

# Seek The Old Paths

*"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein."*

(Jeremiah 6:16)

Vol. 20, No. 10

October 2009

## GREAT ATTENTION PAID TO EVIL MEN DYING

*James E. Farley*

**D**uring the first eight months of 2009, a great many famous, worldly and evil people have passed from this life to their eternal reward. These were people who were not Christians. They were people who enjoyed the great rewards of this carnal and evil world. Many of them were in the field of entertainment and politics, and they espoused and promoted very evil lifestyles and philosophies. However, to hear most of the worldly pundits and news analysts speak, you would believe that all of these are now in heaven enjoying eternal rest and bliss. The Bible tells a different story!

One who recently died spent several decades in the U.S. Senate where he championed an extreme liberal agenda. He was very much pro-abortion (pro-death). One of the guests on a news program pointed out some of the many positions this senator held and really emphasized this man's position concerning killing unborn babies. The anchor interrupted quickly and stated, "Well, if you were an angel, it would indeed be an interesting discussion to hear between him and St. Peter." Then stated, "But he was a devout Roman Catholic, so we really should not judge in this matter." His point was that we should not judge in matters of a person's faith — a position shared with most religious people these days.

Here is the real problem in our society. This senator advocated "for" and labored hard to "promote" abortion on demand for decades. He was a supporter of the late-term "partial

birth abortion." The anchor of this news program, a devote Roman Catholic himself, did not want to judge one of his brothers in that faith. He is anti-abortion, but seemed to imply that this senator was going to be ushered into glory in spite of his evil doctrines concerning abortion. If people would go back to the Bible and allow God to guide their hearts and minds through the Word, they would not make such ridiculous arguments. This senator died supporting and promoting something that God hates; the shedding of innocent blood (Prov. 6:16-19).

God has already pronounced judgment concerning these matters. We can read about it in the verbally inspired Word of God. This man's stand on abortion, not to mention his false religion of Catholicism, is what causes him to be lost eternally. He made certain decisions and choices in his life, and will now have to embrace the destiny brought about by what he chose to champion. He will stand in the Judgment one day and his works, in the Senate and elsewhere, will be compared with what is written in the Word of God (John 12:48; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; Rev. 20:11-15). This will be a righteous judgment, for it is based upon God's revealed righteousness (Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 1:16-17).

We can make a righteous judgment about those who are outside of Christ and who espouse evil positions that are contrary to the teaching of God. We are to make righteous judgments ourselves (John 7:24). We

are commanded to "try the spirits whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1). If one advocates a teaching and practice contrary to what God's Word teaches, we can judge according to what God said on the subject. We can know this person does not have God (2 John 9-11). We can indeed know the truth (John 8:31-32). We *can* understand God's Will for mankind (Eph. 5:17; Compare Psalm 119:104-105).

The story is told about a young preacher, fresh out of school, coming to an old, established congregation of the church. As he preached on Sunday morning, he stated, "I won't tell anyone they're going to hell. I don't think that's my job." Just as he said that, an older preacher stood up in the back of the building and said, "Young man, point them out to me and I'll tell them, for if they are heading toward hell they sure enough need to know about it." We have failed many people because we are afraid of offending them. If they are lost and going to hell, TELL THEM before it is eternally too late! Political Correctness has no place among those who profess the name of Jesus.

We have great opportunity when an evil person dies (whether famous or not). We must take the opportunity to tell others not to follow in their steps! Their steps lead to a place prepared for the devil and his angels.

*1179 Mark Wayne Drive  
Louisia, KY 41230  
preechfarley@yahoo.com*



Editorial...

## CAN A CHILD OF GOD BE LOST? #3

Garland M. Robinson

### WHAT IF?

**T**he danger and possibility of being eternally lost after you become a Christian is clearly seen in verses that make salvation “conditional” by using the word IF. For example,

**1 John 2:24**, “Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. **IF** that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.”

This is addressed to Christians. We are to be guided by the Word of God. We are to study to show ourselves approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:15). We are to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). First John 2:24 says, “IF that which ye have heard from the beginning shall REMAIN in you, ye also SHALL CONTINUE in the Son and in the Father.” But, what IF we DON’T REMAIN in the truth? This verse implies we will NOT continue in the Son and in the Father.

