



Seek The Old Paths

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

Vol. 24, No. 2

February 2013

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION #1

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

I have received a number of inquiries relative to the **English Standard Version** (ESV), a twenty-first century Bible version.

I did not buy this version when it first came out in 2001 but did purchase a copy in April of 2007. I have not read all it has in the Old Testament but have read and studied closely what it has in the New Testament. With one exception, all my questions will pertain to the New Testament.

Just because it is a new version does not insure it is better than the **KJV** (King James Version) or the **ASV** (American Standard Version) — versions which have brought the church to us in our lifetime. The **NRSV** (New Revised Standard Version) is not a superior version, but flawed in many places. The **NIV** (New International Version) has “new” in its name but that does not make it superior. Brother Guy N. Woods told me in the 1970s that “as little as I think of the RSV, I prefer it over the NIV. The NIV is *shot through with error!*” His assessment is the same as mine has been for over thirty years.

In **Genesis 49:10**, why did the **ESV** (English Standard Version) change “Shiloh” in the text to “tribute” and yet injects into a footnote “until Shiloh comes?” Why put into a footnote what its translators did not allow in the text? The **KJV**, **ASV** and the **NKJV** (New King James Version)

do not tamper with this text. Jacob, in this prophecy, does not have tribute or Shiloh the city in mind, but a person “and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” “Him” refers to a person. Had it been a city under consideration it would have been an “it!” The **ESV** does not do well with **Genesis 49:10**. With my **KJV**, I do not have to deal with this created problem. Users of the **ESV** do!

We likely would not suspect the genealogy section of **Matthew 1** to find name changes. If you have memorized the list of kings over Judah during the Divided Kingdom period of some four hundred years, do you remember including *Asaph* as son of Abijah and this same *Asaph* as father of Jehoshaphat? *Asa* fits; *Asaph* does not fit. Yet the **ESV** has *Asaph* in the text and *Asa* in the footnote. In **1 Kings 15**, they have *Asa* consistently and not *Asaph* at all. Why this name change? Truth, even with names, belongs in the text and not just the footnote.

Not content with one name change in **Matthew 1**, they have *Amos* as the son of Manasseh and *Amos* the father of Josiah. Yet this version has *Amon* in a footnote. *Amon* is used by the **ESV** in **2 Kings 22**.

Amon and *Asa* we know from Scripture, but who are *Asaph* and *Amos* in this lineage line of **Matthew 1**? You may be thinking, why all this ado over name changes? We do not

want our names changed nor names of our ancestors changed. Names mean something and should not have tampering hands on them! Even Kenneth Taylor in **The Living Bible** (TLB) did not tamper with these names. The **NIV** has *Asa* and *Amon*. Its translators did not opt for name changes.

Like so many of its translational colleagues, the **ESV** leaves **Matthew 5:17**, **Ephesians 2:15** and **Hebrews 10:9** in translational shambles and contradictions. It has Jesus to say in **Matthew 5:17**, “I have not come to abolish them (Law and Prophets) but to fulfill them.” Yet in **Ephesians 2:15**, the **ESV** has “by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances....” According to the **ESV**, who is right — Christ in the Sermon on the Mount or Paul in the **Ephesian** epistle? In **Hebrews 10:9** the **ESV** has, “He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.” Who is right — Christ in **Matthew 5:17** or Paul in **Hebrews 10:9**? Christ did not come to shatter or destroy Mosaic law and make it void of fulfillment. He came to fulfill it or fill it full and then remove, annul, abolish or take it out of the way in order to establish the second — His covenant. The **ESV** translators were very inept in dealing with these crystal clear passages. Give me the task “any day” of exeget-

(Continued on page 12)

Questions About The ESV...



Editorial...

GAMBLING

Garland M. Robinson

Every thing in life must be considered in light of, “What does the Bible say?” Every choice we make must be filtered through, “what saith the Lord?” Colossians 3:17 makes it very clear, “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...*” It is by His Word that we, as well as all mankind, will be judged (John 12:48).

When concerning a matter we must ask, “is it right or wrong?” What about gambling — the lottery?

The word lottery means: “a drawing of lots in which prizes are distributed to the winners among persons buying a chance. Something that is regarded as a chance. Players buy (or are given) chances and prizes are distributed by casting lots.” Lotteries are one of the many forms of gambling.

Gambling is defined as: “the act of playing for stakes in the hope of winning (including the payment of a price for a chance to win a prize). It is the act of risking what is yours in order to get what belongs to another with nothing in return.” Gambling preys upon the greed, selfishness and covetousness of those who “play.” The Bible plainly says, “*Thou shalt not covet*” (Rom. 13:9). “*Covetousness...is idolatry*” (Col. 3:5).

