

The Discipline of Detour

by Denis Lyle

God leads us on a detour to educate, prepare, and discipline us for our future, and to make us dependent on Him.

Scripture: Job 36:22, Psalm 25:9, Psalm 37:23, Proverbs 4:12, Isaiah 63:9, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Ephesians 2:10

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Gods Guidance"

Description

Denis Lyle preaches about the destructive emotion of frustration, likening it to a conflict that causes anger and disappointment. He delves into the concept of spiritual detours, comparing it to feeling lost and making no progress, drawing parallels to the Children of Israel's journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. Lyle discusses the 'Discipline of Detour,' emphasizing God's guidance, goal, and grace in leading His people through indirect paths for their spiritual growth and development.

Transcript

Frustration is a word often mispronounced. It is often mistakenly called "flustration", or "flusteration". Whatever one names it, frustration is a destructive emotion. What is it Most of us have a fairly accurate idea. It is the emotion of conflict which courses through our systems, making us miffed, causing us to breathe heavily and turn red in the face. Our blood pressure rises, and our hearts race. The anger attached with frustration is our systems trying to react against a seemingly impossible barrier.

One comedian aptly summed it up, "It makes me so mad I could eat a goat burger". Frustration is the upset of not being able to succeed. It's harmful to the system because it means the dashing of hopes and dreams, the inability to reach a goal, and the disappointing embarrassment of failure. Now there is nothing that frustrates you so much as DETOURS. III: Do you know what its like driving up the M2 to the airport or to North Antrim and suddenly you see a sign "Traffic Diversion".

And you're behind time, and you push the panic button, as they divert you onto the Shore Road and you see the cars stretched a long way in front of you. That's the time you want Jim Shaw to appear to guide through all the back roads, and bring you out on the other side of Glengormely! Now do you ever feel that you are on a spiritual detour Do you ever feel that you are just going around in circles That you're making no progress That you seem to be going nowhere in a hurry. I wonder is that how the Children of Israel felt as God led them from Egypt to the Promised Land Did they think to themselves, "What is God doing here This is not the nearest way!

This is not the easiest way! This is not the best way". Is that how you feel this... Do you feel that you are out in the wilderness and all you're doing is going around in circles Then I have news for you. In God's school the curriculum often includes the Discipline of Detour. (Job 36:22,10) In other words God uses this method to educate us spiritually. Now the simple geographical fact referred to in (Exod 13) is that when God led Israel out of Egypt He did not lead them directly to the Land of Promise, but led them indirectly.

The result, was, of course that the journey took not a few days, as would have been the case had they travelled through the way of the land of the Philistines, but the journey took a long time. Here then is "THE DISCIPLINE OF DETOUR," For in His all-wise plan God often chooses to lead His children by a round-about way for their good and His glory. Now I want to talk to you today about "THE DISCIPLINE OF DETOUR", and there are three phrase's here that I want to draw your attention to. (1) "GOD LED "THIS IS GODS GUIDANCE Look at (13:18) In (13:17) its put another way.

The fact of God's guidance expressed in these verses is later expanded in (13:21-22) You see God's guides His people. (Ps 25:9 32:8) Ill: Dr.W.E.Sangster was so sure of this fact that he entitled his book on the subject of guidance: God does Guide us! Indeed if you look at this passage you'll notice that: (a) GODS GUIDANCE IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE: " God led them not through", "God led the people about", God chose the way for His people through the wilderness. Ill: George Muller once said, "I never remember in all my Christian course that I ever sincerely and patiently sought to know the will of God by the teaching of the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of the Word of God but I have always been directed".

Are you wondering about the future Are you uncertain as to the course that you should take My, be assured that God's guidance is always possible. Always possible to those who are: (1) REDEEMED BY HIM: For lets remember that the Children of Israel had just been redeemed from the bitter bondage of Egypt. They had known the protecting blood and the mighty hand of Jehovah. (12:13 13:9) Moses put it this way, "Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed". (15:13) You see God is pledged to guide only those who are His people through faith in His Son, the Lamb of God.

My, are you one of His people Have you been redeemed by His precious blood (2) RULED BY HIM: God led His people: his people followed. How do we know Well, when the Cloud lifted they journeyed, when the cloud tarried they stayed. (Exod 40:36-38) In other words God was acknowledged not only as their Redeemer but as their Ruler! Do you want to know God's guidance in your life Then there must be a spirit of willingness to be led. The Lord Jesus stated this principle when He said, "If any man do His will he shall know...

