



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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TRIUMPHS OF THE CROSS

Marvin L. Weir

The cross of Calvary is precious in what it accomplished.

The cross, a curse for all mere humans, was a triumphant moment in the life of Jesus Christ. Having died on Calvary's cross, it can now be said that Christ *“...spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it”* (Col. 2:15). The devil did not win a victory when Christ was crucified. Neither was a victory won by him when the Lord arose from the dead. Men did all within their power to keep Jesus in the tomb, but to no avail (1 Cor. 15:4; Luke 24:1-6). The Lord's greatest triumph over Satan now comes by way of the cross.

The cross of Calvary is precious in what it accomplished. It should hold a special place in the heart of one who is concerned about his soul. Let us never forget that...

1) **The Cross Of Christ Was A Triumph Over Sin.** Satan never advertises sin for what it really is. *“The sting of death is sin; ... But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Cor. 15:56-57). The brethren at Rome were reminded that *“the wages of sin is death”* (Rom. 6:23). Since all of accountable age have sinned (Rom. 3:23), all were (are) hopelessly lost, had not Christ triumphed over sin on the cross.

Of Christ it is said, *“...now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”* (Heb. 9:26). What the blood of bulls and goats could not do (Heb. 10:4), Christ, *“...by his own blood...entered in once into the holy place, having*

obtained eternal redemption for us” (Heb. 9:12).

Those who have *“put on Christ”* (Gal. 3:27) by obeying the Gospel have access to the blood of Christ and the forgiveness of their trespasses *“according to the riches of his grace”* (Eph. 1:7). Repentance always precedes forgiveness (Luke 13:3) and the sins one has repented of will be remembered against him no more (Heb. 8:12). This is quite a contrast to the old law where there was *“a remembrance...made of sins every year”* (Heb. 10:3).

2) **The Cross Of Christ Was A Triumph Over The Old Law.** The Bible teaches that *“...if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second”* (Heb. 8:7). Though many today advocate that “Christians” are subject to **part** of the Law of Moses, such could not be farther from the truth! Paul reminds the brethren at Colossae that Christ forgave their trespasses, saying, He blotted *“...out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross”* (Col. 2:14). Ever consistent in his teaching, Paul tells the brethren at Ephesus that Christ, *“Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace”* (Eph. 2:15).

The inspired writer to the Hebrews says, *“And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament,*

that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth” (Heb. 9:15-17). Yes, at His death on the cross, Christ triumphed over the Old Law of Moses.

3) **The Cross Of Christ Was A Triumph Over Death.** Christ's death put an end to the fear of death for all who *“die in the Lord”* (Rev. 14:13). Paul, writing to Timothy, says that Christ *“abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel”* (2 Tim. 1:10). Isaiah prophesied this truth some 750 years before the cross. Isaiah proclaimed, *“He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it”* (Isa. 25:8). Homer Hailey comments: *“Having made provision for the great spiritual feast and having removed the covering or veil of ignorance and unbelief, the Lord makes a third provision: He hath swallowed up death forever. This was achieved through Jesus Christ. In Christ's victory over death our victory is guaranteed, for*

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Triumphs of the Cross...



Editorial...

SYSTEMIC CORRUPTION #2

Garland M. Robinson

When men/women leave the eternal word of God and refuse to look to the Lord's word as absolute truth and guidance, there's no place they can go but down, down, down.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8).

The world is full of corruption because people don't follow God's will. They violate his law on every point and at every turn. People do their own will instead of the will of God the Father. This leads the world into...

ADULTERY, FORNICATION, UNCLEANNESS, LASCIVIOUSNESS

These sins are rampant in the world. People do what they want and don't care what the Bible says. They fulfil every desire of the flesh and of the mind. They run headlong into corruption and never consider what is right with God.

How are these words defined? Adultery: sexual intercourse with another which violates the marital vows. Fornication: sexual intercourse outside of a marriage recognized by God. It includes sex between a man and a woman, a man and a man (homosexuality), a woman and a woman (lesbians), and even a man or woman with animals (bestiality). Uncleanness: The impurity of lustful, lewd, luxurious, profligate living. Lasciviousness: Unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, wantonness, shamelessness, the unchaste handling, touching, of males and females, obviously including dancing. All these are sins condemned by God.

