

# 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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## IS THERE SALVATION OUTSIDE THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

*Matt Carver*

The question posed in our title has been the source of many a conflict among those espousing to be Christians. Furthermore, the teaching of the New Testament on this theme has led many to make the wild and disdainful charge, "You think that your group is the only one that is going to be saved." In the past, members of the Lord's body had no difficulty accepting and propagating the Bible position on this subject. Rather, the opposition was originated by those outside that marvelous spiritual body. However, in more recent times, members of the churches of Christ have begun to wane on this topic, following a similar line of reasoning as those within the denominational realm, namely, that the churches of Christ are simply one small religious fellowship amongst all other religious fellowships that, as a whole, comprise the spiritual body of Christ, the church. In this manner, many of those within the church have come to accept the idea that the church of Christ is a non-essential entity and that "one church is as good as another," implying the tired and misguided maxim that "we are all headed to the same place but only taking different paths to get there." However, if we are to be God's people and practice and uphold that which is revealed in His holy word, we must take all that the Bible teaches on a given subject with an obedient heart of faith, "nothing

doubting" (James 1:6). So it is with these thoughts that we briefly examine the nature of the church of Christ and the implications of spiritual life without it.

First, Jesus Christ is said to be the "savior of the body" (Eph. 5:23). That the body has reference to the church, there is no doubt whatsoever for Paul writes, "and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to *the church, which is his body*, the fullness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). Again he writes, "And he is the head of *the body, the church*: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:18). Hence, if Christ is "savior of the body," and the church is the body, it necessarily follows that He is savior of the church. No other body, whether described within the New Testament or without, is said to be the beneficiary of Christ's salvation other than the church.

Second, the church described in the oracles of God is said to belong to Christ. The most quoted passage along this line is found within the context of Matthew 16, during which our Lord questions the disciples regarding whom people believe him to be. He receives several answers, to which He then pointedly asks, "*But whom say ye that I am*" (Matt. 16:15)? Peter replies with that immortal confession, "Thou art the

Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). With reference to Peter's response, the Lord declares, "...upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). We therefore understand that the church was to be built by Christ our Lord and that it would belong to Him.

Third, we find that not only was the church to be built and established by Christ Himself, but that He also was the purchaser of it. Paul, in bidding farewell to the Ephesian elders, gave this instruction, "*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*" (Acts 20:28). We find this theme echoed elsewhere in the sacred writings. In condemning fornication amongst the Corinthian church, Paul writes: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). He reminds them: "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men" (1 Cor. 7:23). John says: "...Thou art

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**Salvation Outside the  
Church of Christ?...**



Editorial...

## CAN A CHILD OF GOD BE LOST? #4

Garland M. Robinson

### WHAT DO WE DO?

If a Christian can't be lost, what do we do with the passages that tell us of those who actually fell away and were lost? Not only do we have multiplied warnings against falling away, but we have example after example of some who did fall away.

**Acts 1:25**, "That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which **Judas** by transgression **fell**, that he might go to his own place."

Judas Iscariot fell. He was chosen by our Lord to be one of the twelve apostles. He lived and listened to Jesus for three years. But this verse says he **FELL**. Do we expect to see him in heaven some day? I don't think so.

**Acts 5:1-10** tells us about Ananias and Sapphira. "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them

which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband."

Here was a Christian couple who conspired together to lie about their giving. They were punished with immediate death. They fell away from the Lord. The punishment brought upon them caused great fear to come upon the whole church. It is a grievous error to lie to God. Lying brings eternal destruction to one's soul (Rev. 21:8).

**Acts 8:18-24**, "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me."

Simon had become a Christian at Samaria (Acts 8:12-13). Not long afterwards, he fell back into the lusts of his old trade. Peter told him his heart was not right in the sight of God and that he needed to repent of his wickedness. Fortunately, he did so and was forgiven. But, what if he had not repented? The point is, his heart would have continued not being right in the sight of God and he would have been lost.

**2 Timothy 4:10**, "For Demas

*hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia."*

Demas, a traveling companion of Paul, abandoned him because he loved this present evil world. Does that sound like he was still going to be saved? No, he chose to be lost.