"(Jn 7:17) Are you prepared to pray with Horatius Bonar, " I dare not choose my lot: I would not if I might: Choose Thou for me, my God: So shall I walk aright." (b) GODS GUIDANCE IS WONDERFULLY PROGRESSIVE: " And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud... "(13:21 Num 9:17-18) From Rameses (12:37) they went to Succoth, from Succoth to Etham and so on. (13:20) In other words the Lord was leading them a step at a time. (Num 33:1) Is this not exactly how God deals with us Sure, God has a definite plan for each of our lives (Eph 2:10) but He usually does not reveal to us more than the next step in it!

Do you recall that this is how He led Philip Imagine being told to leave a great gospel campaign where souls were being saved and demons were being exorcised. (Acts 8:12 17) And a city turned upside down and inside out for Christ. But the Lord came and said to Philip, "Arise, and go toward the south..."(8:26)He received no further details. He had, as, it were, to go with sealed orders. Do you know what Philip did "

And he arose and went". Then he received the next command. "Go near and join thyself to this chariot". (8:29) The result The Ethiopian eunuch was gloriously saved.

You see (b) God does not set down before us the whole blueprint, but rather He reveals to us one step at a time. Why That we might continually trust in Him. The psalmist says: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord". (Ps 37:23) "And as thou goest step by step the way shall open before thee." (Prov 4:12) So God's guidance is (a) (b) but: (c) GODS GUIDANCE IS SOMETIMES PERPLEXING: Here were Israel on the borders of Egypt. Canaan was their destination (Gen 5):25) God was their guide but how perplexed they must have been when they discovered the way God was leading them!

It certainly was not THE NEAREST WAY: As the crow flies, the route to Canaan from Egypt was through Philistea. This way would have been along the north side of the wilderness along the coast of the Mediterranean, through the land of the Philistines entering Canaan on the south west. This would have been the most direct route but it was not God's way. Still again, the way God was leading them was not THE EASIEST WAY: " God led the people about". (13:18) The easiest route seemed to be through the land of the Philistines.

On that road there were no mountains to climb: no desert to cross: no sea to obstruct... but God said NO! Are you perplexed this... as to the way God is leading you Listen: His thoughts are not our thoughts: His ways are not our ways. And sometimes His leading is to us the source of surprise and perplexity. My, because of our finite intellect: our faulty insight: and our foolish interpretation of His guidance we are often baffled and beaten as to the reason for His strange leading.

Its at such times we must remember that God is still leading us and we must trust Him, for His way is perfect. " My Fathers may twist and turn, My heart may throb and ache, But in my soul I'm glad to know God maketh no mistake." " God led", (13:18) But there's a second phrase I want you to notice in (13:17) (2) "GOD SAID", THIS IS GODS GOAL Look at (13:17) Why did God lead His people in this roundabout way What did God have in mind for His people What goal or objective was to be achieved by this strange leading Well in (13:17) we notice: (a) GODS GOAL STATED NEGATIVELY: " For God said...

"(13:17) In other words God was saying, "If they face war prematurely they might change their minds and return to Egypt". You see God's strange but sure guidance was dictated partly because of the frailty and feebleness of His people. My, do you not see here a beautiful instance of the knowledge and greatness of God "He knoweth our frame He remembereth that we are dust". (Ps 103:14) When Paul speaks of Gods dealings with Israel he uses this expression: "And about the time of forty years suffered He their manners in the wilderness". (Acts 13:18) Now here is another rendering, "God bore and fed them as a nurse beareth and feedeth her child."

My, God knew the greatness of Israels foe and the weakness of Israels faith and God dealt gently with them and would not "suffer them to be tempted above that they were able". (1 Cor 10:13) Thats why He adapted the journey to their strength. Do you know something "A way of escape", is often a detour. Sometimes God conducts us on a "roundabout way," that we might escape hills that are too steep: currents that are too strong: ordeals that are too bitter. My, the meandering path we wearily tread sometimes irritates us, yet if we saw truly, we would glorify the wisdom and grace which finds for us at every step the line of least resistance!