The Lord says those who commit adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, or any other sin, do not and can not go to heaven (1 Cor. 6:9-11). One thing is very clear, "...the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body" (1

Cor. 6:13). Sin causes one to be separated from God (Isa. 59:1-2). When one divorces their spouse for any cause other than their spouse's "fornication," and marries another, he/she is living in adultery. Their so-called marriage is an adulterous marriage. Jesus made it very clear when he explained, "I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9; 5:32).

So many do not accept what the Lord said and desperately seek to find a way to get around it. Some offer a solution by saying that committing adultery is a "one time" act. That is, when one divorces their mate and it's not because of their mate's fornication and marry again have committed the sin of adultery, but they say it's only a "one time" act of adultery. They do not believe or recognize that the marriage itself is an adulterous marriage. In "their minds" it's only the acts of putting away and marrying again that is adultery. Therefore, if one repents of the one-time "act of putting away and marrying again," they are forgiven of adultery and they can keep living with their new spouse or marry anyone else they choose. That is not what the Lord said.

The word "committeth" is in the present active tense. The present tense identifies "continuous action." The force of the word means "ongoing." As long as one continues married to their new partner, they continue committing adultery. It is a continuous state — a continuous relationship, marriage.

The Scriptures are filled with present tense ("continuous action") verbs. For example: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness"

(Matt. 6:33). The word "seek" means to "keep on seeking." "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation" (James 1:12). "Endureth" means to "keep on enduring."

Colossians 3:7 verifies that one can "live in a continuous state of sin." Some in the church at Colossae had "lived" in the continual state of fornication, the continual state of uncleanness, etc. (vs.5-6) They lived in these sins before they became Christians! But, in order to have forgiveness of their sins, they repented of their practice, stopped doing it, and got out of that relationship.

Herod had John beheaded because he exposed his adulterous marriage to Herodias (Matt. 14:3-4). Philip and Herodias had gotten a divorce and Herod married her. The Holy Spirit revealed to John that their marriage was adultery. As a result, John blatantly told Herod, "it is not lawful for thee to have her."

Jesus said in Matthew 19:9 that those who "put away" their wife (or husband, Mark 10:12) for "any cause" other than their wife's or husband's fornication and marry another, "committeth" adultery. Not only that, but those whom they marry is also living in adultery (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). These are hard words — very hard words. But, they are true words. The Lord is the one who said them because he loves our soul and does not want anyone to be lost.

The Lord's disciples did not have any problem understanding what he said. Their reply was, "...If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry" (Matt. 19:10). They saw the seriousness of the situation. Jesus then illustrates the necessity of living single the rest of your life when one has not put away their spouse for fornication. Such a one has forfeited their right to marry. In that case, they must live single (celibate) the rest of their lives. They must live as a eunuch. However, even in this situation:

- 1) they can obey the Gospel,
- 2) they can be forgiven,
- 3) they can live a faithful Christian life,
- 4) they can worship God faithfully,
- 5) they can go to heaven on judgment day,

BUT they cannot get married again. This is not "my" judgment. This is not the way "I" see it or want it to be. This has nothing to do with me, you, or

any human being. This is what the “Lord says!” Will you take time to listen attentively to what God almighty from heaven says on this subject? Matthew 19:6 says, “*what God has joined together let no man put asunder*” (Matt. 19:6).

When the disciples understood that God’s law was so demanding and that divorce was so prevalent, they thought it would be better if a person didn’t even get married. The Lord responded by saying (vs. 11-12), “*All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so **born from their mother’s womb**: and there are some eunuchs, which were **made eunuchs of men**: and there be eunuchs, which have **made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake.**”*

Jesus is telling them (and all mankind) that living for God, serving God, being faithful unto God, is more important than the things of this world. He had said earlier, “*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness...*” (Matt. 6:33). Also, Jesus said “*he that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: And he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me*” (Matt. 10:37).

A eunuch is a man who is not capable of functioning as a husband in the marriage bed. In verse 12, Jesus gives three reasons for one being a eunuch (living as a eunuch):

- 1) some are born that way,
- 2) some have been made that way by men (surgically), and
- 3) some make themselves a eunuch “for the kingdom of heaven’s sake.”

The third of these three is the one that applies in the Lord’s example. Those who have forfeited their right to marry must live “as” a eunuch (i.e. unmarried). Jesus is not saying those in this situation must mutilate (surgically) themselves to become a eunuch. What he’s saying is that they can never enter into a sexual relationship as they would in a marriage.