**1 John 1:7**, “But **IF** we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

How is it, by what means, can we expect the blood of Jesus to cleanse us from all our sins? It is by walking, living, in the light of God’s Word. But, it is only IF we live every day in the Lord’s Will that His blood will wash our sins away (cf. Rev. 1:5; Acts 22:16). What if we don’t walk in the light? It is implied that His blood will NOT take our sins away. When a Christian is faithful to the Lord, he enjoys continual forgiveness of sins and when he is not faithful to the Lord, he no longer receives forgiveness of sins.

**John 8:31**, “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **IF** ye continue in my word, **THEN** are ye my disciples indeed.”

What constitutes Christians being counted as being faithful disci-

ples of Jesus and thereby being saved? It is IF they continue in His Word. But what if they do not continue in His Word? The point is (by implication) they are not counted as faithful disciples of the Lord. By failing to continue in God’s Word, one will be lost.

**Galatians 6:9**, “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, **IF** we faint not.”

Who is it that will be saved? Those who continue in “well doing.” “Well doing,” of course, is following all the precepts and commandments of God’s Law. But this verse makes the reaping (receiving) of God’s blessings contingent upon not fainting, not giving up. One must be faithful all the days of his/her life. We will receive God’s reward only IF we continue faithful. But, what will happen IF one doesn’t remain faithful? He/she obviously won’t receive the Lord’s reward.

**2 Peter 1:5-11**, “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your 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. For **IF** these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for **IF** ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

These verses tell us to add these eight attributes to our Christian life. It is said that IF we do so, we will not be barren or unfruitful and IF we do these things we “shall never fall.” Verses eight and ten make it clear, by

using the word IF, that being saved depends upon us adding these things to our life. We will not fall IF we incorporate them into our life. But, what if we don’t add them? The conclusion is, we will fall.

**Hebrews 3:14**, “For we are made partakers of Christ, **IF** we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.”

To be a partaker of Christ is another way of saying that we stand in His favor. If we wish to be saved, then we will stand with Him. We will be a part of Him by keeping His Way, His Word. But how is such a relationship kept and maintained? It is IF we hold stedfast to the end of our lives. But, what if we don’t hold fast? The obvious point is that we will not be partakers with Him in His eternal glory in heaven above.

**Hebrews 10:38**, “Now the just shall live by faith: but **IF** any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”

Christians live by faith. We have confidence in Him. We keep and obey His Word from which we will be judged (cf. John 12:48). This passage implies that IF one continues to live for the Master, he will be saved. However, it is plainly stated that IF one stops living for Him and goes back into the world, there is no salvation. The Lord has no pleasure in such a person. Will Jesus save those in whom He has no pleasure?

**Romans 8:13**, “For **IF** ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but **IF** ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

We have the approval of God when we put to death our lusts and passions. We must stop living for ourselves; and instead, live for Him. Salvation is made conditional by the word IF in this verse. IF we mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body, we shall live. But the question is, what IF we don’t put to death the deeds of the body? The clear and obvious point is, we will not live with Him in eternity.

**Romans 11:22**, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, **IF** thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”

This verse shows us the consequences of not living as we’ve been told. We are to live in His goodness; ►

# "A CALL TO ARMS"

*Charles Blair*

Paul (through inspiration) confronted many problems in the church at Corinth. One specific area among their problems was what was taking place in worship. There were those present who had the gift of tongues. This gift given directly by God meant that those who had this gift could speak in a foreign language in which they had never been trained (Acts 2:4,6). One received this gift by the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 8:18). The Spirit of God would, therefore, give different gifts to faithful ones in Christ by the laying on of the apostles' hands (1 Cor. 12:8-10). It was the Spirit who decided which person got which gift (v.11).

Some in Corinth, having the gift of tongues, wanted to excel in worship by the use of that particular gift. Paul reminds them of God's desire that worship not be turned into something of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33). God regulated through Paul the idea that when the saints came together, it was not about men but rather about God who gave those gifts to men (Eph. 4:8). The public assembly of the church was to have worship conducted that was decent and in order (1 Cor. 14:40).

Paul used the example of the trumpet. When, under the Old Testament period a man played a certain sound on the trumpet, that meant that people needed to get their weapons for it was time for war. Paul showed the brethren in Corinth that if the trumpet gave an "uncertain sound," how would people prepare for battle (1 Cor. 14:8).

The call to arms or battle should be heard throughout spiritual Israel today, which is the church of Christ

(Rom. 2:28,29). We are to learn from those in the Old Testament period in order to be better prepared for the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged as Christians today (Rom. 15:4). A case in point is found in the book of Zephaniah.

