



Seek The Old Paths

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

Vol. 33 No. 3

March 2022

MUST A CHRISTIAN BE “WOKE?”

Randy Kea

Many in the world think to be “woke” includes burning buildings, vandalizing communities, looting stores, threatening lives, and attacking law enforcement. When others do not agree with their actions, they are declared not to be woke! Jesus was not a social reformer but rather a soul redeemer.

We hear a great deal about the term “woke” in modern vernacular lately. As with any word, concept, philosophy, or agenda, we as Christians need to accurately assess and make sure we have and keep a Bible perspective about matters.

DEFINITION

The Merriam-Webster dictionary website says about the word “woke” that it is “chiefly used as slang.” Further stating about this current usage that it means “aware of and actively attentive to important facts and issues (especially issues of racial and social justice).” From the dictionary.com website we read about the term “woke”: verb — a simple past tense of wake; adjective — slang, having or marked by an active awareness of systemic injustices and prejudices, especially those related to civil and human rights — aware of the facts, true situations, etc. Essentially it means “a person who is consciously awake.”

To summarize: a “woke” person according to current usage of the word would consider themselves to be “awake,” “aware,” “attentive,” and “alert” to what’s going on, particularly with reference to racism and social

justice. Many in the world think this definition includes burning buildings, vandalizing communities, looting stores, threatening lives, and attacking law enforcement. When others do not agree with their actions, they are declared not to be woke!

IS GOD “WOKE?”

God and Race — The Bible is the revelation of God’s mind and will to man (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 2:9-16). The Bible teaches that God created the male (Adam) and the female (Eve) at the beginning (Mark 10:2-10) in His own image (Gen. 1:26-28). Each human being therefore is equally valuable before God, having a soul (spirit) that’s worth more than the world and everything in it (Matt. 16:24-28).

In the great sermon by Paul in Acts 17, Paul states this about the subject of race: “*God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before*

appointed, and the bounds of their habitation...” (17:24-26). Clearly then, although races are different in some ways, all people are created in God’s image with equal value before God. God loves all men equally (John 3:14-18). Jesus died for all men (all races) (Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:1-2). The Gospel invitation is extended to all people everywhere of all nations (Matt. 11:29-30; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47; Rev. 22:17). God wants all people to be saved and live with Him eternally in heaven (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4; Titus 2:11). In fact, the book of Revelation indicates that the redeemed will be composed “*of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues*” (Rev. 7:9).

The God of the Bible is the impartial God. Peter thus declares at the household of Cornelius: “*of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him*” (Acts 10:34-35). Here are some statements written by Paul: “*for there is no respecter of persons with God*” (Rom. 2:11); “*God accepteth no man’s person*” (Gal. 2:6);

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“Woke?”...



Editorial...

WOKE TO EVIL

Garland M. Robinson

The Woke Culture is broken and works in reverse. God does not want anyone to be lost and confined to that place of everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. But that's exactly where following the woke crowd will lead you.

The word “woke” is the new buzzword of the day. It is used to characterize an agenda of so-called “political correctness.” It is supposed to represent those who have left old policies and practices behind and embraced a new and enlightened path of fairness and “so-called” social justice. Those who are “woke” are representative of the best and the brightest — so they tell us. But according to heaven’s truth and their practice, they are the worst and unenlightened. They not only hate the truth, they are antagonistic and rebellious to the truth.

A dictionary definition of “woke” uses words such as: alert, attentive, aware, vigilant, watchful. Those who embrace the “woke” agenda would have us believe their mission is good, fair, decent, just. But their application of it is the very opposite of these things. That should not surprise us, that’s the way the devil works. He is sly and cunning.