Those who divorce their spouse for any cause other than their spouse’s fornication cannot marry again. If they marry, they will be “living in adultery.” That’s the continuing force of the word “*committeth*” (Matt. 19:9). Adulterers can not and will not go to heaven unless they repent and get out of their adulterous relationship (Gal. 5:19-21;

1 Cor. 6:9-11; Matt. 5:32; 19:9).

Who then can marry? 1) Those who have never been married (Heb. 13:4). 2) Those whose spouse has died (Rom. 7:2-3). 3) Those who have put away their spouse because of their fornication (Matt. 19:9; 5:32). Obviously, any of these three can only marry someone among these three.

When men/women leave the eternal word of God and refuse to look to the Lord’s word as absolute truth and guidance, there’s no place they can go but down, down, down. They reach the point where they believe there is no such thing as TRUTH. They do not

Triumphs of the Cross...

(Continued from page 1)

death will be swallowed up in victory (1 Cor. 15:54). He will wipe away tears from the faces of His people and provide them comfort in the midst of affliction (Heb. 13:5-6). And, in their victory over all forces by the strength which He gives, their reproach is taken away. *Isaiah’s* seal of certainty is now stamped upon the promise: *for Jehovah hath spoken it*. There can be no higher guarantee.”

Salvation (eternal life) is located IN Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 2:10). This is why Jesus could say to Martha, “*I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this*” (John 11:25-26)?

4) **The Cross Of Christ Was A Triumph Over Satan.** It is true that Satan bruised Christ’s heel (the effort to destroy Him on the Roman cross), but the good news for Christians is that Christ bruised Satan’s head (cf. Gen. 3:15). The Lord’s atonement and triumphant resurrection were for the purpose of destroying “*the works of the devil*” (1 John 3:8).

It is sin that separates man from God (Isa. 59:2). Christ was willing, however, to empty Himself of some of the glory that was His (Phil. 2:6-7) and become flesh and dwell among us (John 1:14) to defeat Satan and the stranglehold of sin. The Savior was willing to partake of flesh and blood “*...that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*” (Heb. 2:14).

May it never be said of us that we are “*enemies of the cross of Christ*”

believe there is an absolute standard. Our question to them is, “are you absolutely sure about that?” If, in their mind, there is no such thing as absolute truth, how can they claim they absolutely know that?

God’s word is the world’s absolute standard of truth. God’s word is truth (John 17:17). Jesus said that He is truth (John 14:6). He said that we can know the truth and obedience to the truth will save us from our sins. John 8:31-32, Jesus said, “*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*”

(Phil. 3:18)! Rather, let our attitude be that of Paul, “*But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world*” (Gal. 6:14). May we ever be grateful for and treasure the triumphs of the cross!

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VOICES FROM THE PAST...

THE SIN OF DENOMINATIONALISM

The results of denominationalism show it to be displeasing to God. Here are a few reasons:

Denominationalism makes Infidels. What one builds, the other destroys. What one makes, the other un-makes. They lead in different directions. Unity among people who believe the Bible to be the Word of God will do much to lead men to God. Jesus prayed: *“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me”* (John 17:21). The purpose of unity is here made plain — *“that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”* Unity makes believers. If it is necessary for believers in Christ to be “one” that the world may believe on him, then division is certain to have the opposite effect.

Denominationalism is a prolific source of infidelity today. When you think of hundreds of conflicting religions being claimed as authorized by the same book, the Bible, what could one expect but infidelity? Men who “reason” would not be willing to accept a book that is filled with conflicting ideas. But the Bible must be regarded as such a book if denominationalism is to be accepted. One denomination teaches that man is saved by “faith alone;” another teaches that faith alone is not sufficient. One denomination claims salvation may be had without any conditions; another teaches that salvation is conditional. Some declare that a child of God can never so act as to be lost at last, while others say he may fall away and be lost. By some, it is taught that immersion is the only scriptural form of baptism, but others insist that it may be by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. And yet all claim to get their teaching from the Bible.

To endorse denominationalism is to say that all these conflicting theories are true and to regard the Bible as a book of inconsistencies and contradictions; and, it results in infidels. But the Bible does not teach all these conflicting doctrines; nor does it endorse the existence of denominations. Unity must be based on Bible teaching (1

John 1:7).