Zephaniah was a prophet used by God to encourage good king Josiah in leading Judah back to its roots and faithfulness toward God. In the second chapter of the book, the prophet pronounces woes against such places as Moab, Ammon and Ethiopia. He begins chapter three by addressing those in Jerusalem. Remember, the nation of Judah had been spiraling downward under the leadership of Manasseh (Josiah's grandfather) and Amon (Josiah's father). The prophet Zephaniah encourages Judah to face her sins. What were they? They had not obeyed the voice of the Lord, refused instruction, did not trust God and would not draw near to God (Zeph. 3:2). The prophet appeals to the people to consider the justice of God. The Lord, due to the reformation brought by Josiah, was in the midst of His people (v.5). God had already given up on Israel (the northern kingdom) but He was still present with Judah. They were beginning to amend their ways in much the same way that those of Nineveh had done under the preaching of Jonah.

Zephaniah 3:5 is a challenge to the people to face a simple fact: God will not do iniquity. Other prophets called upon the people to find a time or place where God had done iniquity. No man has ever been able to make such a case against God. Many rant and rave but lack the evidence to show where God has ever done wrong.

God would bring His judgment to light every morning (v.5). Great prophets like Zephaniah and Jeremiah were making known the will of God to Judah. God wanted His will to be presented to a disobedient nation of His children. The prophet states that God "faileth not." One could rest in the promises of God because they had personal history plus the commands of God from Moses on Mount Sinai to rely upon. God could bless or

condemn based on how His people treated His Word in written form from Moses or in spoken form by His prophets.

The close of verse 5 touches on a serious problem both then and now. The unjust knows no shame. Going back a short time in history, Isaiah tried to show Judah when they were under good king Hezekiah, that God would no longer accept their worship if they continued in their present course (Isa. 1:12-17). Those who had not been stirred by men like Isaiah, were not ashamed of the sins of their hearts.

The call to arms begins with the willingness of God's people to respond to His will (Isa. 1:19). Worship is a most serious matter. It is to honor, revere, adore, exalt and praise God. We do not have an option to do what pleases us. God is the object of worship, not we ourselves. Worship must be from the heart, but must also be governed by the Truth, God's Word (John 4:24). Brethren everywhere must stand up and sound the call to get back to the Bible and do things God's way. That's the only way we can be right in God's sight.

*2842 Shelby St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46203*

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Saks C/C, Anniston, AL .....	\$50
James Lucas Unger.....	\$25
Cary & Kay Barron.....	\$10
Gladys Daugherty .....	\$20
Billie Hale .....	\$25
Land Between The Lakes C/C, Dover, TN.....	\$100
Central C/C, Denison, TX .....	\$20
Carl & Mary Jenkins .....	\$30
Travis & Rose Brown.....	\$20
Redah Price.....	\$50
Bobby & Mary Thompson.....	\$30
Ruby York .....	\$185
Anonymous .....	\$25
Chuck & Nancy Verkist .....	\$25
Anonymous .....	\$50
Baker C/C, Baker, FL.....	\$25
Robert M. Price.....	\$200
Robert M. Price.....	\$200
David Carver .....	\$25
Bobby & Mary Lawrence.....	\$68
Addie Bell Long.....	\$25
Anonymous .....	\$100

Beginning Balance .....	\$14,370.13
Contributions .....	\$1,308.00
Debits	
Postage .....	\$1,634.36
Supplies .....	\$226.77
Ending Balance .....	\$13,817.00

◀ that is, His Law, His Word. But, receiving God's goodness is conditioned upon our living in His goodness. Otherwise, we will be "cut off." If a Christian can't be lost eternally, then I guess "cut off" doesn't mean "cut off." If that is so, that makes God a liar. Practically every page of the Bible is going to have to be re-written if a Christian can't ever be lost.

*Part 3 of 4*



# SYMBOLISM OF FREE MASONRY

Glendon W. Cantrell, Sr.

Symbols or Icons, is there a difference? A *symbol* is a thing that represents or stands for something else. It is a material object representing some abstract object.<sup>1</sup> An *Icon* is a devotional painting or statue of Christ or another holy figure. They are regarded with particular admiration or as a representative symbol.<sup>2</sup> They both symbolize a comparison of one thing with another. The pictures and statues of Catholicism, Russian Orthodox, Byzantine, and other Eastern churches have represented their spiritual counterpart for centuries. Do we need such things? Have these symbols taken the place of the true meaning of their counterpart? Has the meaning itself been lost? When looking at a statue of Christ, is it the Saviour which is adored or is it the splinter of the wood or the rust of the nail that is adored? Are they crutches supporting a weakened faith in God and His dear Son, Jesus the Christ? Do we really need such things to be a true faithful servant of God? Are they authorized in the Scriptures?