Lotteries are becoming more and more popular as states are seeking additional sources of revenue. Gambling is “BIG business” — generating more revenue than movies, spectator sports, theme parks, cruise ships and recorded music combined — upwards of \$100 billion a year in the USA alone. Lotteries make up approximately 25% of that amount.

Just a few years ago, only two states had legal gambling while the other 48 states outlawed it. Today, at least 44 states have some form of legal gambling. According to wiki.answers.com, Alabama, Alaska, Hawaii, Mississippi, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming do not have state run

lotteries; nor do any of these states participate in Mega Millions or Power Ball. Tennessee, Utah and Hawaii do not allow land based gambling such as a casino; while Virginia, Vermont, Alaska, Washington DC and Kentucky do not have any land based casinos within their state lines. In addition, there are currently only two states that do not permit gambling: Utah and Hawaii. But even within these states, players are able to gamble online at age 18. Washington does not allow online gambling and is the only state that has laws against it.

According to cbsnews.com, there are proposals to allow or expand slots or casinos in at least 14 states. Even Hawaii, which along with Utah is one of two states without a lottery or other form of legalized gambling, may consider a change.

While the high-dollar multi-state lottery games such as Power Ball and Mega Millions get most of the attention, Tennessee lottery officials say the “scratch-off” state lottery games is what brings in the money. According to the *Tennessean* (newspaper), lottery ticket sales produced \$1.3 billion in the latest fiscal year and “scratch-offs” accounted for more than 80% of total sales. Lottery sales in Tennessee has grown for 8 years in a row and now ranks 6th in per capita instant sales among the 44 states with lotteries.

Lotteries are a means of gambling, and gambling is wrong, dead wrong. Gambling, in whatever form it takes is SIN. It violates every principle of truth, equity and honesty. There is not one good thing that can be said of gambling.

In spite of arguments made to say the profits will be used for education or some other good cause, it remains a dishonest and damnable venture. There were some in Paul’s day who slanderously accused him of saying, “*Let us do evil, that good may come*” (Rom. 3:8). He declared that

“*damnation is just*” for people who think that way! A oft heard expression says “the end justifies the means.” But one can never scripturally do a wrong thing in order that good may be the end result. Scripturally, the end does not justify the means. A lottery is evil and we must not do evil and unjustly seek to disguise it under the cover that good will come from it. It’s just not right! Therefore, a Christian should not (would not) participate in the selling and/or buying of raffle tickets, even though it is for a good cause.

The words gambling and lottery are not found in the Bible; but neither are the words abortion, drugs and homosexuality. However, they all are condemned in many passages such as 1 Timothy 1:9, 1 John 3:15, Galatians 5:19-21, Romans 1:26-32.

What is so sinful about gambling?

1) Gambling is sinful because it violates the Golden Rule. “*...All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them...*” (Matt. 7:12). In gambling, you desire that others lose so you can win. It has to be that way in order for it to work. It is “winner take all” while everyone else loses all. That is the foundation upon which gambling exists. That is not what Jesus said in Matthew 7:12. Gambling deprives others of the means of their living. It doesn’t matter if they are a willing participant or not, the result is the same. People may agree to steal but, that does not make it right (cf. Rom. 13:9). People may agree to commit fornication, but their agreement doesn’t make it right! Fornication is sin, period (1 Cor. 6:13,18)!

2) Gambling is sinful because it is not an honest day’s work for an honest day’s pay. Gambling is an attempt to beat someone else out of what they have without having to compensate them for it with honest labor. The work ethic God gave man from the very beginning says, “*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*” (Gen. 3:19). It is man’s responsibility to labor and earn a living. “*Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth*” (Eph. 4:28).

3) Gambling is sinful because it violates the principle of proper

stewardship. *“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful”* (1 Cor. 4:2). God has intrusted us with material possessions. They are not to be squandered and misused on our own lusts (cf. James 4:3). They are to be used to God’s glory. When a person takes that which should be used in support of their family and “throws it to the wind” on some get-rich-quick scheme, he is not providing for his own (1 Tim. 5:8).

4) Gambling is sinful because it sets an evil example. We are to *“recompense to no man evil for evil, provide things honest in the sight of all men”* (Rom. 12:17). Gambling is not an honest way of making a living. It is living off of the misfortune of others. *“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you”* (Titus 2:7-8). *“Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God”* (3 John 1:11). We must set a good example for others. *“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity”* (1 Tim. 4:12). Jesus is our perfect example. *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps”* (1 Peter 2:21). Can you imagine Jesus gambling?