Satan is all into the woke concept. It plays right into his hands. But, don’t expect the devil to tell the truth about it, or anything else for that matter. He is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). He dresses evil in robes of righteousness in order to dupe willing participants to follow along. He will never show you the drunkard lying in the gutter in his own vomit and filth. He’ll show you a party of a laughing crowd enjoying a “few” at “happy hour.” He don’t want you to see dope addicts strung out on opioids to pilfer and steal, even from their own parents and grandparents. He won’t show you the hogs wallowing in the mire. He will never show you the

destructive nature of one’s lifestyle. But this is exactly the practice of the woke crowd! Don’t fall prey to their policies. It is everything that is indecent, immoral, shameful, and ungodly. It is the very opposite of righteousness and truth.

You would think being “woke” would be used in a good light to describe alertness, attentiveness, soberness, watchfulness. The Scriptures use such words to awake us to righteousness, not wickedness. We are told to “**have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.** For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov’d are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, **Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,** Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:11-18). According to verse 15, the woke policy is walking/living as fools. Anything that leads us away from God is evil. Let us not be unwise, but let us understand we must live according to God’s will. Alcohol dulls the mind and leads to excessive behavior (v.18). Carousing the streets, destroying property, breaking, burning, rioting are all condemned by God, but are upheld by the woke agenda.

The practice of evil and wickedness is not new. It has flourished through

the generations. Solomon wrote: “*The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us*” (Eccl. 1:9-10).

The woke mentality was alive and well in the ancient past — turning everything upside down — just as is being done today. Many Bible accounts of ancient history is like watching current events on TV. It was prevalent in Isaiah’s day — 700 years before the time of Christ. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Isaiah wrote these words: “**Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!** Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! ... Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so **their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel**” (Isa. 5:20-21,24).

Jesus warned about such people and their destructive works when he said, “*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire*” (Matt. 7:15-19).

Evil abounds in the world. There has never been a generation when it didn’t. Evil is defined as that which is “profoundly immoral and wicked.” The Old Testament word for “evil” is found 663 times. It is translated “evil” 442 times, “wicked” or “wickedness” 84 times, and by various other words such as hurt, harm, bad, trouble, grievous, etc.

Wickedness was so routine in the days of Noah that we read in Genesis 6:5: “*God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of*

his heart was only evil continually.” Sounds like the progressives, liberals, elites, woke crowd of today doesn’t it? Instead of respect, holiness, and godliness, we find people whose every thought is how they can promote themselves and take advantage of others.

Micah 2:1 says, “*Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.*” Described here are those who lie awake at night scheming what they will do the next day. Proverbs 4:14-19 continues the point, “*Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.*” Psalm 36:4, “*He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil.*” Isaiah 57:20, “*the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.*” Proverbs 1:16, “*For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.*”

The devil approached Eve in the garden of Eden with the woke mentality. God had given Adam and Eve freedom to eat of every tree in the garden with but one exception. “*But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons*” (Gen. 3:3-7).

The devil LIED! He added one

tiny word to God’s instructions. God said they would die. The devil said they would NOT die. Eve was deceived by satan (1 Tim. 2:14) that there was another way, something better than God’s way. Friend, there is *nothing better* than God’s instructions! He made us. He knows what is best for us. He wants to keep us safe from sin’s con-

“Woke?”...

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“*Neither is there respect of persons with him*” (Eph. 6:9); “*there is no respect of persons*” (Col. 3:25).

God and Social Injustice —

The God of the Bible has always opposed injustice, oppression, inequity, and prejudice. He so commanded Israel: “*ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor...ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure...just balances, just weights...shall ye have*” (Lev. 19:15, 35-36). “*Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment*” (Deut. 16:18).

Later, the prophets condemned injustices in Israel: “*Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey and that they may rob the fatherless*” (Isa. 10:1-2)!

In the New Testament James condemns prejudice and injustice: “*My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing (magnificent, bright), and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? ... But*

demnation and eternal punishment. God does not want anyone to be lost and confined to that place of everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels (2 Peter 3:9; Matt. 25:41). But that’s exactly where following the woke crowd and mentality will lead you. It’s everything opposite of truth and soberness. Don’t fall for it!

ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? ... But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors” (James 2:1-9)

Here is a good summary statement about the nature of God and what He requires of us: “*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)?

WAS JESUS WOKE?

Jesus is infinite in all of His attributes (John 8:58; Heb 13:8). Therefore His compassion is infinite in nature: “*he was moved with compassion*”; “*was moved with compassion*”; “*I have compassion on the multitude*”; “*was moved with compassion*”; “*Jesus had compassion on them*” (Matt. 9:36:14:14; 15:32; 20:34). In His teaching He severely condemned the hypocritical Jewish hierarchy because of their lack of righteous judgment and mercy (Matt. 23:23).

Jesus broke gender, religious, and ethnic barriers during His earthly ministry as He taught God’s truth without partiality and with love. Note the Samaritan woman account in John 4, the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10, and the Apostolic Commission requiring the Gospel to be preached to “all nations” (Matt. 28:18-20). Yes, Jesus was “awake” and “aware” of racial prejudice and social injustices and condemned them.

However, the mission of Jesus was/is to save souls (Luke 19:10; 1 Tim. 1:15). Jesus therefore was not a social reformer but rather a soul redeemer (Matt. 1:21; John 1:29). On one occasion Jesus said, “*For ye have the poor with you always, and whatsoever ye will ye may do them good*” (Mark 14:7). You cannot be a faithful Christian without compassion for the poor and the needy. You cannot follow in the steps of Christ and have racial

prejudices or promote or excuse any form of injustice.

Remember, the church of Christ does not have a political position or agenda as the church. As an individual, I can have a political position on various matters. I can do this as an individual Christian as long as my position is in harmony with the Bible. The Lord's church has a BIBLE position on all matters. There are various political positions concerning race, poverty, social injustices, and abuse of civil authority. As the church, we are going to teach the Bible on all issues regardless of what man-made laws are passed or what the politicians may say. Those running for political office are not always Christians or may not have a Christian set of values. However, **we as Christians should be voting for people who are the closest to the Bible in their stances on these topics.** The primary mission of the church is to save souls. The mission of the church is actually an extension of the mission of Christ (Luke 19:10; Mark 16:15-16).

CONCLUSION

The only way to change the world is by changing people. The only way to change people is by changing them on the inside, i.e. their heart. The only way to change the heart into what God wants it to be is by the power of the Gospel:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16).

“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Rom. 6:17-18).

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2).

The current definition of “woke” advocates that we be awake, aware,

attentive, and alert to what's going on in the world and implies if we do not share certain beliefs, we are unenlightened. Biblically speaking, the truly enlightened are those who follow the Lord's teaching. *“The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple” (Psalm 119:130).* *“Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:104-105).*

Let us be awake to opportunities to serve, aware of our responsibilities to God and man, and alert to Satan, our arch enemy, who deceives the whole world (Rev. 12:9). Let us be guided by God's truth in His Word the Bible, rather than social media, news media, or wicked people with worldly agendas. The Bible alone should control our thinking and our actions.

“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth” (John 17:17).

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QUESTIONS ABOUT THE GENESIS FLOOD #2

Jon Gary Williams

WAS THE ARK LARGE ENOUGH TO HOLD THE ANIMALS?

In some circles it is considered witty to poke fun at “Mr. Noah's houseboat.” The Biblical account of the ark is often seen as nothing more than fantasy and without serious investigation. It is labelled unscientific. It should be pointed out, however, that objections directed against the ark-account spring out of ignorance of the facts. In order to properly understand and appreciate the account of the ark, it is necessary to note several key points.

1) The argument that the ark could not hold “all those animals” is easily rebutted by understanding how many animals were actually needed in the ark. Some have mistakenly thought that there were two of every variety of animal (i.e., two of every variety of dog, two of every variety of cat, etc). The fact is that only two of each species was required, from which all varieties would later come.