**1 Timothy 1:19-20**, "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have **made shipwreck**: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."

Hymenaeus and Alexander were Christians who had become unfaithful. They had "put away" the faith. Their departure from faithfulness to the Lord is described as a "shipwreck." They were lost. How could it possibly be understood otherwise?

**1 Timothy 6:10**, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, **they have erred from the faith**, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Notice the word "from." They had erred "from" the faith. If one can't be lost, then he can't err from it. Yet some had actually done so. Verse 21 says the same thing. "Which some professing **have erred** concerning the faith..."

**2 Timothy 2:18**, "Who concerning the **truth have erred**, saying that the resurrection is past already; and **overthrow the faith** of some." Should we suppose that to err from the truth and have your faith overthrown doesn't actually mean you will be lost? Even a child can understand this verse. Therefore, **James 1:16** warns, "Do not **err**, my beloved brethren."

### CONCLUSION

If a Christian can't turn away from the Lord and be lost, then how can it be said that those who have escaped "...the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, **the latter end is worse with them than the beginning**. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment deliv-

ered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire” (2 Peter 2:20-22).

If we can't fall away and be lost, then we don't have to pray for the Lord to *lead us not into temptation* (Matt. 6:13). We don't have to “*watch and pray*” (Matt. 26:41). We don't have to “*put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*” (Eph. 6:11). We don't have to worry about *Satan taking advantage of us* and don't have to worry about *being ignorant of his devices* (II Cor. 2:11).

If we can't fall away and be lost, we don't have to worry about being *beguiled by Satan* through his subtlety and *our minds being corrupted* from the simplicity that is in Christ (II Cor. 11:3). We don't have to worry about *Satan transforming himself into an angel of light* (II Cor. 11:14). We don't have to worry about not *giving place to the devil* (Eph. 4:27). We don't have to worry about being *tempted of the tempter and our labor being in vain* (I Thess. 3:5). We don't have to worry about the *snare of the devil* or being *taken captive by him* at his will (II Tim. 2:26).

If Christians can't fall away and be lost, we don't have to be concerned about the great dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world (Rev. 12:9).

FRIEND, you had better be concerned. Heed the warnings of God in His Word. Don't follow the examples of those who fell away. Don't listen to the devil when he says you can't fall away. Instead, believe Jesus who says, “*he that endureth to the end shall be saved*” (Matt. 10:22).

To begin your walk with the Lord, you must: **believe** in Jesus (John 8:24), **repent** of your sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30), **confess** faith in Jesus (Rom. 8:37) and be **baptized** into water for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21). One must then live faithful unto Christ the rest of their life. Only if we're faithful unto death will we receive the crown of life that fadeth not away (Rev. 2:10)

Part 4 of 4

## Elder's COLUMN

# THERE'S A BETTER WAY TO SAY IT

Roger D. Campbell

It's so easy to slip into the habit of saying things like folks around us say them. It is not necessarily bad to imitate the words and expressions of others. It depends on what they say. Most of us learned to talk from our parents and others that were close to us. We may even catch ourselves saying some of those old phrases that sounded “so corny” when our parents used to say them.

In our religious terminology we are also sometimes influenced by those around us. In our discussion of spiritual affairs we need to try and speak with clarity, as well as speaking according to the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11). There are some inappropriate phrases or expressions that we might use from time to time. I am convinced that we use them with genuine sincerity and innocence, perhaps without even considering what we are saying, but really there are better ways to say what we are trying to express. For example, in reference to a deceased family member that was also a member of the Lord's church, one might say, “She was church of Christ.” We understand completely the intent of the speaker, however it would be better to say, “She was a member of the church of Christ” (1 Cor. 12:20).

Another common expression is, “He's a church of Christ preacher.” Once again, we understand what is being said, but we suggest that it would be better to speak of one as “a Gospel preacher,” or to state that he preaches for the church. In a similar matter, while some have the habit of saying, “The church of Christ teaches,” it would be better to say, “The Bible teaches” (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Mem-

bers of the church, being human beings, might say any number of things, some of which would be right, while some would be wrong. If what we teach is the Bible's message, and it is, then let's tell folks that we accept what the Bible says, and so that is what we teach. But, it is not “church of Christ doctrine,” rather it is “the doctrine of Christ” (2 John 9).