5) Gambling is sinful because it joins you with evil companions. *“Be not deceived: evil communications (companionships) corrupt good manners (morals)”* (1 Cor. 15:33). Gambling is the very stock and trade of organized crime which preys on people who are willing to squander their living. Is this the company you desire to keep? When Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom it put him in some very bad company and caused him great misery (cf. 2 Peter 2:6-8). *“Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil [men]”* (Prov. 4:14). *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”* (Gal. 6:7).

6) Gambling is sinful because it leads to other sins. *“But evil men*

and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Tim. 3:13). Gambling leads to dishonesty, immorality, theft, lying and fraud. Such crimes are much higher where gambling is present. A report from Reno, Nevada, stated that 75% of their embezzlement cases are related to gambling. *“The labour of the righteous [tendeth] to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin”* (Prov. 10:16). *“Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me...that they may add sin to sin”* (Isa. 30:1). *“And now they sin more and more...”* (Hosea 13:2). *“And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch”* (Luke 6:39)? Second Corinthians 8:21 says, *“Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.”*

7) Gambling is sinful because it destroys the home and family. *“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel”* (1 Tim. 5:8,4,16). The addictive nature of gambling has caused many to get into debt so deep they lose everything they have, even their family. Any activity which results in the destruction of the home is sinful. The home is sacred. Man has no right to tamper with it. Jesus said, *“what therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder”* (Matt. 19:6). Gambling has wrecked many a home and left children hungry and cold.

8) Gambling is sinful because it violates the first and great commandment to love God supremely. *“Jesus said...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind”* (Matt. 22:37). *“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”* (Matt. 6:24). Our first priority is the Lord’s way, not our own way (cf. Matt. 6:33). Gambling becomes the master of those who participate. It enslaves! You can’t serve God and riches (wealth) at the same time. It takes you away from God.

9) Gambling is sinful because it violates the second great commandment to love thy neighbor as thyself. Jesus said, *“Thou shalt*

love thy neighbor as thyself” (Matt. 22:39). How can one love their neighbor (which means to seek the best interest of) while trying to gain what is his? When Paul wrote, *“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others”* (Phil. 2:4), he did not mean to look on the things that others have in order to take it from them! The Lord’s way is to desire that all may be blessed and prosper. This is the same principle as the golden rule of Matthew 7:12. Whether the gambler admits it or not, he/she does not care if their neighbor loses their job, car, house, everything they own, just as long as they win!

10) Gambling is sinful because it prevents one from growing in the Lord. Becoming a Christian means we have “escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” and must therefore give all diligence to add to our *“...faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity”* (2 Peter 1:5-7). The addictive nature of gambling means we have abandoned virtue (moral goodness — doing right, avoiding wrong), knowledge (understanding God’s will), temperance (self control), patience (steadfast waiting, perseverance), godliness (God likeness, holiness), brotherly kindness (the love we cherish for each other), and charity (good will toward all). How can we exhibit any of these characteristics while desiring that others fail in order that we might win?

11) Gambling is sinful because it exploits others. It seeks to promote yourself while taking advantage of others. *“That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such...”* (1 Thess. 4:6). In order to be a winner, there must be losers.

12) Gambling is sinful because it is not a good work. It does not glorify God. *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matt. 5:16). Does gambling and being a winner make people think more kindly of us in a spiritual way? Does it show the world how meek, rever-

ent, holy, respectful we are? Does it show the world more devotion to the Lord and his church? You know the answer is NO.

13) Gambling is sinful because it is not avoiding evil. First Thessalonians 5:22 tells us to “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” Given all the evidence before us, no one can successfully deny that gambling is evil on every side. We must avoid it, not embrace it. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present

world” (Titus 2:11-12).

14) Gambling is sinful because it is not walking with God. “He hath shewed thee, O man, what [is] good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God” (Micah 6:8). Gambling does not promote God, Christ, the church, home, family, heaven. It does not make people show more devotion to things that are holy. Instead, gambling desecrates and blasphemes the Lord’s way.

Gambling takes many forms: lottery, roulette wheel, card games, dice,

numbers, races, slot machines, elections, sweepstakes, sporting events, sports pools, punch boards, bingo, bunco, raffle tickets, buying chances, cake walks, matching coins, pitching pennies, etc. etc. There is no limit to what people will bet on in an effort to take advantage of others.

Brethren, DO NOT buy or sale chances, even if it’s for a good cause. If you want to help a good cause, give a donation — don’t gamble. Your soul is at stake. To promote, sell or buy lottery tickets involves one in that which violates the law of God. Repent if you’re guilty!