Denominationalism makes God contradict himself. This is closely allied to the point already discussed. Denominational preachers of all types claim a divine call to their ministry. They claim to be preaching because God in a direct way has called them to preach. But how inconsistent that would make God! According to the claims of denominationalism, God calls one man to preach *Methodist* doctrine and to build up the Methodist Church. He calls another man to preach *Baptist* doctrine and to build up the Baptist Church. Another is called to advance the cause of *Presbyterianism*. And yet another to preach the *Pentecostal* doctrine. And on and on it goes, with men called to preach the conflicting doctrines of all religious bodies in Christendom. And, the whole thing is charged up to God. He has called one man to deny what he has called another man to preach. Can you believe a thing like that? If you believe that denominationalism is of God, that is what you must believe. I am frank to say that I do not believe it. God does not contradict himself. Anything that makes God contradict himself is sinful.

Denominationalism declares God’s Way is not sufficient. Paul said to Timothy: *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Tim. 3:16-17). This shows the all-sufficiency of God’s way. The Word of God is a perfect rule of faith and practice. Nothing in addition to it is needed. It will furnish the man of God to all good works, and what more could we want than that? Yet denominationalism is not satisfied with the way of God. They have formulated their *disciplines, manuals, articles of religions, confessions of faith, and creeds* to supplement the Word of God. Such action declares God did not give to the world a perfect system, and that man had to come to his rescue and help him out of a difficulty.

Denominationalism turns men

away from the unadulterated Word of God to an acceptance of the doctrines and commandments of men. That is the very thing that Jesus condemned. He said, *“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”* (Matt. 15:9). Jesus admonishes men to refrain from following such teachers. *“Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch”* (Matt. 15:13-14). Denominationalism is not a divine planting. God did not plant it. Its leaders are blind guides. Jesus said: *“Let them alone.”* The statement simply means that we should not follow them, for if we do, we shall fall into the ditch with them. Whenever a man is satisfied with God’s revealed way, willing to take just the things found in the Gospel of Christ, he will not build up denominationalism. And if he labors to build up denominationalism, he announces his belief that God’s way is not sufficient.

Denominationalism demands acceptance of other gospels. From what has already been said it is evident that denominationalism is not found in the Gospel of Christ. Nothing can be called the Gospel of Christ that is not authorized in the New Testament. But denominationalism is a perverted gospel. In Paul’s letter to the churches of Galatia he said, *“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ”* (Gal. 1:6-7). This is the very thing that denominational preachers do. They pervert the gospel of Christ. They twist it into meaning what it does not mean. What about men who pervert the Gospel of Christ? Paul answers, *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed”* (Gal. 1:8-9). In

the strongest language possible, this shows God's displeasure toward denominationalism. All the conflicting things proclaimed by denominational preachers cannot belong to the Gospel of Christ. They preach perverted gospels, other gospels than that proclaimed by the apostles. Hence, the curse of heaven rests upon them.

Denominationalism makes Christ a polygamist. Christ and the church sustains the relationship of husband and wife. We read from the pen of Paul, *"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body"* (Eph. 5:23). We have many statements showing there is only one body/church (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:20). Hence, Christ is the husband of one wife. But if all denominations are bodies of Christ, Jesus is the husband of hundreds of wives. This would make him a polygamist. That is exactly what the result will be if denominationalism is divinely authorized.

A system that is guilty of sin at so many points should be thrown aside. Let men come back to the Bible, to the Bible alone, and denominationalism will disappear from the earth. The world will profit by their loss.

*W. Curtis Porter, 1897-1960
Firm Foundation, March, 2000*

THE WORLD IS LOST

The whole world is lost (1 John 5:19). The cause of souls being lost is sin (Isa. 59:2). Sin occurs when God's law is violated (1 John 3:4). Each one is responsible for their own sin (Ezekiel 18:20). None are exempt from sinning (Rom. 3:23) except little children (Luke 18:16).

The only way to be saved from the penalty of our sins is to have them forgiven (Acts 26:18). That which forgives sin is the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7). It washes our sins away (Rev. 1:5). The only way to receive the blood of Christ is to obey the Gospel (2 Thess. 1:8). Obeying the Gospel involves: *Believing* in Christ (John 8:24); *Repenting* of sins (Luke 13:3,5), *Confessing* faith in Christ (Matt. 10:32-33); being *Baptized* in water for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21). A sinner comes up out of the water a new person, a Christian (Rom. 6:4,18; 2 Cor. 5:17; John 3:3-5; 1 Peter 1:22).