The true or faithful believer has no need for such symbols or icons. We have all we need for the foundation for our faith and that is God's Holy and Inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; Rom. 10:17; John 20:30-31).

I have a copy of the movie *"The Passion Of Christ"* by Mel Gibson. My personal opinion is that if you overlook all that is NOT revealed in the Bible, this movie portrays the closest account we know of concerning the suffering and crucifixion of our Lord that modern man may view. Do I need this movie or something like it in order for me to believe in the Biblical account of the passion of Christ? Absolutely not! I have God's own personally inspired word as the foundation for my faith (Rom. 10:17). I have no need for symbols, icons, or anything else. I can believe and trust in God's Word without doubting that such took place. This, dear reader, is my understanding of true faith. In fact, such is a violation of Scripture. Exodus 20:3-5 says, *"Thou shalt have*

*no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."*

To the Mason, a symbol is the visible representation of some dogmas of a deep religious character. They convey to them a moral sentiment and are designed to illustrate the philosophy of Speculative Masonry. To study the symbolism of Masonry is the only way to investigate its philosophy.<sup>3</sup> Freemasonry itself is science of morality, developed and inculcated by the ancient method of symbolism.<sup>4</sup> Their system of symbolism is the very life-blood and soul of the institution of Freemasonry. If one withdraws from freemasonry its symbolism, you take from the body its soul, leaving behind nothing but a lifeless mass of effete matter, fitting only for a rapid decay.<sup>5</sup>

The system of symbolism of speculative Masonry depends upon the types and figures derived from the temple of Solomon and referred to as "Temple Symbolism of Freemasonry." In fact, Speculative Masonry dates its origin from the building of King Solomon's temple by Jewish and Tyrian artisans.<sup>6</sup> Thus, I shall, for the space of this article dwell on those symbols directly associated by those in freemasonry.

Speculative Masonry symbolized the labors of their predecessors whom they claim to be the original constructors of Solomon's Temple. The labors of those who built Solomon's Temple built a physical temple. "Speculative Masonry engages in the construction of a spiritual temple in our hearts, pure and spotless, fit for the dwelling-place of HIM Who is the author of purity — where God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and whence every evil thought and unruly passion is to

be banished, as the sinner and the Gentile were excluded from the sanctuary of the Jewish temple."<sup>7</sup> The principle stated in this quote is very familiar to the faithful Christian. These very things are taught to us in God's Word (Titus 2:11-12; John 4:23-24; 2 Cor. 10:3-5). The main difference in this matter is the fact that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven (John 14:6), not Masonry.

This spiritualizing of the temple of Solomon is the most prominent and most pervading of all the symbolic instructions of Freemasonry. It is the link that binds the operative and speculative divisions of the institution. If one takes from Freemasonry its dependence upon the temple and leave out its ritual all reference to the temple, and to the legends connected with it and the system itself is destroyed.<sup>8</sup>

The "trestle-board" is one of the basic elementary symbols connected with the temple. The trestle board was the tracing board or book of plans of the architect. The architectural plans or blueprints of the construction of the temple was laid upon the trestle-board. Like a construction worker today uses his blueprints to construct his house, the architect building the temple used his trestle-board to construct the temple. This serves as a symbol of the mason building his spiritual temple in obedience to the rules, designs, precepts and commands of the grand Architect of the universe. The trestle-board becomes the symbol of the natural and moral law. Like other symbols it is universal in its application.

The "rough ashlar" is the stone in its unpolished state while still in the quarry. It has to be polished and sized to fit into the temple structure. To the mason this stone is a symbol of the natural state of man. This has reverence to the ignorant, uncultivated, as the Roman historian expresses it, "groveling to the earth, like the beast of the field, and subject to every sordid appetite."<sup>9</sup>

I am reminded that man was created in the image and likeness of God Himself and that he was created

“very good” (Gen. 1:26-27,31). Thus, our natural state is to be like unto God. We allowed Satan to corrupt this natural state through his deception (Gen. 3:1-6).

The “perfect ashlar” is a stone properly fitted for its rightful position in the temple. This stone is a symbol of human perfection. To the mason, this in itself, is only a comparative term. It has reference to the mode in which one is prepared for the

concord and union of men in society.

The rough ashlar, the perfect ashlar, and the trestle-board, because of their importance to the mason, have been named “jewels.”