Questions About The ESV...

(Continued from page 9)

ing these passages from the KJV and ASV rather than the more difficult job of trying to harmonize these three verses by usage of the ESV. Have its strong supporters among us overlooked these three verses? If so, why?

It is nothing short of inexcusable the way the ESV, plus so many of its predecessors, makes shambles of this trio of verses. After they finished Matthew 5:17 and arrived at Ephesians 2:15 and later to Hebrews 10:9, did it not occur to them that they had produced a contradiction between Christ and Paul? They have Christ to deny abolishing the Mosaic law (covenant) only to have Paul affirm His doing that very thing. The fault is not to be laid in Christ’s speech and Paul’s written statement for they breathe perfect harmony. The fault lies with inept and incompetent translators who fail utterly to handle aright the word of truth or divide it aright. The *old* had to be removed before the *new* could become operative. Hebrews 10:9 makes this positively plain. If Mosaic law is still in effect, as many religious leaders contend it is, and Christianity is now valid, we are under *two* lawgivers, Moses and Christ. Yet Jehovah at the transfiguration scene in Matthew 17:1ff said to hear Christ — not Moses and Christ, not Elijah and Christ. James, the Lord’s half brother in the flesh and His full brother in the faith, affirmed *one* lawgiver (James 4:12).

Children in my Sunday evening class prior to service time know that we are under the Christian covenant, not patriarchal precepts or Mosaic mandates. There is not an iota of justification for producing a glaring contradiction among these three passages. Paul’s counsel in 2 Timothy 2:15 relative to dividing truth in a right way is lost on people like this!

WEAK RENDERINGS OF PORNEIA AND MOICHEIA

These Greek terms are used many times in the Greek testament. In our older versions, these are rendered *fornication* and *adultery*. Has anybody across the years had that much trouble in understanding what fornication is and what adultery is? As a teenager, I knew what these terms meant. Yet so many of our modern versions opt for *sexual immorality* instead of precisely stated renderings like fornication and adultery. A man or woman may enjoy hearing sexy stories, reading sexy stories or viewing pornography which are sexually immoral and yet due to various constraints may never commit overt fornication or adultery. The ESV favors *sexual immorality* in **Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 7:21; Acts 15:20; 21:25; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 6:13; 6:18; 7:2; 10:8; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3,5; Colossians 3:5; Hebrews 12:16; Jude 7 and Revelation 2:20ff.** Why use a term that is not nearly as precise as are fornication and adultery? The man in 1 Corinthians 5:1 was not just reading

a filthy novel or viewing images of a woman immodestly arrayed. He was committing overt fornication with his own father’s wife. We do not need to soften these atrocious and widely practiced sins with words less precise than fornication and adultery. The world does this by calling such “affairs” instead of adultery or “meaningful relations” (of the unmarried) instead of fornication.

TAMPERING WITH MATTHEW 19:28

The ESV has “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Why is “new world” in the text and in a footnote “Greek, in the regeneration?” The 148 men who translated the KJV (47) and the ASV (101) used “regeneration,” not “new world.” The NKJV has regeneration. The RSV that came out in 1952 has “new world.” Were I a patron of premillennialism, I would be happy with the “new world” rendering and would shy away totally from versions that use regeneration. Regeneration is a synonym for the “Gospel dispensation.” In Titus 3:5, Paul speaks of the “washing of regeneration” which is the excellent equivalent of “born of water” in John 3:5. It would be interesting to know how many premillennial people worked on this translation. Religious “isms” are welcomed into many of the modern versions now extant.

Here is another matter about a word in the text and the word for it in

a footnote. In **Matthew 28:19**, the ESV has, “baptizing them *in* the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (emphasis mine). The Greek word for *in* here is *eis*. The KJV and the NKJV both have *in*. In a footnote the ESV has “or into.” The ASV has *into* which is my strongly preferred rendering and the way I quote it when I give Matthew’s account of the Great Commission. Why put *in* instead of *into* “the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit?” A. T. Robertson, in his Word Studies of Matthew 28:19, preferred *in* and said it should not be *into*. I can understand why, as a Baptist, he opted for *in* and not *into*. The ASV has *into* and had 101 Greek scholars behind that version. Robertson and the ESV translators were not superior to these 101 in the aggregate.