STEALING IS STILL WRONG

John Chowning

"Thou shalt not steal" (Exodus 20:15; Rom. 13:9).

Though it is much more challenging to enumerate all the ways stealing can occur, it is quite hard to misunderstand that four-word, black-and-white commandment.

Stealing is still wrong no matter who does it. When royalty (Queen Jezebel) defrauded Naboth the Jezreelite of his life so her petulant husband (King Ahab) could take possession of his vineyard (1 Kings 21), it was sin. When King Herod seduced and stole Herodias, his brother Philip's wife (Mark 6:17-18), it was sin.

Stealing is still wrong even if no one gets arrested or prosecuted for it. Neither Ahab nor Jezebel had the other arrested; therefore, neither was punished immediately after the theft of Naboth's life and property. This did not mean they were guiltless before God. He did punish them (1 Kings 21:21-23; 2 Kings 9:30-32). Though King Herod was not arrested or prosecuted for his theft, his actions were still unlawful in God's eyes (Mark 6:18).

Stealing is still wrong even if others approve it or defend it. King Ahab did not reprimand Jezebel for her deceit towards and death of Naboth. He benefitted from her actions; therefore, he did not disapprove of them. Though he approved of her actions, her theft was still sinful and indefensible.

Stealing is still wrong even if the thieves successfully suppress the evidence of it. One tires quickly of the recent legal farce of "Chase Your Tail" as it has been played out in various courts in our country. The game works something like this: Judge: "Show us the evidence of fraud." Plaintiff: "To confirm our suspicions we need access to the material which can show evidence of fraud." Judge: "You cannot have access because you have no evidence." In other words, the plaintiff must do the impossible — produce evidence which confirms their suspicions of fraud without having access to the potential evidence. This is not the rule of law.

The last time I looked, all that was needed to launch a legal investi-

gation was the suspicion of illegal activity. That suspicion then permits a fair and open investigation into possible evidence which can then lead to a determination of whether the suspicion was accurate or not. (If memory serves, this is precisely what happened about four years ago when there were allegations of a fraudulent Presidential election. The practice of fairness would insist that at the very least the same approach and handling of such matters be done now as it was previously.)

Being the recipient of stolen goods is still wrong and is still illegal in our country. Although Jezebel did all the dirty work in taking Naboth's life and vineyard from him, Ahab, the recipient of her fraud, was not exempted from God's wrath. *"Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity...and will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah"* (1 Kings 21:21-22). Neither the thief nor the beneficiary of a theft is guiltless before God.

Stealing is still wrong because God's unchanging truth declares it to be unrighteous. *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God"* (1 Cor. 6:9-10, emphasis added).

Stealing is still wrong, especially when you are stealing from God. *"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation"* (Malachi 3:8-9).

As heinous as it is to be a thief of your fellow man's property or of fellow citizens' rule of law, how much worse it is to be one who robs God of His honor (Malachi 1:6), His first fruits (Prov. 3:9), or the love He rightfully deserves (Matt. 22:37).

Stealing is still wrong.

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WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE KING JAMES BIBLE?

Denver Thomas

In recent years, more and more Christian people are moving away from that trusty old King James Version Bible (KJV). It's as if there is an immediate need for something new. Reports indicate that when a teacher or preacher enters a bookstore in search of a new Bible, the sales personnel observe "You must be church of Christ" as so many come looking for the New King Version (NKJV) or perhaps the New American Standard Bible (NASB).

When asked for a reason for leaving the KJV, each seems to give a different explanation. One minister told me the King James Version (KJV) has errors in it and he wants a Bible that has been duly corrected. Another minister told me the KJV Bible is hard to understand with all its *strange* words that many people today simply do not understand and he wants a Bible that has common, ordinary words that he and those he addresses can easily comprehend. Yet another minister told me the KJV Bible is awkward with all its *thee, thine, thou* and such like and he wants a Bible with common usage words.

Starting somewhere around fifty to sixty years ago, new translations, versions, revisions, editions, etc. began to hit the open market. Time and space allow for just a sampling of possible reasons for those new books that flood the market today.

One obvious reason has to do with *money* since the KJV is not copyrightable. It is necessary to make changes in order to copyright, sell copies and thus make money.

