

September 23

Luke 9:62 (NIV) ⁶² Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.” **Proverbs 4:25 (NASB)** Let your eyes look directly ahead And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you.

When I was in high school, Wayne and I would sometimes go outside to throw the football. I was the receiver, and Wayne was the quarterback. As I would “run” patterns, Wayne would hit me with the ball. He got quite good at it. However, when I would run away from him and look over my shoulder, we had a difficult time connecting because, when I turned to look over my left shoulder, I would veer to the right. When I turned to look over my right shoulder, I would veer to the left. I could not run in a straight line. Even when I focused on doing so, I would veer off the path.

Jesus’s words reminded me of those times playing with that football. As long as I did not look behind me, I was good. As I write this, I am also reminded of the one time I helped a friend rake hay. “Stay in a straight line,” he said. Well, I learned early that the only way I could do that was to focus on a specific point in front of me. Now, imagine plowing a field while constantly looking back. When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we are to walk that straight and narrow path that He has established for us. He tells us the old is gone and the new has come. He assures us that our past has been wiped away by His blood. Thus, we are to keep our eyes on what lies ahead. We are to focus on the goal of the upward call of Jesus Christ. However, when we look back at our past, we will begin to lose our way. If we look back at another person’s past, we will also lose our way. We do not pretend we have not made mistakes, but, because of the sacrifice of Jesus, we are not to look back at our past lives or at the past lives of others. Instead, we fix our gaze on the promise that lies ahead of us.