In our next study we will continue to look at the symbols of Masonry.

#### ENDNOTES:

1 *Oxford Dictionary*, Oxford Press, On-line.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Mackey’s Symbolism of Free Masonry*, The Power Co., Chicago, Preface, p.5

4 *Ibid.* p.71

5 *Ibid.* p.72

6 *Ibid.* p.85

7 *Ibid.* p.86

8 *Ibid.* p.88

9 *Ibid.* p.89

392 R. Arnold Rd  
Smithville, TN 37166

## NOT ALL CHANGE IS BAD!

*Marlin Kilpatrick*

That churches of Christ are undergoing change can hardly be denied. In our day, the church in many places is experiencing change that is not good. “Change-agents” are working to change the Lord’s church into a denomination among many. There were enemies of the cross of Christ in Paul’s day and the situation is no less critical today (cf. Phil. 3:17-19).

However, the word change is not necessarily bad. There are some changes that are sorely needed. Sometimes it becomes necessary that changes be made so we might better serve our Lord. Every sinner must change if he is to be saved. It should be pointed out that not every congregation is in need of changes to which reference is made, but many need to amend their ways or eternal ruin will be their destiny. Let’s consider some things wherein change would be highly commendable.

**A change in attitude towards the authority of the Scriptures and how the Scriptures authorize is sorely needed.** In every case of departure from God’s will in doing things His way, Israel of old rejected God’s word. The church, spiritual Israel (Gal. 6:16), in many places is making the same mistake. A misguided attitude towards the authority of the Scriptures usually develops gradually. I have never known of a congregation, known for its soundness in the faith, to suddenly announce its intention to begin an unscriptural practice. But with a gradual change in our attitude towards the Scriptures, especially in

that which is authorized, an apostasy begins to occur.

**A change in understanding what is acceptable worship is sorely needed.** Over the past several decades there has been a shift from Scriptural to unscriptural worship. The entertainment craze has infiltrated the church. An overemphasis on emotionalism, riding upon the undercurrent of entertainment, makes acceptable worship impossible. The fruit (evidence) of such worship is seen in the use of choirs, quartets, solos, the placing of microphones in strategic locations in the auditorium so certain talented singer’s voices are highlighted are some of the ways our worship is being corrupted.

Since singing is a part of acceptable worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), we need to pay better attention to the lyrics of our songs. Do the lyrics teach that which is unscriptural? The fact that we have sung these songs for years, does not justify the practice. In our singing we are “teaching and admonishing one another” (Col. 3:16). There is no difference between singing a false doctrine and preaching a false doctrine. It is my judgment that more often than not, we sing our songs because we love the melody and the four-part harmony. Brethren, this is hardly the criteria we should use to determine what we will or will not sing. When I was a little boy I often heard the preacher say, “Be careful what you sing, lest you sing a lie.” I now understand what the preacher meant. We need to be more vigilant in our singing, lest we

too sing a lie.

**A change in our attitude towards preaching is certainly needed.** Many a Gospel preacher can testify to this needed change. In many congregations the concern is more for the feelings of others, than one of upholding the hands of the faithful preacher of the Gospel. No preacher in his right mind wants to offend people just for the sake of offending. However, we should realize that, by its very nature, truth is offensive. When the preacher tells sinners there is but one church and the Lord adds only the saved to His church, often the membership will begin to get uncomfortable. Why? In far too many cases, we’re not sure such really is the case. Brethren, the Gospel is a militant message, and faithful Gospel preachers are militant in their presentation of it. We have too many weak hirelings in our pulpits who are more concerned about appeasing the membership than they are of their eternal destiny. Too many of our preachers are little more than specialists in public relations, and elders who condone such are no better off.

What, then, is the answer to our situation? A return to respect for the authority of the Scriptures is basic to all of the aforementioned changes. Most all changes are somewhat painful, but if we make changes in the right direction, God will be glorified and pleased with all of us. Think about it.

1336 Spring Lake Road  
Fruitland Park, FL 34731

# THE REALITY OF HELL

*Douglas Hoff*

The concept of some kind of universal judgment is common to every major religion. The Bible teaches God will judge every person according to how they lived. Jesus Christ warned his followers that the majority of mankind will choose the easy road of sin. He described this path as the broad way that leads to destruction. Only a small number will make the right choice of following the narrow way that leads to eternal life (Matt. 7:13-14).