The point we are trying to drive home is this: in our speech, let's not denominationalize the church. To say, “It is church of Christ \_\_\_\_\_,” or “He is church of Christ” makes the church sound like a denomination, which it is not. Let's strive to use the expression “church of Christ” or “church of God” in the manner that these terms are used in the New Testament.

When speaking about the church of our Lord in contrast to the denominations, we ought not say, “Other denominations do such and such, but the church of Christ....” The key word to avoid here is “other.” We should leave off the word “other,” and just say “denominations...” and it will be correct. You see, if we are contrasting Jesus' body with man-made denominations, then for us to say “other denominations” makes it sound like we are saying that the church of Christ is also a denomination, i.e., such speech makes the church sound like “one of the denominations.” Jesus did not build a denomination (Matt. 16:18), did not purchase a denomination (Acts 20:28), and is not the head of a denomination (Eph. 5:23). Let's be sure that we do not say anything that would cause others to think that we consider the church to be just one of the many denominations that exists - it IS NOT!

God being my witness, I have not written one word of this article with any specific individual(s) in mind. The examples that I used are things that for nearly twenty-five years I have heard brothers and sisters say. Fact is, I used to use some of the same language myself. Regardless of who uses the expressions that we have noted, for each statement we've considered there's a better way to say it.

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## Salvation Outside the Church of Christ?...

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worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (Rev. 5:9). Peter writes that we have been redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:19). Thus we understand that the church of Christ was purchased by His blood. However, these texts plainly teach that those who had been saved,

bought, and redeemed had become such by His blood. Hence, unless one affirms the absurd proposition that Christ reserved a portion of His blood to save those outside His church and kept back yet another portion of His blood to save those within His church, it necessarily follows that those who have been purchased, bought, or redeemed by His blood are those within the church which He built and established.

Finally, we note that reconciliation unto God is obtained in the one body which is the church of Christ. Paul affirms, “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of par-

titution [between us]; 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; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (Eph 2:14-16). Paul teaches that reconciliation unto God, for both Jew and Gentile alike, is found in the one body through the accomplishments of Christ on the cross. Reconciliation is simply the restoration to favor that which was formerly lost, such as a union or friendship after estrangement. Estrangement from God takes place when sin comes between man and Creator: “but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isa. 59:2). Thus, reconciliation to God implies the removal of that thing which caused the initial separation, namely, sin. But what does this describe other than salvation itself? Hence, Paul speaks of the “ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18), which is but the ministry of the Gospel, and the “word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19), which is but the word of the Gospel. So it is that we find reconciliation unto God located in the body, which is the church of Christ.

Can one be saved outside the church of Christ? If so, one can be saved without being reconciled unto God, for reconciliation takes place in the body of Christ, the church of Christ (Eph. 2:16). If salvation can be found outside of the spiritual body/church of Christ, one can be saved without being purchased or bought by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Rev. 5:9). If one can be saved without the church of Christ, they can do so without that institution which Christ came to establish and build (Matt. 16:18). Finally, if salvation can be obtained outside the church of Christ, one can be saved without Christ as their savior, for He is savior of the body which is his church (Eph. 5:23; 1:22-23).

Can it honestly and sincerely be stated that these are non-essential matters? If not, let us resolve to be “the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1 Cor. 12:27).

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## WHAT IS “BINDING” AND “LOOSING”?

While Jesus was on earth, He began delivering a new law, the New Testament (Luke 16:16; Heb. 8:7). However, He only gave a part of it and chose the twelve apostles to deliver the rest. To the apostles he said, “*whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*” (Matt. 16:19). This is simply stating that the apostles would deliver the LORD’S WILL in their teaching, preaching and writing. It does not at all indicate they had the freedom to bind (make laws) and loose (cancel laws) on earth and the Lord would then bind and loose those same laws in heaven. Even Jesus himself did not have that power! He did not speak of his own will, He taught only the things the Father had commanded Him (John 12:49). The Holy Spirit also spake only what He was given from the Father to speak (John 16:13; 14:26). They did not speak of their own will; nor did the apostles speak of their own will. They spake what the Father in heaven had given them to speak.

