

# How Do We Turn Away From His Decrees?

Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. **—Malachi 3:7**

God's accusation in this verse is that "you have turned away from my decrees." What does the word decree mean? A decree is a judgment or decision. In Psalm 119 there are seven words that can be used interchangeably: law, statutes, precepts, decrees, commands, word, and promises. All these refer to the revealed will of God. When people come to me asking how they can know God's will, I tell them it is in the Bible. If you were stranded on a remote desert island with only five pages of the Bible, there would be enough in those five pages, wherever they came from, to give you a glimpse of what God wants of you and how He wants you to live your life.

Two final points: how these people wandered and how they could come home. They wandered because they turned away from God's Word. How do you turn from God's Word? First, you stop praying. You can remember days when you took time to pray, but then you became busy, busy, busy. You think that God understands that you were too tired to pray, but eventually not praying doesn't seem to bother you any more. Next, you stop reading the Bible. The devil doesn't want you to read the Bible, and he will come up with every reason why you don't need to. He'll make you keep putting off regular Bible reading until you find yourself in a most precarious state.

Then you begin to yield to temptation. Now what is temptation for some may not be temptation for another. You begin to yield to temptation, and by this time you feel too ashamed to pray and read the Bible. The fourth thing that happens is that you return to a life not dissimilar to what you were converted from. At first that bothers you, but after a while you become

anesthetized to it and you almost feel at home even though you are a long way from home. That is how you wander from God.

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