Most people do not like to think about what may await them beyond the grave. As a result, it becomes fashionable either to deny the reality of hell or redefine it in less upsetting terms. Years ago a well known British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, wrote an essay entitled, "Why I Am Not A Christian." One of the reasons he cited was that Jesus taught eternal punishment for the wicked.

Americans are also rejecting the Biblical concept of hell. Nine years ago the cover of *U.S. News & World Report* carried a drawing depicting hell as a place of flames. However, the title proclaimed "Hell: A New Vision Of The Netherworld." For the Bible believer, there is something terribly wrong with the picture. Instead of being the domain of the damned writhing in torment, it shows the "lost" as though they were at a beach party. Smiles abound. The "wicked" are relaxing on lounge chairs while a demon serves drinks to the scantily clad.

Our enlightened age sees no need for archaic notions like a lake that burns with fire and brimstone designed to torment day and night forever (Rev. 14:11; 21:8). Many American churches of the twentieth century largely ignored the Biblical teaching of hell as a real place where unforgiven sinners will receive the penalty for their deeds. Though the majority of Americans polled claim to believe in hell, almost no one thinks he will go there. Some people I have known admitted their lives were far from righteous but the idea of going to hell did not bother them. Some jokingly said they did not want to go to heaven because all their friends were

going to hell! This attitude reveals a tragic ignorance about punishment in hell. Perhaps we should not be too surprised by this carefree spirit in a society where blatant criminal offenses are excused or barely punished.

People who believe the Bible must accept the reality of hell. Jesus spoke plainly and often about hell but scoffers tell us his words do not mean what they say. Instead, they say Jesus was only speaking figuratively. Others would have us accept the view that hell is merely being separated from God. It is just a state of mind, not a real place, they say. Still others try to convince us that, yes, hell is real and, yes, there are flames there, but the suffering is only temporary. They argue that sinners could not possibly suffer eternally since they are in flames. After only a brief period of punishment, they are consumed by the fire. This is the false doctrine of annihilation. Some reason that since God is love, he could never punish anyone eternally. One "theologian" even went so far as to say that inflicting everlasting torment sounds more like Satan's nature than God's! Ignorance or rejection of the Scriptures is never a good thing (Hosea 4:6; 2 Thess. 2:10).

So, what does the Bible say about this vital subject? Here are some basic facts gleaned from various passages. First, **hell is real.** It exists and is not some mythical place created by man to scare others into submission. The Bible speaks of it in a literal sense. It is just as real as heaven is real (Mark 9:47). In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus spoke about some who would go away into everlasting punishment while others would be rewarded by entering into eternal life. Clearly, we are to understand that if heaven is real and eternal, then hell also is real and eternal (everlasting).

Sometimes, people get confused because hell will not be a physical place. They wrongly conclude that if it is not physical, it cannot be real. However, let's apply the same thinking to heaven. Will heaven be a phys-

ical place? Of course not! If in doubt, read 1 Corinthians 15:50-54. Does that make heaven any less real? No. At the end of this age, physical things (including the earth and the present heavens) will be done away (2 Peter 3:10-12). From that time forward, we shall exist in our eternal and spiritual forms in a spiritual place called heaven.

Second, **hell is a place of continual torment and agony.** The book of Revelation describes it as a "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14-15). Jesus warned his followers to fear God since He is able to "destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). Once again, people sometimes get confused on this point. Some wonder how the torment can go on for ever and ever if they have been destroyed. Remember that the body which shall be destroyed will not have a physical form. Like the saints who ascended to heaven, those souls that are cast into the lake of fire will have had their bodies changed in the twinkling of an eye (John 5:28-29; cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-52).

The destruction will not be done in a physical sense. In 2 Peter 3:7 the Bible speaks of the perdition of ungodly men on the day of judgment. Perdition literally means complete and irreparable loss or ruin. Souls in hell will indeed suffer eternal loss since they will be cut off from every good thing (2 Thess. 1:9). "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Matt. 16:26)? This loss of the soul includes punishment for the evil done in this life. Paul said every soul shall be repaid for the things done in the body [i.e., the earthly life] (2 Cor. 5:10). When Jesus comes again with his mighty angels, He will begin this repayment (2 Thess. 1:6-9).

Third, **hell will be inhabited by wicked and horrible inhabitants of all the ages.** Who will be there? Jesus said hell was prepared for the Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). However, when man chooses sin and refuses to repent, he has con-



signed himself to the devil's abode. Some have the mistaken notion that Satan will have charge of hell and that he will be the one to inflict torment on the lost. According to the book of Revelation, this is false (Rev. 20:10). God will cast the devil into the lake of fire and will torment him. All who deserve to be punished will be there including sinners of all time (Rom. 2:8-9). Sadly, this will also include unfaithful members of the Lord's church (2 Peter 2:20-22).