What does it mean that the apostles would “bind” and “loose?” When inspired men delivered the sacred Scriptures, they did not give their own interpretation or opinion; rather, “Holy men of God *spake* as they were *moved by the Holy Spirit*” (2 Peter 1:20-21). Paul said, “which things also we speak, *not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth*, but which the *Holy Ghost teacheth*” (1 Cor. 2:13). “...When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it *not as the word of men*, but as it is in truth, *the word of God*” (2 Thess. 2:13). They spake the words (the commands) of the Father in heaven, and they did so by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

What the apostles “bound” on earth “had already been bound” in heaven and what they “loosed” on earth “had already been loosed” in heaven. The Greek text bears this out plainly. The apostles and other inspired writers were teaching those things that had already been determined and settled in heaven as the Holy Spirit guided them! “*For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven*” (Psalm 119:89).

No man or group of men living today can give further revelation claiming to be from God. Inspiration has ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10; 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3!)

—Editor, Garland M. Robinson

# CHALLENGES FACING THE CHURCH TODAY

## THE CHALLENGE OF PURITY

“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; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11-14).

“Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8). “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently” (1 Peter 1:22). “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 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. 12:1-2).

## THE CHALLENGE OF SELF-CONTROL

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed [himself] to him that judgeth righteously” (1 Peter 2:21-23).

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and

clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:29-32).

“Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:17-21).

## THE CHALLENGE OF FAITHFULNESS

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58). “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14). “Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (2 Tim. 2:10).

## THE CHALLENGE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen” (2 Peter 3:18). “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that

is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15). “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” (Col. 1:9-11).

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Postage .....	\$1,594.36
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# LESSONS FROM ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE OF ISAAC

Marvin L. Weir

God spoke to Abraham, saying, "...Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will

tell thee of" (Gen. 22:2).

In this chapter we see an outstanding example of Abraham's great faith in God. We also see that Bible faith is always faith in action. There is no such thing as "faith only" in the Old

## DO YOU THANK GOD AT MEAL TIME?

Douglas Hoff

Jesus often used common activities like eating a meal to teach the will of God. On one occasion he noticed how guests chose the best seats for themselves at a feast. This led to the parable found in Luke 14:7-11 warning against the sin of pride. In modern times, meals have also provided the setting for teaching disciples the Gospel.

A well known preacher once related an incident that involved a group of Christians at a restaurant. As soon as the food was placed before them some of the brethren began eating without even pausing a second to offer thanks for the food. The preacher remarked that such behavior was appropriate for brute beasts because they do not know any better. However, for one made in the image of God, it is the height of ingratitude not to thank the giver of every good and perfect gift.

God blesses mankind with food to eat and enjoy. As Solomon said, it is the gift of God (Eccl. 3:13). Since He created man with a physical body, he certainly knows man needs nourishment to sustain life. He has promised to give man what is necessary (Matt. 6:31,32). Is it possible some forget God's steady provision is a gift? Man ought to remember a few basic facts on this matter.

First, God owns everything. As Creator of everything, it all belongs to Him. Long ago the inspired penman Asaph declared, "*The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken... every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field*

*are mine*" (Psalm 50:1,10,11). Remember what is written in Nehemiah 9:6, "*Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein.*" On God's behalf, Asaph makes another interesting point when he says, "*If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof*" (Psalm 50:12).

Second, God is willing to share with man what rightfully belongs to Him. However, He wants us to give thanks. Paul gave the general command in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" The apostle taught the Corinthian brethren to give thanks for their food. He showed that they could eat meat sold in the market even if it had been offered to an idol since "*the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*" (1 Cor. 10:26). Paul's point was that God had created the food to be eaten and so it could lawfully be used for that purpose. Notice though the gratitude Paul expressed for what many consider to be their birthright: "*For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks*" (1 Cor. 10:30)? This great man of faith considered it only natural to thank his Lord for the grace bestowed. He also told the Corinthians to follow his actions. Paul later told his son in the faith that food is sanctified by the word of God and prayer (1 Tim. 4:4,5; 6:17). Timothy was to teach this principle to the brethren at Ephesus.