2) This supposed problem is further

reduced with the understanding that almost 90% of all land animals are insect size or smaller, and many of them can survive in a water environment. Of the remaining 10%, 95% are smaller than a dog. The remaining animals live in water, eliminating them from a place in the ark. Scripture states that only animals with the “breath of life” died (Gen. 6:17). Additionally, it was not necessary for mature animals to be taken into the ark, which would reduce considerably the space required.

3) How large was the ark? A skeptic once said that no matter how you look at it, the ark was not large enough to hold all those animals. When asked how large the ark was, he did not know. When asked how many animals were on the ark, he did not know. So, he did not know the size of the ark, nor did he know how many animals were on it, yet, he was certain the ark was not large enough.

What was the size and capacity of the ark? Genesis tells us that the measurements were 300 x 50 x 30 cu-

bits. A cubit was at least 18 inches, with some ancient records having it longer. This made the ark a gigantic floating container, a massive vessel at least 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet in height. Its three 15-foot tall stories each had upwards to 500,000 cubic feet or a total of more than 1,500,000 cubic feet. It's volume capacity is estimated to be equivalent to that of a train of more than 500 standard box cars. Imagine, eight trains each hauling 65 stock cars. Indeed, the ark was quite capable of containing the animals.

HOW DID NOAH GATHER ALL THE ANIMALS?

Again, skeptics have gone to great lengths in disparaging Noah and the ark. Noah is sometimes pictured as an ignorant old man wandering the countryside, capturing all sorts of animals to put into the ark. As one skeptic said, “No educated man would consider for a moment that Noah could have captured all those animals

and taken them to the ark.”

Here again it is necessary to expose the ignorance of the skeptics. With a simple reading of the Genesis account of the flood, the foolishness of this argument becomes obvious. Noah did not have to gather the animals. In Genesis 6:20, God told him the animals would come to him. In the providential working of God, the animals were guided to the ark.

HOW WAS THE ARK VENTILATED?

Some skeptics have argued that the ark story is fiction because no allowance was made for ventilation. One said, “The ark story is foolish. With only one little window in the top of the ark how could all those animals have breathed?” So the account of a “window” (Gen. 6:16) is considered another flaw in the story and reflects on the inspiration of the Bible. At first glance this may appear to be a sound argument. But was the ark virtually sealed off? Did it have only one window?

Skeptics are again building upon assumption. This argument is made without regard for the text. The Bible does not say there was “one little window” in the ark. It says there was “a window” in the ark. But what does this mean? An examination of the text is in order. The King James version states, “A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above.” The American Standard and the Masoretic Text read, “A light shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward.” Leupold, in his commentary renders it, “An opening for light shalt make for the ark and to a cubit shalt thou make it complete toward the top.”

The Hebrew text shows that the “window” was more than a mere cubit square opening. Rather, it was an opening for a vast amount of light in (or within) a cubit from the top. The meaning is that an opening within a cubit of the top extended completely around the ark. This is what the Hebrew word *tekhallennah* (“make it complete” or “finish it”) indicates. An opening within a cubit of the top reaching around the ark would have supplied ample ventilation. And let it be remembered that while Noah was the builder of the ark, the grand Architect and Designer was God. He

knew what was necessary for life to be sustained aboard the ark.

WAS THERE TIME TO BUILD THE ARK?

This is another imagined problem designed to cast reflection on the Biblical account. It is argued that one man could not have built such a huge craft. Of course, the building of such an enormous ark was no small venture and may have seemed impossible. And, indeed, it would have been had not God been involved.

However, it must be remembered that Noah was not alone. He had three sons to help in this task. Also, it is possible, if not probably, that Noah hired others in this work. The skeptic might respond, “But even if Noah had others to help him it would have taken years and years to accomplish.” This we do not deny — it did indeed take many years to complete the job! And here again is another example of the skeptic failing to carefully observe the Genesis account. Genesis 6:3 reads, “*My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*” So, from the time of the promise of the coming flood, Noah had 120 years in which to build the ark. It is as simple as that.