Fourth, **hell is a place of absolute justice minus any mercy** (Matt. 18:34-35; cf. Heb.

10:28-29). There will be no second chances to escape the wrath of God once a soul is in this awful place (Luke 16:26). Everyone needs to be warned of the horrors of this terrible place in hopes that they will choose to avoid that destiny. Unfortunately, the majority of mankind is on the broad path that leads straight to hell (Matt. 7:13-14).

God has good reasons for having a place called hell. If hell were not real, sinners would go unpunished. Who would want to go to heaven that was populated with the wicked? Though most will go to hell, they

want to believe otherwise. Some exclaim, "My life is hell." This is not true since life will be over one day, then comes judgment (Heb. 9:27). Paul wrote, "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...*" (2 Cor. 5:10-11a).

24735 Huron River Dr.  
Rockwood, MI 48173

## Elder's COLUMN

## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES & BENEVOLENCE

Bill Graddy

**F**rom an administrative view, the function of an eldership looms before us in *benevolence* perhaps more than any other area. True, the deacons should shine the brightest here (cf. Acts 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:8-13). But the leadership, vision, and wisdom must be generated and radiated through the eldership. The importance elders attach to it, the funds set aside for it, and to give the congregation a clear path to it comes from a knowledgeable eldership.

Benevolence is interlaced and interwoven with the preaching of the Gospel (cf. Gal. 2:10). It is a cause and affect relationship. To be able to administer the spirit of benevolence with the evangelistical thrust is wisdom personified. To be overzealous in preaching the Gospel and passionless in benevolence or to be overenthusiastic in benevolence and indifferent in preaching is to be unbalanced. Elders must be good listeners paying attention to the voices crying in the slums and streets (cf. Matt. 3:3; 15:33; Mark 8:4; James 1:27). Jesus ate with publicans and sinners (Matt. 9:10-13). Have we learned what verse 13 means? We must first know "how" to do before we "can" do.

Although the elders and deacons may spearhead the benevolent pro-

gram, each member must participate as they have opportunity. The parable of the Good Samaritan should overwhelm us (Luke 10:25-37). Helping people in need stands out in the ministries of Jesus and the apostles (Matt. 8:16; 20:28; Luke 9:11; Acts 4:9; 5:16; 10:38; 11:28-30; Gal. 6:10; Col. 1:10). When we lose our desire to help people, we are shorn of our power and God is against us (Psalm 41:1-3; Prov. 14:31; 21:13; 1 John 3:17). Does the love of God dwell in us to the extent that we help the poor?

Generally, we may think of benevolent work as physical, which is, food, clothing and shelter. But we must see the dichotomy of both physical and spiritual help, realizing these two work together. Gospel meetings have lost their "zip" in proportion to Gospel preaching. Bland and generic preaching has desensitized many members of the church. We do not have a shortage of preachers as much as we have a shortage of congregations who desire to hear the Gospel preached. Failure to grasp the insight of going the "extra mile" in benevolence will eliminate the purpose for which Christ came into the world (cf. Matt. 5:16; Luke 19:10; John 10:32; 1 Tim. 6:18; James 4:17;

1 Peter 2:12; 3 John 11). Forgiveness of sins and eternal life are wrapped up in the Gospel (Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 2:7). Thus, our twenty minute sermonettes have lulled many congregations into full sleep with "fun and games."

Compassionate Christians will see those in physical need and give them those things which are needful to the body (cf. Mark 8:2; John 6:26; James 2:15-16). Concerned Christians will take the Gospel to every creature, poor and rich alike, to heal them spiritually (Matt. 13:15; 28:19-20; Acts 11:28-30). Especially, elders and deacons must see the difference between "freeloaders" (John 6:26) and "freedom-seekers" (John 8:32). Our failure to discern and make the proper application of this has caused a reaction of "play it safe" and help no one. Jesus and the apostles worked this to perfection and did not convert the entire world. Likewise, we will not convert all, but we must try, because the Lord will judge us for our efforts not our perfection (Rev. 14:13).