The late and lamented **H. Leo Boles** was a Greek-English scholar of wide reputation among churches of Christ and many in the denominations recognized him as such as well. He had these scholarly comments in his Gospel Advocate *Commentary On Matthew*, “The baptism is to be done ‘into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’ The name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit means the combined authority of the Godhead. To be baptized into this is to be brought by baptism into actual subjection to the combined authority of heaven. To be baptized into the name of these three brings one into covenant relationship with the Godhead. Baptism is, therefore, not only a sacred act of obedience, but it brings one into the fullness of the blessings of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (pp.564-565). It is my judgment that the ASV has the better and more accurate rendering here. More accurate renderings belong in the text, not just footnote status.

Here is another baptismal matter found in the early part of Mark. The ESV has in **Mark 1:4**, “proclaiming *a* baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Emphasis added). The KJV has “the.” The ASV has “the.” In *Living Oracles*, published by Alexander Campbell and translated by the renowned George Campbell, James Macknight and Philip Doddridge, we have “the immersion of reformation for the

remission of sins” (Mark 1:4, p.106). Why the indefinite “a” and not the much more definite “the?” In the spring of 1922, the eloquent and scholarly **N. B. Hardeman** preached his first “Tabernacle Sermons” in Nashville, TN. One of his extraordinarily great sermons was on baptism. In that sermon he quoted Mark 1:4 by stating, “John preached *the* baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Vol. I, p.208). Brother Hardeman was a grammatical schol-

ar second to none. He knew the difference between the indefinite “a” and the definite “the.” It is true he was quoting the KJV in Mark 1:4 but it was grammatically accurate. The ESV would have done itself better on Mark 1:4 by remaining with “the” as the scholarly KJV and the highly accurate ASV had done long before.

Change is the translational trend of modern versions.

1 of 3
PO Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063

HOW BEAUTIFUL HEAVEN MUST BE!

Jerry Joseph

Anyone can go to Heaven if he/she will obey the will of the Father (Matt. 7:21). To live in Heaven should be the desire of every person. Heaven is a wonderful, glorious and beautiful place. Let us notice some reasons why Heaven is such a beautiful place.

Heaven is beautiful because it is HOME for the child of God. We are pilgrims, strangers in this life (Heb. 11:13). Our stay on earth is only temporal (Heb. 9:27). It is in that future home where happiness will be found and hope fulfilled (1 Cor. 15:19). This earth is not our home, we are just passing through to a better and more beautiful home, heaven.

Heaven is beautiful because it is ETERNAL. According to Matthew 25:46, it is the righteous who will be rewarded with life eternal. As children of God we will have eternal rest in heaven (Rev. 14:13). The blessings and benefits of heaven will never cease. The beauty of heaven will continue because it is eternal.

Heaven is beautiful because it is a place of wonderful ASSOCIATIONS. In heaven we will be able to enjoy eternal fellowship with the Godhead (John 14:1-6; 1 Cor. 15:23-25). We will also enjoy fellowship with the godly of all ages (Matt. 25:31-46; Heb. 11). How wonderful and beautiful that fellowship will be because of the associations there.

Heaven is beautiful because it is a place of VICTORY. In this life, we can have victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:57). In heaven we will enjoy final eternal victory. We will have victory forever over death, the Devil, darkness, despair, discouragement, distress, disappointments, danger and even disobedience (Rev. 21:1-8). How wonderful it will be, knowing that one day we will have victory over these things.

Heaven is beautiful because it will be the END. In this life there is indifference (Rev. 3:15-16), immorality (Gal. 5:19-21), and immaturity (Heb. 5:12-14). In heaven all these will end. Irreverence, ignorance, ill-will and ingratitude will not be in heaven. How wonderful and beautiful heaven is going to be without these things.

Heaven is beautiful because of its NATURE. It is a promised place for the people of God. Peter states in 1 Peter 1:4 it is the Christian’s inheritance. This inheritance Peter says is “*incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.*” This inheritance does not decay, is not defiled, is not dull and is definite.

Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people (John 14:1-3). To prepare, one must have faith (Heb. 11:6), repent of sins (Luke 13:3), confess Christ (Matt. 10:32-33), be baptized (Mark 16:16) and then live a faithful and dedicated life (Rev. 2:10).

Begin now to prepare for this wonderful, glorious and beautiful place called heaven.

PO Box 1385, St. Peters, MO 63376

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Lloyd Gale

Every time I address this grand theme, the more I love, respect and appreciate the value of God's revealed truth (word). God's truth will endure forever and ever (cf. Psa. 119:160). The wise man Solomon said concerning the value of it, "*Buy the truth and sell it not*" (Prov. 23:23). Solomon was no doubt aware of the consequences of those who, in times before, had sold the truth. How sad that he did not follow his own God-revealed advice.

Adam and Eve were recipients of God's revealed truth. For the price of a piece of forbidden fruit and a promise of enlightenment, they sold it. They immediately began to learn how foolish they had been. They paid for it the rest of their lives.

