

QC0018 - How Do You Know If You're on the Right Path.

Many people who come to counseling are trying to figure out the right thing to do in a certain situation. So today on Quick Counsel, we're going to wrestle with the question...How do you know if you're on the right path.

THE QUESTION

What's the right decision? How do I know which choice to make?
How do I know if I'm on the right path?

We all have these questions at times. Whether it's related to a purchase, a career, a relationship, a retirement, or some other life juncture, there are times when we will all ask ourselves, "How can I know I'm making the right choice? How can I know I'm on the right path?"

Well, let's jump right into how to figure this out.

THE QUESTIONS

To know if you're on the right path, you must answer three questions:

1 What is my destination?

If you don't know your destination, you'll never know if you've arrived. Or, as someone once put it..."If you aim for nothing, you're bound to hit it.

The answer to "what is my destination" will vary widely according to who's answering it. For some their destinations may be a particular career. For others it may be a certain financial status. For others it could be a certain home, or a certain number of children. Fill in the blank.

But ultimately there is one or two destinations that we all seek.

- We all seek to be a better version of ourselves. Whether it's our outlook, our education, our status, our relationships...we all want to improve ourselves.
- And, if you're a person of faith, the second destination you seek is that of growing closer to God.

These two destinations often lie underneath all the things for which we strive.

So first answer the question, "What is my destination?"

Next, you need to ask the question...

2 Can the path I'm on now be used in some way to get me to my desired destination?

In his book, "The Principle of the Path," Andy Stanley says it this way....

"Direction, not intention, determines our destination." (I'll put a link to that book in the show notes.)

In other words...the path you choose now will determine where you end up later.

For example:

- You may want to lose weight, but each time you decide to have

that bowl of ice cream you're on a path that will lead to a different outcome.

- You may want to improve your knowledge by reading more books, but each time you spend 30-40 minutes scrolling through your social media feed, you're on a path that will lead you in a different direction.

Get in the habit of daily asking yourself: "Will this (*fill in the blank*) get me to my desired destination?"

Finally, the third question you need to ask is this...

3 What's the next small step or steps I need to take?

It's easy to get overwhelmed when you think about all it takes to get to where you want to be.

I remember when I felt called to get my masters degree from seminary. I had a wife and two children...I was working 40 hours a week in the oil fields of Texas...I was working 20-30 hours a week in a church...and I hadn't even completed my bachelors degree. I was overwhelmed by the thought of it all. It just seemed insurmountable.

But my wife just kept saying things like, "Here's the first thing we need to do. Just focus on that." When I felt like I was never going to get finished, she would say, "Just take the next class." She helped me break things down in small, manageable steps.

It's like the old saying goes..."How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time."

So take the next small step. Make the next small decision.

In reality, there's really no such thing as a small step or a small decision, because each small step and each small decision builds one upon the others to eventually take us somewhere.

The Chinese philosopher Lao Tsu put it this way, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

These are the three questions you need to ask yourself to determine if you're on the right path...

- What's my destination?
- Can the path I'm on now be used to get me to my desired destination?
- What's the next small step or steps I need to take?

But there's a...

THE BIGGER QUESTION

And that question is...

What if there's not one right path?

This may sound like some mystical "mumbo jumbo," but think about it...

If you're destination is very narrow and specific...

- Becoming a six figure earner.
- Getting a specific job.
- Retiring at a certain level.
- Getting a specific piece of property.
- Etc.

Then the paths to that destination tend to be more narrow and restricted.

But what if your destination is bigger, broader, and deeper?

As I said before, I believe, there is one or two main destinations we

should be striving for.

- To become a better version of yourself.
- And if you're a person of faith...To have a better relationship with God.

If these are the two main destinations you're striving for, then there's a way to take any path you're on and turn it to reach these two destinations.

Which means...there can be more than one right path.

The right path is the one you're on...as long as you take that path and use it to become a better version of you, and (if you're a person of faith) to have a better relationship with God.

This idea may be deeper than you expected when you started this podcast, but it will lead you to a deeper life. It will broaden and expand your life. And it will free you from trying to find just one right answer so you can explore a wide variety of possibilities.

I hope this has been helpful today, and I hope you'll share it with someone who could use it. Don't forget to subscribe to this podcast, wherever you listen to podcast, and leave a comment and a rating, to help move this podcast along to others.

There's more from me at bretlegg.com (one t and two g's)
And feel free to follow me on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

I hope you have a great week, and I hope you'll join us again for the next episode of Quick Counsel!