Third, Christians should imitate Paul's example to the degree he followed Christ. Did Jesus ever give thanks at meal times? Certainly he did (Matt. 15:35). What about you? Do you thank God with at least a silent prayer?

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or New Testaments! Let us learn (from the sacrifice Abraham was willing to make) some great lessons regarding acceptable faith.

**Abraham did not reason with self or consult others to try and avoid the command of God.** There is no evidence that Abraham stayed awake all night fretting over what God had told him to do. The Scriptures declare, "*And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son. And he clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him*" (Gen. 22:3). Isaac is the son of promise (Gen. 17:19), and now God demands that Abraham offer him as a sacrifice. Human wisdom would reason that God has Himself in a bind and needs human help to extricate Himself from His problem. God does not need human assistance to carry out His divine plan. He needs Abraham to trust and obey.

Abraham did not rationalize and try to justify offering something to God other than Isaac. He did not check with his friends and relatives to see what they **thought** about the matter. Abraham took God at His word, trusted in Him to know best, and "*went unto the place of which God had told him.*" It would be wonderful if people who desired to be religious today would imitate Abraham's great faith. There would be no more arguing over which church to attend. No one would declare that one church is as good as another. People would never say, "Give me Christ but not the church."

Faith like Abraham's faith would produce no division in religious doctrine as all would be of the same mind and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10). All people would attend the Lord's church that He promised to build (Matt. 16:18) and that wears His name (Rom. 16:16). All people would believe that there is only "**one body**" and "**one faith**" because God's Word says that such is true (Eph. 4:4-5). Everyone would agree that the head (Christ) cannot be separated from the body (the church), and that the church is His body (Eph. 1:22-23).

If faith like Abraham's existed, liberal members of the body of Christ who desire to **change** almost everything about the Lord's church would all agree that "*whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God...*" (2 John 9). All mem-

bers of the Lord's church would agree that to please God one "*must worship in spirit and in truth*" (John 4:24). This would do away with gimmicks, entertainment, drama, recreation, seminars, and the social gospel being substituted for scriptural worship.

**The faith of Abraham did not crumble under the crushing weight of such a demand.** Some people, when put to the test, declare that it is not humanly possible to faithfully endure such trial that has come their way. They reason that God expects **more** of them than they can give. The Scriptures tell us, however, that God will not allow man to be tempted (tested) beyond that which he can bear (1 Cor. 1:13). He who does not have the

faith to renounce "*all that he hath*" cannot be the Lord's disciple (Luke 14:33). If we are to save our souls, **nothing** can stand in the way of our full obedience to God.

Abraham's faith enabled him to be prompt in obeying God's command. He did not postpone what he knew was the right thing for him to do. He "*rose early in the morning*" and "*went unto the place of which God had told him*" (Gen. 22:3). God wants people to remember Him in their youth (Eccl. 12:1). Deathbed repentance is not authorized in the Scriptures. Today is the day of salvation, not tomorrow (2 Cor. 6:2).

**Abraham prepared to worship God.** He carried with him the "*wood*" that was necessary for the "*burnt offer-*

*ing*" (Gen. 22:2-3). True worship does not occur accidentally. We must **plan** and **prepare** if our worship is to be accepted by God. Haphazard worship will not suffice! **Abraham was determined to please God.** For whatever reason, he left his "*young men*" behind (Gen. 22:5). Perhaps he thought they might hinder him from carrying out God's command. Abraham's faith enabled him to be determined to **worship God** — whatever God required, He would do (Gen. 22:5-6). God spared Isaac, but not because of Abraham's refusal to do His will.

Will your faith lead you to unquestionably obey God?

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## "ANTIPAS...MY FAITHFUL MARTYR"

Alan Caudle

***"...and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth." (Rev. 2:13)***

**I**n the last book of the Bible, mention is made of Antipas, a faithful child of God and martyr for his unwavering faith and loving devotion. At first glance, his brief mention might seem impersonal and unrevealing. Yet he has been immortalized in God's Holy Book. The simple mention of his name has lived through the centuries as a reminder of those who (like him, though unseen and unknown by man) have walked the way of duty and had their names written in the Lamb's book of life.

