

The Road Less Traveled – February 23, 2018

I've been eyeing my bicycle lately. It hangs upside down from the ceiling of garage, right over the hood of my car. So whenever I pull into the garage, there it is. We have a number of new trails in and around our neighborhood, and – at least before the rain started – I was itching to get out on them. It kind of reminds me of when I first bought the bike five or six years ago. It hung in the garage for a number of weeks before I ever rode it for the first time.

You see, I was recovering from my last ride on my old bike.

I had bought the new bike, but it had to be ordered. So while I was waiting for the new bike to be delivered, I decided to take my 17-year-old mountain bike out for one last spin. We went along fine on the paved bike trail, so fine in fact that I ventured off the paved trail onto terrain more suitable for an honorable mountain bike.

Well, one thing led to another – there was this hill and a rock that proved too much of an obstacle for my front wheel – and I found myself at the bottom of a small ravine, face-down with the bike on top of me and my leg folded over it. I was extremely fortunate to escape the accident with bruises and scrapes. It could have been much worse. But the thing I remember the most about the whole ordeal was lying in the bottom of that ravine taking inventory. As I lay there – before I even tried to untangle myself from the bike – I did a mental check of all my vital parts.

Legs? Yeah, they hurt, but it feels like raw flesh hurt, not broken bone hurt.

Arms? I can move my fingers, and the rest seems to be working, too.

Head? My helmet is still on my head, so I'm guessing we're OK there, too.

Finding nothing seriously damaged, I began the process of untangling myself, climbing out of the ravine and limping home. A friend of mine found the story tremendously funny. Not the accident, of course, but the mental system check that I conducted face-down on the ground. But at the time it made sense. If something was seriously wrong – if something was not as it should be – then there was no sense in trying to move forward.

I wonder if we wouldn't be better off if we approached other aspects of our lives the same way. The truth is that we tend to let consequences drive much of our decision-making, rather than our spiritual status. But a quick spiritual system check can help us determine whether we truly should move forward or not.

What's my motive?

How will this serve God?

Will this glorify God and build the Kingdom?

Will people see God at work in my actions?

The funny thing is, it only takes a minute. But it is time that can be the difference between getting ahead and getting home.

See you Sunday.