WERE DINOSAURS ON THE ARK?

Since they were a part of the animal world, the answer is yes. However, considering the size of some dinosaurs this is an obvious question. How, for example, could animals like the Bron-tosaurs or T-Rex fit into the ark? In response, there are several important matters to consider.

1) Though dinosaurs are commonly perceived to be huge, the fact is, the great majority of the dinosaurs were quite small.

2) It is generally presumed that only adult animals were taken into the ark. Yet, it is entirely likely that the larger animals, including the largest dinosaurs, were taken as babies. Nothing at all required that the animals be full grown on the ark; such animals could have adequately repopulated the earth.

3) While there are about 650 names of dinosaurs, there are only about 55 different “kinds.” It is from these general kinds that many different

dinosaurs could descend. This is much like many different varieties of dogs coming from one kind of dog, or many different varieties of cats coming from one kind of cat.

Questions concerning the Genesis flood are both interesting and welcomed, for they help the serious Bible student to look deeper into this amazing historical account. Such a study creates a stronger faith in the word of God.

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Silverhill C/C, Silverhill, AL.....	\$25
Central Arkansas C/C, Alexander, AR.....	\$100
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Beginning Balance.....	\$22,861.51
Contributions.....	\$ 4,135.00
Debits	
Postage.....	\$2,097.45
Paper.....	\$1,130.00
Supplies.....	\$812.06
Web Site (1yr).....	\$165.00
Ending Balance.....	\$22,792.00

THE BIBLE IS AN INDESTRUCTIBLE BOOK

Bob Winton

From a human perspective, it seems amazing that the Bible is still here despite having had more enemies than any other book. Many of its enemies have tried literally to eradicate it from the earth. *Jehoiakim*, king of Judah, tried to destroy Jeremiah's writings by cutting up the scroll on which it was written and burning it (Jer. 36:11-32). *Diocletian*, the Roman Emperor, tried to destroy the Bible when he issued an order in March, 303 A.D. that the Christians turn in all of their copies of the Holy Scriptures, which were to be burned.

The Roman Catholic Church has tried to destroy the Bible and its influence by force. [See F.W. Mattox, *The Eternal Kingdom*, pp.224f, 274ff; Sidney Collett, *All About The Bible*, pp.32ff.]. John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English. The Catholic hierarchy forbade the reading or even possessing his work, under penalty of death. Wycliffe died a natural death in 1384, but about 40 years later, his bones were exhumed and burned by order of the Catholic authorities. William Tyndale made another English translation in 1525 which he had to have smuggled into England. Romanists seized and burned thousands of copies of his translation. On October 6, 1536, the Catholic authorities strangled Tyndale and burned his body at the stake. His last words were these: "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!" Tyndale's translation was very accurate.

The Bible has been banned in many countries through the centuries, and only recently has been allowed into Russia. It is still banned in China, where about one-fifth of the world's population resides. It is not welcomed in some Moslem countries.

Many of the enemies of the Bible have tried to destroy its influence by undermining its teachings. About 176 A.D., Celsus, an avid enemy of Christianity, wrote a book in which he sought to refute the teachings of the Bible. His work, rather than to destroy the Bible, actually preserved many direct quotations from the Scriptures, giving us added proof of the accuracy of the text.

Thomas Paine, famous man of the

American Revolution, wrote a book entitled *The Age of Reason*, in which he tried to destroy the Bible. He predicted that within fifty years, the Bible would be found only in museums. But his book has all but disappeared and the Bible is being printed in increasing numbers. Just before his death in 1809, Paine cried: "I would give worlds, if I had them, that the 'Age of Reason' had never been published. O Lord, help me! Christ help me!... Send even a child to stay with me, for it is hell to be alone. If ever the devil had an agent, I have been that one."