Even though very few words are used to describe Antipas, they present a meaningful message for all Christians as they strive to live a life of servitude and devotion for the great and mighty Jehovah. So, what might we learn (and apply to our lives) about the character of Antipas from this short, but pertinent passage?

It should be evident that Antipas *believed in God, His Son and in the Christian religion.* He did not simply believe something *about* Christianity — he *lived* the religion of Christ with a faith so great and sure, that he died for it.

Antipas also *put the kingdom of God first.* This should be a lasting lesson for those today who profess to be

followers of Christ. We should continually set our minds on the fact that faith in God and His promises must be held high above everything else. The whole tenor of our lives and our path to salvation is shaped by the things we put first.

A careful consideration of Antipas will reveal that *he loved not the world;* otherwise, the Saviour would not have described him as He did. In setting our course to a heavenly hereafter, we must never lose sight of this Christian characteristic, set forth as a command in 1 John 2:15: "*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*"

Antipas was a *soul winner.* This is the duty of every Christian. As a loving mother would never keep life-saving medicine from her children, we must never be found guilty of withholding the remedy for curing sin-sick souls. We must never fail to teach and preach God's saving Word from those who so desperately need it.

It may also be said of Antipas that *he never missed a Lord's Day worship.* He would not have been considered a "faithful martyr" had he done so. Hebrews 10:25-27 says, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,

as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

Christ praised the faithful in Pergamos by stating that they were holding fast his name and had not denied the faith (Rev. 2:13). Antipas was among the number at Pergamos. Every congregation is sorely in need of such men today. Very few have manifested any greater faith than that exhibited by Antipas.

"*Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.*" Here is a divine recognition of his service unknown to man. But in the world beyond, every Antipas will hear his name read aloud and know that his humble service was not forgotten. And, so it will be for all faithful followers in reward for their service while walking with the Master...possibly unseen by men, but lovingly recognized by our Heavenly Father.

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## SEEK THE OLD PATHS

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have read this issue and think it is very good. I have traveled around the world pretty much. In March of 1944 I boarded the ship Dorothea L Dix in New York and we went out to sea arriving at Belfast Ireland April 3rd. Then we spent some time in Glasgow Scotland, Gourrock, Grennuck, Portland, but we didn't forget to hit the Omaha Beach at Normandy June 6th at break of day. However, we couldn't get to the beach, the Germans had big posts set with old wire in between and mines tied in the wire. When the soldiers crossed over, they were blown up. We spent the day putting soldiers up to the beach. July 10th we were at Oran Africa, July 11th the Germans bombed there but we happened to be just in between two bombs and didn't get hit. We made several trips to Southern France from Naples Italy, Oran and Algiers Africa. October 25th we went through Straits of Gibraltar going to New York to get the Dix repaired. Then on Christmas Day we went through Panama into the Pacific. To make a long story short, we hit most of the Islands in the Pacific including Alaska and we were at Okinawa May 1-8th when the suicide planes and boats were going strong. The ship next to us on the left got hit by a suicide plane. We took some casualties to Saipan. On Christmas Day 1945, we went back through Panama. The war was over and I got home on April 12, 1946. This might be a 'bird's eye view' of what went on out there in the world during World War II. I would be first to say God looked after me in lots of cases out there in this big old world. Now, the first time I came home, I met Lucille, she became my wife in Nov. 1945. We will soon have our 64 years in, with only 16 more to go and we'll have our 80 years in!! Over the years I have been able to teach and baptize something over 20 souls into Christ Jesus. I have been called to talk to some different schools about the war. I only went to school 7 and 1/2 years and went to 8 different schools. However, in the navy, I worked hard to do the job that I was assigned to do. Please send me STOP" **...Wayne Hickox, Flora, IL.**

**Seek The Old Paths** is a monthly publication of the **East End Church of Christ** and is under the oversight of its elders. It is mailed **FREE** upon request. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3; II Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13; Titus 2:1; II Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless otherwise noted. Articles are also welcomed.

Editor: **Garland M. Robinson**

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