

The Farmer and the Furrow

A farmer went out to plow his field. He hitched up his team of mules to the plow and walked with them to the field. He picked up the plow handles and called to the team yelling "Get up mules!" as he slapped them lightly on their rumps with the reins. Across the field they went, the plow creating a furrow in the dark fertile soil, the man walking behind with his hands on the plow and the reins slung over his shoulder. He called out to the mules, "Gee" or "Haw" if he wanted them to turn to the right or left.

He intended to plow straight furrows, but he was so concerned with the plowing that he kept to this side or that and would then stop and look behind. If a furrow seemed to be going crooked he would call to the mules to try to correct it.

At the end of the day his field was plowed, but as he looked back over his day's work he saw that the furrows were crooked, zigzagging all across his field. At first he was bothered because the results were not as he had expected. But he consoled himself by saying to himself, "Well, I tried hard and did the best I could."

Another farmer went out to plow his field. He hitched up his team and came to the field. But before he started, he took a bundle of tall stakes and drove them into the ground at the ends of his field each one where he wanted a row to be. He measured the distance between each stake so it would be just right.

Then he went back to his mules and started to plow. He did not look to the right or to the left or behind. As he plowed he kept his eyes focused on the stake at the end of the row. At the end of the day he looked out over his field. The rows were straight and even. He smiled and was well pleased with his work.

Reflections

If we want our lives to be straight, even, and balanced according to God's plan we must keep our eyes on Jesus the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2) If we look to the side, to the world or the approval of friends, or behind, (Phipprians 4:13) we will end up with crooked lives. Yes, it will be the best we can do, but God expects more. He calls us to a higher standard than we can do on our own and provides the way for us to do it. If we focus on Jesus, receive His grace, and His ability, we can meet that goal.