After these hard challenges it might be good to remember verse 1 and 2!)

PRAY

1. Pray that we could understand God's grace in our lives. He is forgiving and loving and has paid for our sins, and the times we've ignored the guardrails.
2. Pray that we would take calling ourselves a "Christian" seriously. Pray for strength to follow Christ's guardrails so others can tell that we are truly a follower of Christ!