Cain was instructed in how to worship God but allowed his own ego to attempt to improve upon God's truth. Rejected by God, he became jealous of his own brother, who had not sold the truth, and murdered him. He paid a very high price for the rest of his life. Many other examples may be found in God's holy word of individuals and nations who sold the truth and reaped bitter consequences. The nation of Israel fell from God's grace and become the slaves of heathens.

Romans 15:4 tells us these things were written for our learning. But as a nation, we have not learned these lessons; and, so many individuals have not learned them either. The price to be paid is high indeed. God will forgive if we will turn from our evil ways and once again embrace his truth.

AMERICA IS SELLING THE TRUTH

John Adams wrote: "Power always thinks it has great soul and vast views beyond the comprehension of the weak: and that it is doing God's service, when it is violating all of His laws." How very evident his statement is today as our Bible-based constitution is being ignored, twisted and perverted. Legislators (and the courts alike) claim to find authority for violating both the con-

stitution and God's law in such things as making abortion legal, changing the definition of marriage, taking property from some and giving it to others, outlawing the preaching of the Bible and labeling it as "hate speech," forbidding the teaching of Divine creation in public schools and in turn teaching the godless ever-changing theories of men.

To state it simply, American education has sold the truth of man's origin for the unproven and unprovable hypotheses of origin known as evolution. We are now reaping the whirlwind of such folly. Discipline in classrooms is the exception and no longer the rule. Students who have no knowledge of the true and living God are behaving like the animals they have been taught they are. When the Bible, prayer and discipline were in schools, there was no need to have guards. There were no instances of students settling their frustrations by mass murder. Sin has consequences.

American society today is in a free-fall of moral and spiritual decadence. Poverty and welfare rolls increase while America is drowning in debt. America has become a nation where the so-called rights of a minority are more important than the will of the majority. Our elected officials no longer consider themselves as the servants of the people but as the masters of the people. They make laws that benefit themselves while they make different laws for the people they are supposed to serve.

THE BLIND QUESTION OF PILATE

Pilate asked, "what is truth" (John 18:38)? It was a question to which he was not really seeking an answer (like so many today who are not seeking the truth). It is an attempt to pretend that there is no such thing as truth. This attitude actually began among false religious teachers who have gone about to write their own creeds and to establish their own churches. The popular concept of many is that truth is "subjective" and is not the "objective"

absolute. Tell that, if you will, to those in times past who fell for the same deception. Was it not Satan that suggested to Eve that what God said was not objective absolute truth? She put her own interpretation on God's instructions. How did that work out for her?

Jesus, the embodiment of truth, was standing before Pilate who was blind (by choice) to the truth. None are so blind as those who refuse to see the truth. Pilate refused to believe the Son of God for his own personal gain. Jesus said, "*I am the way, the truth and the life, No man comes to the Father but by me*" (John 14:6)). Man's spiritual blindness is a matter of choice. Jesus spoke to the masses in parables because their "*...heart is waxed gross, and [their] ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with [their] eyes and hear with [their] ears, and should understand with [their] heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them*" (Matt. 13:15).

THE TRUTH IS GOD'S WORD

"*Sanctify them through thy truth thy word is truth*" (John 17:17). Truth therefore is the means by which God separates the saved from the lost. We are told the saving truth is only found in God's holy, inspired word (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3). It is the one and only truth for all living. There are not many truths as society believes and teaches. God is no respecter of persons. There is one and only one truth for all. He gave Adam and Eve the one and same truth. "The truth" does not allow for some other so-called truth. It in fact excludes everything else. Paul spoke of the gospel as "the" power of God unto salvation thereby excluding all else (Rom. 1:16).

DO NOT BE DECEIVED BY FALSE TEACHING

The belief and teaching that one faith is as good as another did not come from God. No scripture so

teaches. The belief and teaching of men that one church is as good as another did not come from God, but from Satan-guided men. There are many other beliefs and doctrines of men that will not stand on judgment day. We will not be judged by the creeds and doctrines of men, but by the very words of Jesus Christ.

Learn to seek, love and embrace the truth for therein you will find freedom from error and sin (John 8:31-32). The pathway to heaven is paved with the stepping-stones of truth. Where He leads, we must follow.

