

## I Did It My Way

Proverbs 3:5-10

### Slide 1

In 2010 there was a story of a British man named Shawn Murtagh who decided to wear a Halloween costume.

To complete the costume, he had a sequined top-hat he wanted to wear at an angle on his head. But it wouldn't quite stay on, so, instead of attaching the hat to his head with a string, he decided to glue it on.

Fabric glue didn't work, so he used some Super Glue. The good news was: the hat stayed on. The bad news was: It wouldn't come off. Nothing he used could get the hat off his head.

So, he finally went to the emergency room, and the ER doctor told him, *"Super Glue is actually quite strong. If I rip the hat off, it will tear your scalp and could lead to an infection."*

So, the nurse cut off the top of the hat with scissors and left the brim. She told reporters, *"I left the brim, so he wouldn't look like that much of an idiot."*

The brim finally came off, but only after he soaked head in warm water for 12 hours.

The Bible tells us that *"There's a way that seems right unto a man..."* but the end thereof can be pretty embarrassing. Especially if you use Super Glue.

When it comes to the more serious decisions of life, if we insist on doing things our way, it can get dangerous... really quick.

The actual quote from Proverbs 14:12 says, *"There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death."*

This sermon series deals with *“Lies That People Believe”* and the lie we’re looking at today is: *“I Did It My Way.”*

Those words are from a song written back in the 60’s by Paul Anka and subsequently made popular by Frank Sinatra.

It’s a powerful song. It starts out with the singer talking about the difficulties of life and at one point, you hear these words:

*“Regrets, I’ve had a few; but then again, too few to mention. I did what I had to do and saw it through without exemption. I planned each charted course; each careful step along the byway. But more, much more than this, I did it my way.”*

The Chorus goes, *“Yes, there were times, I’m sure you knew when I bit off more than I could chew. But through it all, when there was doubt, I ate it up and spit it out. I faced it all and I stood tall; And did it my way.”*

That last section builds to a crescendo and you can almost hear people in the audience say *“YEAH! That’s the way to live life!!! Do it your way!!!”*

In fact, a 2005 survey showed that the song, *“I Did It My Way,”* was the most requested song at funerals.

The spokesman said, *“The words sum up what so many people feel about their lives and how they would like their loved ones to remember them.”*

It’s an impressive song about facing life’s difficulties and triumphing over the challenges – *“I Did It My Way!”* It’s a powerful song, but it’s also a pagan song.

Scripture repeatedly warns us that's not a good idea!!!! *"There is a way that seems right unto a man ("I Did It My Way!"), but the end thereof is the way of death."*

Our text this morning is Proverbs 3:5-8, *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones."*

## **Slide 2**

The bottom line is: Don't do it your way, do it God's way!

There are many stories in Bible that show what happens when people don't do things God's way.

Cain probably knew what kind of sacrifice God desired, but he did it his way and offered God his own kind of sacrifice causing God to reject both Cain and his offering.

After the flood God told Noah and his sons to multiply and fill the earth. Instead, they did it their way.

They settled in one spot and built the tower of Babel. God came down and scattered the people, confusing their languages.

Abraham was promised that he and Sarah would have a child, but Sarah was getting old and impatient.

So, Abraham listened to her and did things her way and he had a child by her servant Hagar. They ended up with serious family troubles.

Pharaoh did it his way. He mocked Moses by saying, *"Who is this God that I should listen to Him"* and refused to let the Israelites go.

Ten plagues later, he learned the folly of his actions. And, of course, Judas did it his way and betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. We all know how that turned out.

I could go on... and on ... and on. God would say one thing - people would say something else, and life just got more complicated.

*"I Did It My Way"* is not a good idea. It's not a Biblical idea and it's definitely NOT a Christian idea.

Luke 9:23, *"Then he [Jesus] said to them all: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.'"*

To deny yourself is to lay all your life at the cross of Jesus. It's no longer your will that guides you but God's.

Romans 10:9 tells us that part of being saved is confessing Jesus as Lord. *"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."*

When you call Jesus LORD, Jesus owns you. From that time on it's His will, not yours, that should guide you.

In fact, in Luke 22:42 Jesus modeled that very idea when He prayed, *"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."*

The problem for a lot of people is that they want to do things their way. If they do it their way, they're convinced it'll be done right. They think, *"Why depend on someone else, when I can do it right the first time?"*

That kind of thinking bleeds over into our relationship with God.