Another obvious reason for a new book is to *accommodate beliefs and practices* that are foreign to the KJV. It is noted that sectarian councils have been responsible for the greater number of new bibles that have been created. The introduction of instrumental music in worship has been made *scriptural* by some modern day translations. Women participating in leadership roles in worship services have become common practice. Marriage, divorce and remarriage for unscriptural reasons has been eased to the point that civil authorities grant divorce for just about any reason; and, church oversight just does not take issue. Whereas the KJV uses *fornication* (Matt. 5:32; 19:9), various other terms such as *sexual*

misconduct, sexual immorality and unchastity appear in the newer books. Whereas *fornication* is very specific, *sexual misconduct, sexual immorality and unchastity* might include petting, fondling and groping, none of which is *fornication*.

Today, there is little or no *going* into all the world to preach the Gospel, and the result is a weakening of the church as those who are departing this life are not being replaced by new converts. The *located preacher phenomenon*, as one preacher suggested to me recently, has left the lost to be lost without hope. Gospel meetings of three or four nights duration once or twice a year have little effect, if any, on church growth and yet that has become the norm.

If one is willing to accept the 1604 or 1901 King James Version Bible as God's Holy Word (and it surely is, to be sure), then it is quite simple to explain why preachers of the Gospel seventy and eighty years ago were so highly successful in their seeking and saving the lost of

the world. Those old guys had no trouble with what the KJV said about any topic. It was theirs *to go, to preach and to baptize* in keeping with Matthew 28:18-20. In those days, two and three week Gospel meetings were commonplace and baptisms were numerous, almost daily. As a consequence, the Lord's church was fast growing and was recognized for its strong impact on the community affairs and especially so around election times.

So, what's wrong with the 1604/1901 King James Bible? Absolutely nothing, if one is interested in seeking and saving the lost, in seeing rapid church growth and in taking an active stand against the multitude of evils that have come to be in recent times.

When those who preach today decide to follow the example of those preachers of yore, the need for new books will disappear and church grow will once again resume.

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WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT ABIGAIL?

Roger D. Campbell

Does the Bible character Abigail sound familiar to you? She is mentioned for the first time in the Bible in the book of First Samuel. One of the things about Abigail's life which many Bible students recall is that she had "a loser" for a husband, an Israelite by the name of Nabal. Following his death, "Abigail the Carmelitess" married David and later gave birth to David's second son, Daniel (1 Chron. 3:1).

But what about Abigail's character traits? We learn a number of things about her from the divine record found in 1 Samuel 25. Let's consider some different aspects of her mentality, speech, and conduct.

Abigail was *humble* when she encountered David for the first time. What did she do in that instance? "Now when Abigail saw David, she dismounted quickly from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground" (1 Sam. 25:23). Is humility a lost trait in

our time? The following two truths are relevant in every period of history: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5).

Abigail was *honest* in her evaluation of her husband when she saw that he treated David rudely. She referred to him as "this scoundrel Nabal," saying, "For as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and folly is with him!" (1 Sam. 25:25). Nabal conducted himself foolishly. Abigail refused to support such behavior.

She was *generous*, as she brought a considerable amount of provisions to feed David and those men who accompanied him (1 Sam. 25:18,27). Would it not be wonderful if all of God's people graciously shared their substance without expecting any type of payback? Having a spirit of hospitality is a quality that should characterize each Christian (Rom. 12:13).

Abigail was *God-revering*, using her tongue to speak with respect and honor

about Jehovah (1 Sam. 25:28-31). Would it not be wonderful if all modern-day men and women alike would do the same?! So many people of our day flip-flop and disrespectfully refer to the Creator. Among God's children, this should never happen. Instead, we ought to speak and "serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28).

The woman Abigail was *perceptive*, understanding that it was God's will for David to reign over Israel. She knew that God had spoken something concerning David's future on the throne, telling David, "...when the LORD...has appointed you ruler over Israel" (1 Sam. 25:30).

For me personally, the one aspect of Abigail's character which stands out more than anything else is this: this wise woman *had the heart of a servant*. In most cases in ancient times, who was it that had the responsibility of washing the feet of guests and dignitaries? It was the lowest of the servants, right? Listen to what the Bible tells us what Abigail did and said when she came before David: "Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord" (1 Sam. 25:41). Abigail basically said, "I will wash the feet of the foot-washers. Count me as the lowest servant." In an age when people have "gone nuts," so to speak, spreading selfies (a photo one takes of him/herself) and self-exalting statements on social media or in any forum where they can get some "Likes" to stroke their egos, it seems to me that we could use a whole lot more hearts like Abigail's — the heart of a humble servant. Jesus, the Master, came to serve others (Mark 10:45), and He plainly proclaimed, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35).