1186 Martha Leeville Rd.
Lebanon, TN 37090

CONTRIBUTIONS

Anonymous (in memory of

Cecil Minton).....	\$25
Anonymous.....	\$70
Baker C/C, Baker, FL.....	\$25
Anonymous.....	\$50
M/M M. S. Rooker, Jr.....	\$600
Anonymous.....	\$25
James W. Berry.....	\$20
Mark Franklin.....	\$100
Berea C/C, Rives, TN.....	\$100
Del Brantley.....	\$50
Jack Langford.....	\$50
Anita Nelson.....	\$25
Bradford C/C, Bradford, TN.....	\$100
Church of Christ, Allenhurst, GA.....	\$150
Allen Rupert.....	\$30
Charlotte Rauchle.....	\$100
Anonymous.....	\$100
Anonymous.....	\$100
Anonymous.....	\$25
Anonymous.....	\$200
Berea C/C, Rock Island, TN.....	\$100
Anonymous.....	\$25
Anonymous.....	\$200
Anonymous.....	\$50
Beginning Balance.....	\$5,616.10
Contributions.....	\$2,320.00
Debits	
Postage.....	\$1,748.87
Paper.....	\$2,014.50
Supplies.....	\$29.98
Ending Balance.....	\$4,142.75

WOE IS ME

Wayne Coats

The inspired word of God declares that “God is love” (1 John 4:8). No person can deny this great characteristic of our heavenly Father. However, it is a tragic error to emphasize this feature and overlook or deny that Jehovah is also a God of *terror*. The same book which informs us that God is love, also declares, “knowing therefore the *terror* of the Lord, we persuade man” (2 Cor. 5:11). There are those who declare that God is such a God of love that he cannot punish the disobedient and transgressors.

When God says *woe*, he means what he says. Over sixty times in the Old Testament, Jehovah pronounced a *woe* upon individuals and groups. The New Testament uses the term some 27 times. Our blessed Lord very carefully pronounced a *woe* upon the religious fanatics of his day.

The inspired Paul declared, “For thou I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea *woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel*” (1 Cor. 9:16). Paul did not say, “woe is me.” It is a sad mistake to think that Paul was ever in the throes of depression and woe. He did not say “woe is me” as some people would say it. He said, “woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.” I think of the great apostle as a servant of Jesus Christ who evermore rejoiced and taught the brethren to rejoice.

Paul wrote the book of Philippians. Many think the keynote of the book is joy and rejoice. Consider a few passages which convey the idea of joy. Paul declared, “Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy” (Phil. 1:4). Even in bonds and imprisonment the apostle would say that “the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel” (1:12). With Paul, “Christ is preached: and I therein do *rejoice*, yea, and will *rejoice*” (1:18).

Paul would write of “the joy of faith” (1:25). He desired to “rejoice in the day of Christ” (2:16). Paul was such a marvelous Christian that he could say, “I *joy* and *rejoice* with you all (2:17). “For the same cause also do you *joy* and *rejoice* with me” (2:18). “I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again (Epaphroditus), ye may *rejoice* and that I may be the less sorrowful” (2:25,28). “Finally, my brethren, *rejoice* in the Lord” (3:1). “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and *rejoice* in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (3:3). “Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my *joy* and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved” (4:1). “*Rejoice* in the Lord: and again I say *rejoice*” (4:4). But I *rejoiced* in the Lord greatly, that now at the last, your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity” (4:10).

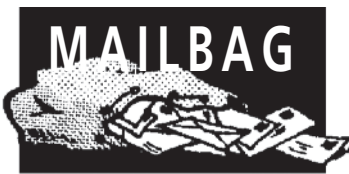
From the many passages of Scripture in the book of Philippians, we can understand how the apostle Paul could *rejoice* and teach his brethren to rejoice and be happy. Paul was not of that number who constantly declared, “woe is me.”

A number of us are aware of a great falling away. The church does not have that zeal and great desire that it had in days gone by. So many of the brethren have learned to retire with the statement, “woe is me, if I preach.”

Some of us can recall when preachers were motivated to preach in order to save the lost. They desired to sacrifice in order to see that the lost heard the precious truth. Preachers could and would say, “woe is me if I preach *not* the gospel.” Great crowds would go out to hear the word of God preached.

The apostle was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. He believed that it was the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believed it (Rom. 1:16). The apostle considered himself a debtor to all, and no person could pay that debt (Rom. 1:14-15).