### Slide 3

In fact, there's lots of people who have a saying that makes this idea of doing it my way almost sound righteous: *"God helps those who help themselves."*

That saying is believed to have come from one of Aesop's Fables about Hercules. It goes like this:

*"A Wagoner was once driving a heavy load along a very muddy way. He came to a part of the road where the wheels sank half-way in the mud and the more the horses pulled, the deeper sank the wheels. So, the Wagoner threw down his whip, and knelt down and prayed to Hercules the Strong.*

*'O Hercules, help me in this my hour of distress.'" But Hercules appeared to him, and said: 'Man, don't sprawl there. Get up and put your shoulder to the wheel. The gods help them that help themselves.'"*

Notice it was "gods" (little g) not "God." It's a pagan teaching and Christians should never quote it.

It's just another way to sing, *"I Did It My Way."* I don't need God's will, I have my own will and it serves me quite well, thank you very much.

It's possible that there are some Christians who do sing, *"I Did It My Way."* I mean, there are church goers who tell God, *"I want my will, NOT yours?"*

Well, maybe not on purpose. Nobody is that dumb. Except maybe Satan. Satan was kicked out of heaven because he wanted things his way and he did that on purpose.

But when churchgoers do this (when they insist on doing things their way), they don't think of it as defying God. They look at it as "*standing up for their rights*" and doing the "*right thing.*"

That could easily happen to you or me. We could we end up defying God because we thought we were doing the "right thing."

A lot of times, it happens when people can't get their own way. Do you know what people do when they can't get their own way?

They get mad! They get angry! They begin to look for ways to get their own way.

Ephesians 4:30 – 5:1-2 warns us about that. *"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."*

Notice, Paul's warning the Ephesian's about the signs of self-will – bitterness, wrath, anger, slander, etc.

These are signs of someone who doesn't get their own way. People who wanted to do it their way, which caused them to become difficult. This same warning applies to us today.

I've done that, and, probably you have, too. But, if you and I want to do things God's way, if we want to imitate God, we need be kind, tenderhearted, and forgive one another. That should be our goal.

So be careful. Watch out! If you find yourself getting annoyed and angry because of something realize it may be because you can't get your way and you've begun to seek your will... rather than God's.

Don't sing that song!

#### **Slide 4**

##### Conclusion

So, if it can happen to you or me, and we're Christians, how much more do think non-Christians would find it normal to sing, "*I Did It My Way.*"

If Jesus isn't the Lord of your life, somebody has to be and who better to be Lord for the non-Christian than themselves.

All decisions for the non-Christian are based upon: "*What I want.*" So, because Jesus isn't the Lord of their lives, they live by the pagan idea that: "*God helps those who help themselves.*"

They believe God will help them if they do enough good in their lives. When they do enough good, then God will accept them.

They don't need Jesus; they just need to be better people. Because, if they're better people, they'll have earned God's attention and assistance.

Someone once said, "*The universal religion of humankind is: We develop a good record and give it to God, and then he owes us. But the Gospel is: God develops a good record and gives it to us, then we owe him. In short, to say, "a good person (not just Christians) can find God" is to say good works are enough to find God.*"

That's the reasoning of mankind outside Christ; you don't need Jesus. You can do it by yourself.

By contrast, in Philippians 3:4-6 Paul goes through a list of all the “wonderful” things he’d been and done before he became a Christian. After coming to Christ, he recognized those accomplishments were just rubbish!

*Philippians 3:7-10, “But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”*

In other words: he HAD a good record, but it all ended up in the garbage once he became a follower of Jesus. Nothing he had done compared to what Jesus had done for him.

Let me tell you about a man who learned that very lesson. He was a very religious man. He’d been taught by the finest of teachers and he believed he’d done enough righteous stuff in his life to be saved.

But he was an angry man. He’d encountered people we’d call Christians and did everything he could to hurt or destroy them.

*In Acts 26:10-12 this man, we call him Paul, explained: “And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord’s people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities. On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.”*



He thought he was pleasing God, but he was doing things his way, and he was hurting and destroying people. So one day, Jesus came to visit him and shook up Paul's life.

Paul ended up talking with a Christian named Ananias who told him, in Acts 22:16, what he needed to do to turn his life around, *“And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.”*

How would that change Paul's life? It told him to die to himself (repent), be buried with Christ (baptism), and rise a new man.

Paul surrendered his will to Christ's will for his life. But his baptism was only the beginning, because in baptism it's all about learning to do it God's way.