What we read in the Bible about Abigail reminds us that one does not have to be well-known in order to make an impression on and influence others. Though she would not be categorized as a "major" character in Bible history, and although she lived about three thousand years ago, she continues to send a message to you and me by her attitude, words, and behavior, much like Abel by his faith, speaks to us (Heb. 11:4).

Abigail was not a perfect person. She did, however, manifest some admirable qualities: she was humble, honest, generous, God-revering, perceptive, and possessed a servant's heart. In every generation, people of both genders, young ones and older ones, too, can learn from

her. The Old Testament was recorded and preserved for our learning (Rom. 15:4). We are blessed to have its record

about Abigail. Let us be thankful for it.
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Elder's COLUMN FAITHFUL CHURCHES OF CHRIST ARE DISTINCTIVE!

Ivie Powell

Not only will God hold preachers accountable for what they preach, but also for what they refuse to preach!

Since its beginning (Acts 2), the church of Christ has always been distinctive. Five major areas that characterized its distinctiveness were:

- Distinctive Preaching (2 Tim. 4:1-5)!
- Distinctive Worship (John 4:24; Col. 3:17)!
- Distinctive Organization (Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 2 Tim. 4:1-2)!
- Distinctive Mission (Mark 16:15-16)!
- Distinctive Living (Col. 3:1-15).

Unfortunately, there have always been departures from the faith, and will be until the end of time. A reflection of Paul's warnings to the elders at Ephesus (Acts 20:28-31, and other related passages) validates this fact! We need to be constantly reminded of all that is entailed in the five major areas that characterized the early church! If not, we will soon forget the truth and slowly lose our convictions!

Many factors contribute to congregations departing from the truth. That which heads the list is a refusal to preach NEEDED TRUTH! One may preach the truth on a variety of subjects, yet refuse to preach on areas that are greatly needed. Preachers need to be reminded of the charge given by the inspired Paul, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom. Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:1-2). On another occasion, Paul wrote, "And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you. ... Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to

declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:20, 26-27). Therefore, not only will God hold preachers accountable for what they preach, but also for what they refuse to preach!

When the philosophy of any congregation is that of "going along to get along" at the expense of truth, then they have lost their distinctiveness!

When a congregation has members living ungodly lives and never an effort is made to restore them (Gal. 6:1-2; James 5:19-20), they have lost their distinctiveness!

When a congregation becomes a "community service organization," they have lost their distinctiveness!

When a congregation advocates women's leadership roles in worship, the use of instrumental music in worship and joint participation with denominations, they have lost their distinctiveness!

When there is more excitement and involvement in "fellowship meals" than in reaching the lost and restoring the erring, they have lost their distinctiveness!

When the Holy Spirit's qualifications for elders and deacons (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11) are not adhered to, they have lost their distinctiveness!

As God pleaded for ancient Israel to "return unto me ... Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jer. 4:1; 6:16), so I plead for the spiritual Israel of God, the church, to once again be a shining light to the world by its distinctiveness as the body of Christ!