705 Hillview Dr.
Mt. Juliet, TN 37122



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

“Return to sender. Remove from list. Have no way to file” ...**Bob Reed, Cookeville, TN.** “Terry Coplin has passed away” ...**O’Fallon, MO.** “Return, return” ...**Dan Pavlou, Surprise, AZ.** “Return to sender” ...**Goebel G. Music, Bixby, OK.** “Return to sender”

...**Richard Michael, Nixa, MO.** “Refused. Return to sender”

...**Bobby Phillips, Oxford, AL.** “Eva Beede has passed away”

...**Newport, AR.** “Olympia LeBeau has passed away” ...**Springfield, VT.** “Lenda Weeks has passed away” ...**Cleveland, MS.** “Refused. Please remove from list. I read this online” ...**Bill Spates, Winchester, VA.** “Thank you” ...**John Humphries, Montgomery, AL.** “Ruby Walker has passed away” ...**Newport News, AR.** “Eugene Ouzts has passed away” ...**Duncan, AZ.** “Hope all is going well with you and your family. Keep up the good work! Here is a little to help in your efforts with *Seek The Old Paths* and other things you do for the spreading of the boarders of the kingdom. We certainly do appreciate the good articles and pray many readers will seriously read them and become or remain ‘faithful’ in spreading the Gospel of Christ to our confused world. There is so much error floating around in the minds of people and sadly many of these errors are corrupting the church in so many ways. Most people think we are nothing but ‘pawns in the hand of God’ and do not take on the God required individual responsibilities. May God bless you in your efforts” ...**Allen Rupert, Jonesboro, TN.** “God bless each one at the Leoni Church of Christ for your great work and for keeping the Old Paths. Enjoy very much the *Seek The Old Paths* material that I receive from your congregation. Congregations that are walking in the Old Paths are few and far apart”

...**C. S. Hines, Florence, AL.** “This article is in regards to Jerry Joseph’s fine article in the November 2012 issue titled: ‘You Will Not Be Saved.’ One of his points was that no one will be saved who devises his own plan of salvation. Same as in worship. Jesus said, ‘in vain do they worship me.’ He was referring to man-made traditions over the scriptures. We read in Hebrews 11:4, ‘by faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous. God testifying of his gifts and through it he being dead, still speaks’ (NKJV). Here is the scene, God had instituted the blood offering as a ‘type’ to cover sins until Christ made the ultimate sacrifice to permanently cover the sins of the world. Abel acted on his obedient faith. Cain tried in vain to devise his own forgiveness. It didn’t work. The Bible also teaches that those who worship God must do so in spirit and truth. Man is without hope as long as he seeks to worship God his own way, believing faith is obedient faith. The way to eternal life is hearing, believing, repenting, confessing, baptism and living faithful unto death” ...**Leslie Putman, Eldorado, AR.** “Keep up the good work” ...**James Berry, Montgomery, AL.** “Corrine Young has passed away” ...**Columbia, MO.** “Dear brother Robinson, Several years ago, my mother, Rose Brown, from Rising Fawn Church of Christ in Rising Fawn, GA, had submitted my name to STOP for me to receive your monthly publication. She had already been receiving it for several years. Your messages in your publication are not only inspiring, but also very knowledgeable. They have been very helpful to me in gathering insights and themes to some I’ve been working on and have already preached these messages a couple of times already. I’m in prison at the Estelle Unit in Huntsville, TX and we have been blessed to have a morning service every 2nd Sunday of the month. There is so much denominationalism that the State of Texas lets come inside their prisons (as I’m sure all states do)

that when the church of Christ try to get in, the unit chaplains are dead set against it. Everyone wants to be entertained with solo singing, testimonies, women preachers, hands-on healing services, etc. No one really wants the Truth of the Gospel to be taught. But, through prayer and perseverance of faith, God’s providential care (Heb. 13:6), he opened a door for us on this unit to be able to have a brother come and preach to us. Brother Robert Raif, the preacher at the Corrigan Church of Christ, at Corrigan, TX gets to come in on the 2nd Sunday of each month and we have services. These services took years (about 8) of prayer to the Lord before we actually were able to make it all happen. Brother Raif used to have a radio program called ‘What Does The Bible Really Say.’ That’s how we got to know each other. He is a true dedicated brother and a great preacher and teacher. We also got to start a Tuesday class in which we have grown from 4 to 24. After one and a half years of having our services, we now have more people come to our services than all the others! I just wanted to share this with you and also that everyone who reads this to pray for us here that we continue to ‘grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ’ (2 Peter 3:18). To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. I am enclosing stamps to help with anything the church there needs them for. Please add the names listed below to your mailing list. These stamps are all we can send through our mail room. Thank you for all you are doing to his kingdom”

...**Samuel P. Brown #518782, Estelle Unit, 264 FM 3478, Huntsville, TX 77320.**

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: 6818 McMinnville Hwy, Woodbury, TN 37190.

Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** – seektheoldpaths.com

LEONI CHURCH OF CHRIST
PO BOX 7506
MCMINNVILLE, TN 37111
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 17
Woodbury, TN