Voltaire, the infamous French infidel, spent his life trying to destroy the word of God. He spoke of Christ as "the cursed wretch." He arrogantly claimed that although it took twelve men to write the Bible (he is wrong about the number), by his single hand he would destroy it. But after his death, his very house was used by the Geneva Bible Society as a distribution center for the Bible. His last words included this melancholy cry: "I am abandoned by God and man...then I shall go to hell...O Christ! O Jesus Christ!"

European philosophers of the nineteenth century tried to work out a systematic method of explaining the Bible on purely human terms. A theory was developed that tried to show that the Old Testament was put together by redactors who weaved a book from various traditional stories and myths. Instead of being the inspired book we know it to be, this modernistic view of the Bible makes it a mere human production, devoid of any authority, and without any reliability. This theory has been adopted by the modernistic religious organizations of our day.

Other methods are being employed today that effectively neutralize the teachings of the Bible. Catholics claim that the Bible is only part of the authority God expresses. The (1) decrees of the pope and councils and (2) tradition form the other two legs of real authority; one is as important as the other, in their view. Some try to limit the influence of the Bible by asserting that only certain officials are capable of understanding and teaching the

Bible. In this fashion, the common man is kept in darkness as to what the Bible actually teaches. Many people maintain that the Bible was never intended to be a rule-book, that it merely teaches principles that are to be applied as the individual sees fit. This is the basic position of the "new hermeneutics" philosophy. They claim it does not contain any kind of a pattern for us to follow. These and their cousins teach that the Bible is not to be taken literally, and scoff at those who do so.

One of the most effective methods invented by sinful man to stifle the influence of the Bible is accomplished by the modern versions of the Scriptures. In the past, men tried to accommodate the Bible to their creeds, but now they blatantly put their creeds into the text itself, thus polluting the sacred word, and turn it into the word of man, instead of the word of God. Galatians 1:6-9 shows that no one, whether angel or man, has the right to pervert God's word, and to do so is to condemn their souls to torment. When the Word of God is perverted by adding to or subtracting from the sacred text, what results is not God's word.

Despite the earnest efforts of powerful, well-financed, highly-placed, well-equipped, and powerful enemies, the Bible continues with us. No other book has undergone such vigorous opposition. Why is the Bible still here? It is here because of the protective power of Almighty God, and because no man is strong enough to withstand God. "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*" (Matt. 24:35; cf. 1 Peter 1:22-25). "*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*" (John 12:48).

God's providential power and his miraculous power in some special cases during Bible times, have preserved his word down through the long ages of its existence! Are you living a life of obedience to God's eternal Word?

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THEY HAVE MOSES AND THE PROPHETS

Marvin L. Weir

One who has only limited knowledge of the Bible is probably familiar with the Bible account in Luke 16 of the *rich man* and *Lazarus*. Upon death, the rich man found himself in torments. His heart's desire was that Lazarus be sent to his father's house to testify to his brethren so they might **believe** and **obey** and avoid the place of torment. Abraham's answer, "*They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them*" (Luke 16:29). This statement proves that God has never left mankind without a law that reveals the knowledge of His will. "*Moses and the prophets*" were God's mouthpieces for the period of time under consideration. To reject the message of God's faithful mouthpieces is the same as rejecting God Himself. The same is true today. To reject the Holy Spirit's revelation of the inspired writers and the Lord's teaching (the Bible) is to reject the Lord Himself.

The rich man was either willfully ignorant or simply chose to ignore the teaching of Moses and the prophets. The inspired message and eternal principle involved in Abraham's answer is spurned by most of humanity today. The majority of people living today will die lost (Matt. 7:13-14) but in the Hadean realm of torment they will surely have the same desire the rich man had. The plea from every lip in torment will be to send one to testify to their friends and loved ones so they will be persuaded to turn from their sins and obey the commands of the Master. No one in torment will desire that other human beings be lost! Death brings about many changes in the thinking of a soul, but one thing that will not change is the impossibility to repent of sins after death.