My ... " Then murmur not at the winding way: It is our Father's will To lead us home by the zigzag path, To bring the force of the hill " Do you feel that you are presently travelling on a detour Do you feel that God is

leading you in a roundabout way Fret not: fear not: fail not for there is a purpose in "the serpentine path, the confused movements, the unaccountable delays". (a) But what was: (b) GODS GOAL STATED POSITIVELY: You see while on the one hand God did not want a defeated, discouraged and dispirited people, on the other hand He wanted a dependent, developed, and disciplined people.

My, is this now why He led them the way He did (13:18) God wanted them to become DEPENDANT: looking to Him for the provision of their every need. He wanted them to become DEVELOPED: as their faith faced a variety of circumstances. Still again, God wanted them to become DISCIPLINED: to be able to respond to any emergency not in a spirit of fear, but in a spirit of discipline and self-control. My, God leads you though the wilderness and the detours because He is preparing something wonderful thing for you, something better!

III: I heard about an evangelist whose wife died, leaving him with two little boys to rear. He hired a lady to stay with them while he was on his crusades. When he travelled, he would nearly always return with presents for the little boys. One time, however he forgot to buy their gifts. "Daddy, Daddy", they shouted as they met him at the airport. Of course they asked about the presents. He said, "Boys, what we're going to do is let get you anything you want". So they stopped at a large store.

First they went by the sweet counter. They wanted sweets but their Daddy suggested they keep looking. They came to two cowboy suits and they wanted to settle on those. Daddy asked them to look further. They moved into the sporting department and picked up basketballs and began to dribble, "Daddy, Daddy, we want these basketballs". They were excited. Finally, they went to the very back of the store, and against the wall were two beautiful bicycles. The boys left with far more than they bargained for.

They started with sweets and ended up with expensive bikes that Daddy wanted to buy all the time. My, do you realise that God is not leading you around in circles for no reason He takes you on detour because He is preparing something wonderful for you, something better! (1) (2) (3) "GOD GAVE", THIS IS GODS GRACE We have only to read the record of the journey along the detour to find the word GRACE written in large letters. From Egypt to Mount Sinai (19:2) from Mount Sinai to Kadesh Barnea (Deut 1:19) there was an abundance of grace for Israel!

At the: (a) RED SEA GODS GRACE WAS REVEALED IN HIS POWER: Trapped in a "cul-de-sac", with the Red Sea before them: the enemy behind them: the mountains around them "they were sore afraid". (14:10) They were at their extremity. Is that where you are this... Do you feel there is no way out Then listen to the Word of the Lord, "Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation, the deliverance of the Lord". (14:13) My, "if God..." (b) MARAH GODS GRACE WAS REVEALED IN HIS PROVISION: It was here that "they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter". (15:23-25) Are you embittered because of the way God has led you What can you do What did Moses do Well, the Lord showed Moses a tree, "which when he had cast into the waters were made sweet".

My, there is a TREE that can sweeten all the bitter waters of life and when you get down at Calvarys Cross Christ can turn the waters of bitterness into the wine of sweetness. (2 Cor 4:16) (c) IN THE WILDERNESS OF SIN GODS GRACE WAS REVEALED IN HIS PATIENCE: What a murmuring lot they were. (16:2) They murmured when there was nothing to drink (15:24) nothing to eat: (16:3) at God's servants: (16:2) against God Himself: (Num 14:39) My, do you ever wonder how God putt's up with the lot of us Isn't God patient with us (Is 63:9) (d) REPHIDIM GODS GRACE WAS REVEALED IN HIS PRESERVATION: For "Then came Amalek and fought with Israel". (17:8) " And when Moses stood with arms spread wide:

Success was found on Israel's side But when through weariness they failed, That moment Amalek prevailed." (e) SINAI GODS GRACE WAS REVEALED IN HIS PRESENCE: For He the Sovereign of the Universe descended upon Mount Sinai in fire. (19:18) My, do you see that God's grace was made manifest on this detour Do you see that there was grace sufficient for every step of the way There was grace for Israel's weakness: grace for their ignorance: grace for their impatience: grace for their ingratitude.

Grace reigned all the way from Egypt to Kadesh-Barnea! Do you recall those lovely words: " All the way my Saviour leads me: Cheers each winding path I tread: Gives my grace for every trial: Feeds me with the living bread." Is the Lord leading you on a detour Will you look to Him for the supply of His abundant grace to meet every emergency of the way My, His grace is Abundant: His grace is Available. To you just now He says, " My grace is sufficient for thee". (2 Cor 12:9)

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/denis-lyle/the-discipline-of-detour/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net