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

“Houston Stiles has passed away. He enjoyed the publication very much. Thank you” ...**McMinnville, TN**. “Thanks” ...**Allen & Irene Tate, Cache, OK**. “James and Anita Searcy have passed away” ...**Tucson, AZ**. “Michael Miller has passed away” ...**Opp, AL**. “Please remove me from your mailing list. Thank you” ...**Lesa Thurlby, Cherry Valley, IL**. “Joe E. Galloway has passed away” ...**Florence, AL**. “I have enjoyed *Seek The Old Paths* for years. My grandmother had me added to your mailing list. She was 98yrs old and passed away in 2012. My grandfather helped start the church of Christ in Verona, Mississippi, a long time ago. The STOP gives me the truth I need. Thank you” ...**Mitzi Thompson, Tupelo, MS**. “Please discontinue sending the bundle of *Seeking The Old Paths* to the church. It is no longer meeting” ...**Shooting Creek C/C, Hayesville, NC**. “Thank you” ...**Timothy Wright, Glendale, AZ**. “Please discontinue sending us the *Seek The Old Paths*. While I have enjoyed them in the past, I no longer read them, I’m just too far behind” ...**David & Betty Williams, Madison, AL**. “I received your *Seek The Old Paths* for several years and I so enjoyed reading each one. I have moved and want to continue receiving them each month. I told my sister about it and she would like to receive one each month” ...**Linda Goins, Claxton, NC**. “Jean Arnett has passed away” ...**Owosso, MI**. “Please remove me from your mailing list” ...**Hernando, MS**. “My dad, Ector Watson, died in 2001. He was a reader of your paper. He turned in my name years ago and I have enjoyed it too” ...**Vida Hodges, Fort Stockton, TX**. “Many thanks for your stand on the truth. May God continue to bless your great work” ...**Ruth & Eldon Davis, Tuxford, Saskatchewan, Canada**. “Thank you so much for the *Seek The Old Paths*. I truly learn a lot from it. I’m all the time thinking that people ought to pray to God for forgiveness of their sins and do what God has said for them to do and how they should live. Then maybe things would be better in this world” ...**Marjorie McCoy, Metropolis, IL**. “Do not wish to receive” ...**Deborah Bolden, North Miami, FL**. “A. W. Priest has passed away” ...**Leawood, KS**. “Please remove me from your mailing list. I no longer wish to your receive your racist lying publication. It is not a true Christian publican. It’s a Republican publication. You have Christian brothers and sisters of color who suffers under your ways” ...**Michelle Adams, Phoenix, AZ**. [EDITOR’S NOTE: I hope you received the Dec/2020 issue where we printed an article on racism. Racism is defined as “prejudice, discrimination or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one’s own race is superior.” No one connected with *Seek The Old Paths* is racist. We would not knowingly use anyone that is racist. The Bible condemns it. We do not condemn anyone because of their race, nor do we support, defend, or promote anyone because of their race. The Bible will not allow it. We speak and teach the truth. Liars have their part in the lake which “burneth with fire and brimstone” (Rev. 21:8). We are neither Catholic, Protestant, nor Jew, just like we are neither Democrat or Republican. However, we do stand for the TRUTH, the WHOLE truth and nothing but the Truth. We are not blind to the Truth. We don’t accept just a part of the Truth. We take great care to embrace ALL the Truth. Since 1973, there have been approximately 60 million little babies ruthlessly slaughtered while still in the safety and comfort of their mother’s womb. Read that again, 60 million! In 2017, there were more than 862 thousand innocent babies killed. More than 20 million black babies have been killed since 1973. There are more babies

killed by abortion in one year than all the deaths that have occurred in all the wars and military conflicts fought by the USA, from the Revolutionary War to the present. Can you imagine that? Who supports killing children before they’re born, and in some cases even after they’re born, in these unprecedented numbers? Only one of the two major political parties is “pro-death” — they like to call it “pro choice” because it doesn’t sound as bad. Call stealing, sharing, but it’s still stealing. Call murder abortion, but it’s still murder. Pro-choice says, I may or may not choose to kill my children, but I will support and defend your right to kill your children. There is nothing more outrageous than that. Break an egg or kill an animal on the endangered species list and you’re in serious trouble with the law. But, you can kill all the little human babies you want and there’s no trouble at all. You can even get paid for it! I will not support and defend killing babies. I’m not going to stand before the Lord in judgment with that on my record. -editor]. “Remove me from your mailing list. Thanks” ...**John Felts, San Saba, TX**. “I enjoy reading *Seek The Old Paths*. It is a very good paper” ...**Joyce Hollander, Corinth, MS**. “We appreciate your stand for the truth and the spreading of God’s word. Thank you” ...**AL**. “Thank you for the Truth in face of elderships and congregations influence by denominational and human affairs” ...**Troy Thomason, elder, Wellington, TX**. “I am writing to ask you to send STOP to several of my friends. Thanks so much. They are looking forward to receiving a copy each month. Keep up the good work” ...**Linda Goins, Clayton, NC**.

Seek The Old Paths is a monthly publication of the **Leoni Church of Christ** and is under the oversight of its elders. It is FREE, being supported by the contributions of both individuals and congregations. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3, 2 Tim. 4:2, Titus 1:13, Titus 2:1 and 2 Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless it is marked “not for publication.” The church building is located at: 2132 Old McMinnville Hwy, Woodbury, TN 37190.

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