If Abraham were answering one in torment today, his answer would change slightly because all are now living under the New Covenant. He might say, "They have the inspired Scriptures; let them hear them." The lost one could argue, "Yes, but if one go to them from the dead, they will more likely repent" (cf. Luke 16:30). Abraham would surely reply, "*If they hear not the Holy Scriptures, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from*

the dead" (cf. Luke 16:31).

The lessons from Luke 16 are easily discerned and applicable to people today. The atheist who denies the existence of God has chosen to reject the Holy Scriptures. The Psalmist exclaimed "*The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God...*" (Psalm 14:1). To the Gentiles, Paul said, "*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened*" (Rom. 1:20-21). The Bible, God's inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16), announces in the very first verse, "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*" (Gen. 1:1). No, if one will not believe the above Scriptures, neither would he believe if one returned from the dead and testified regarding the existence of God.

The evolutionist who believes the earth is millions of years old and that man descended from apes and chimpanzees rejects the veracity of the Scriptures. Again, there is the testimony of Genesis 1:1. A few verses later the Bible declares, "*And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth*" (Gen. 1:25-28).

Exodus 20:9-11 clearly reveals that a "day" is understood to be twen-

ty-four hours — not millions of years! If one will not believe the Scriptures, neither would he believe if one returned from the dead and affirmed that evolution is a farce — not a fact!

The one who places his faith in man-made denominations denies the truth of God's Word. The Lord built His church — not some man (Matt. 16:18). He said, "*...I will build my church*" — not churches (Matt. 16:18). The Lord's church wears His name (Rom. 16:16), not the name of some man. There is only "*one body*" and "*one faith*" (Eph. 4:5) — not many! The inspired message to the Ephesians is un-get-overable and un-get-around-able! Speaking by the Holy Spirit, Paul said, "*and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all*" (Eph. 1:22-23). The Lord never promised to save man-made bodies. He promised to save only His body, the church (Eph. 5:23). Worship is another matter so misunderstood by most who consider themselves to be religious. There is such a thing as "*vain*" worship (Matt. 15:9). When one teaches and follows the "*precepts of men*," his worship will always be unacceptable to God. One cannot, with God's approval, "*add to*" or "*take away*" (Rev. 22:18-19) from God's book of prophecy (the Holy Scriptures).

It is not worship as one pleases, but one **must** "*worship in spirit and truth*" (John 4:24). All people are to be of the "*same mind*" in matters of faith, and religious division is thoroughly condemned (1 Cor. 1:10-13). Our worship must honor God as He is the object of our worship!

If people will, they can learn from the Bible account of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). Just as the "*rich man*" had "*Moses and the prophets*," to instruct him, people today have God's Word, the Bible, the New Testament to instruct them. May we demand "*a thus saith the Lord*" for our religious instruction and then gladly submit and obey!

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

Saint Charles, MO. “We would like to be taken off the mailing list. We were signed up without our permission and don’t want to waste your resources. Thanks” ...**Carter Milam, Troy, TN.** “I’m not sure how you got my mailing address, as I’ve never been to your church. Please, DO NOT send me your junk mail again. Take my name and address off your mailing list immediately! DO NOT send anything to me again and do not contact me. I’m not interested” ...**Tina Ward, Austin, TX.** [NOTE: Regarding these two requests above, someone filled out our “online form” and requested to be added to our mailing list. Perhaps these two individuals were not aware that someone filled out the form requesting they be added.] “Please discontinue my subscription to *Seek The Old Paths*. I will start reading it on your website” ...**Mary Jackson, Conway, AR.** “**Ted Lingren**, long time missionary in Southeast Asia, passed away 12/19/2021. He was very zealous in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ” ...**Editor.** “Thank you” ...**Joshua & Molly McDonald, Mount Hope, KS.** “Lymon Gower has passed away” ...**Fayetteville, TN.** “Thank you for your work on *Seek The Old Paths*. It’s been a wonderful tool for our congregation” ...**Church of Christ, MI.** “Thank you! We appreciate STOP publication” ...**Allen & Irene Tate, Cache, OK.** “I’m really enjoying these ‘old paths.’ God bless you all” ...**Doris Ingram, Memphis, TN.** “Thank you for your great work with STOP and sending it each time! God bless” ...**Maurice Brown, Broadway C/C, Rockford, IL.** “Vernon Howard has passed away” ...**Dover, AR.** “James Markus has passed away” ...**Murfreesboro, TN.** “Thank you” ...**Sheldon Wright, Newcomerstown, OH.** “Thanks for your excellent publication” ...**Eldon & Ruth Davis, SK, Canada.** “Thanks” ...**Jim Brashears, Zion C/C, Cookeville, TN.** “Thank you. Please add these names to your list” ...**TX.** “Thank you. May God continue to bless us all” ...**Gainesboro, TN.** “Keep up the GREAT WORK brother, which I have appreciated for many decades!” ...**Allen Rupert, Lakeland, FL.** “Wayne Wallace has passed away” ...**Tyler, TX.** “Please remove me from your STOP bulletin mailing. Thank you” ...**Ricky Robinson, Benton, IL.** “Please take me off the STOP mailing list!!!!!!” ...**Bo Nelson, Lawrenceville, GA.** “Thank you for the continued copies of STOP. Enjoy reading them. Hope you and your family had a good holiday and the start of a new year” ...**Cindy Marfield, Augusta, KS.** “Keep up the good work. Always look forward to receiving the publication” ...**Bill Winemiller, Anderson, IN.** “Kerry Pulley has passed away” ...**Lebanon, TN.** “Keep up the good work” ...**J. K. Gossett, Oakland, TN.** “May God continue to bless this good work” ...**Mt. Olivet C/C, Wesley Holt, Greeneville, TN.** “All the very best” ...**Michael Winborn, Cross City, FL.** “Thank you for honestly educating the public concerning the Bible. You are not an ear-tickling source of information, but neither were the authors of the 66 books of the King James authorized. Propaganda, perjury, misdirection, libel, and slander are a constant ingredient of modern 2022 events, but *Seek The Old Paths* speaks honestly about the danger of sin. You are appreciated” ...**Jack D. Langford, Sparta, TN.** “Please continue the good work for the kingdom. What you do to strengthen the brotherhood and proclaim the kingdom have never been more vital. I am reminded of the importance Paul identified in his request to Timothy; the cloak, the books, especially the parchments. Please use this donation to keep bringing your parchments to a world that needs to find

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the cloak of salvation and to hear from the book of God” ...**Mike Millican, Cozad, NE.** “Here’s a donation to the mighty work you’re doing by publishing STOP. The articles in this publication provide much “information that can be used for sermon material. Thank you for a great work you guys are doing” ...**Jim Reaser, Grafton, WV.** “Greetings in the name of the Lord. Over the years, I have enjoyed the articles and applaud your firm stand on the Scriptures as our only guide. May God bless you in this good work” ...**Bill Rankin, Lakeland, FL.** “I am requesting that you stop mailing the *Seek The Old Paths* publications for now. I have enjoyed reading the papers. God’s will, I will try to send some money to help the good work going and my prayers are with you all” ...**Willie Mae Hickson, Hapeville, GA.** “Appreciate more and more the work you are doing, especially in these trying times for the church and its well-being. God blesses those who remain faithful to his cause” ...**Joe W. Nichols, Bastrop, LA.**

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Because of nation-wide supply issues, we are having difficulty obtaining paper for the printing of *Seek The Old Paths*. As of this writing I do not have enough paper to print the next issue. If there ends up being a delay in you receiving the April issue (or beyond), that is the reason why. The work of STOP continues alive and well. The digital version of all back issues is posted online at: seektheoldpaths.com. You can contact us at: seektheoldpaths.com/subscribe.html

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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