22 Sugar Creek  
No. Little Rock, AR 72116

**SEND US YOUR CHANGE OF  
ADDRESS WHEN YOU MOVE**



## SEEK THE OLD PATHS

mon Gannon, Woodbury, TN. "Thanks so much" ...**Vivian Dorman, Rison, AR.** "Your publications are ALWAYS NEGATIVE. Please remove me from your mailing list. I never ordered it to begin with" ...**Cris Graham, Custer, SD.** [NOTE from the editor: By inspiration, Paul wrote to Timothy that his preaching was to 'reprove, rebuke and exhort' (2 Tim. 4:2). Sounds like that is at least 2/3 negative! The whole counsel of God (Acts 20:20-27) involves preaching everything that God has commanded. Teaching/preaching may be summed up as: 1) identifying what sin is and making it clear that it separates one from God, 2) convicting one of their faults, warning individuals of their error, making one feel guilty, and 3) encouraging people to repent, turn to God and obey His commandments. That's reproofing, rebuking, exhorting. Teaching/preaching is not sugar and spice and everything nice. It is everything that is involved in preparing men for eternity. Unless men are convicted of their sins, they will never repent (Acts 2:37). Without repentance, there is no obedience (Acts 2:41). Without obedience, there is no salvation (Matt. 7:21). How do we 'know' we love God? He tells us it is when we 'keep his commandments' (1 John 2:3-6). If we do not keep his commandments, we are a liar and do not love the truth. The Lord's commandments rebuke us when we sin. That's negative. Thank God He is negative and tells us like it is so that we might repent and obey Him! —*Garland M. Robinson*]. "Thank you" ...**Bill Blassingim, Napoleon, OH.** "Please remove my name from your mailing list. I no longer wish to receive STOP. Thank you" ...**Darryl Harrison, Bristol, TN.** "Just recently discovered your seektheoldpaths.com web page. It is great. Keep up the good work. Thanks" ...**Ralph Thompson, White House, TN.** "Enclosed is a check to help in the publication of the paper. Keep up the good work! Thanks" ...**Oxford, MS.** "Hope everyone is doing fine there. Things are pretty good here. I want to say thanks for continuing to send STOP to me. I enjoy reading and learning from them, and so do others. I'd like to ask you to add others to your list. They enjoy reading them and I'm sure they'll continue to learn also. Thank you for spreading the Word and for helping souls to understand the scriptures" ...**Jerry Hawkins #133559, M-23A, J. O. Davis CF 4000, Atmore, AL 36503-4000.** "Please put this contribution toward the printing of STOP in memory of Betty Cannady. We enjoy this paper of Truth so much. Keep up the good work" ...**Marvin & Dathine Bellah, Monticello, AR.** "Please add the following names to your distribution list for the *Seek The Old Paths* publication, starting with the June issue, which has outstanding articles" ...**Chattanooga, TN.** "Would you please mail me a copy of the May issue of STOP. I didn't receive it. Thank you" ...**Helen Hign, Tusculumbia, AL.** "I would like to receive STOP publication. Thanks" ...**Gary Stanfield, Albertville, AL.** "I receive *Seek The Old Paths* and sure do enjoy it so much. Hope this check helps. Thanks" ...**Irene Holland, Athens, AL.** "Dear Brother Robinson, 1st, Let me thank you for this excellent publication. I receive and read several publications and *Seek The Old Paths* is in my opinion the best of the bunch. Thank you again for your efforts. 2nd, Today as I was reading the Vol. 20, No 5, May 2009 issue (Denominations are Sinful #2) it became apparent to me that I had not read #1. Sometimes my mail is delivered to Sleepy Creek Road & not Sleepy Creek Drive. Maybe this is where it went, hope they will read it. Please send me another copy of the publication that contains the #1 article on 'Denominations are Sinful.' Thank you and your staff again for this very excellent publication. Please continue this good work. I believe it has a great influence on many. Thanks" ...**Marcus O. Hull, Elder, Oak Fonost church of Christ, Goldsboro, NC.** "I am so thankful for *Seek The Old Paths*. God bless" ...**Nancy McFaul, Kemp TX.** "In your May issue of *Seek the Old Paths* page 37 brother Campbell gave a sermon that is so needed in our brotherhood, these half-baked preachers we have today will not rebuke sin. This sermon should be preached in all our churches over and over and over again. Thank you brother" ...**Bettye Zumbrun, Deltona, FL.** "Please keep up the outstanding work as many con-

gregations are getting away from sound doctrine" ...**Stuart Healy, Little Rock, AR.** "I really enjoy the fine work you do in publishing *Seek The Old Paths*. Keep up the great work and the Lord will bless you" ...**Everett Poteet, Imboden, AR.** "Please stop sending me *Seek The Old Paths*. It's not that I don't like the paper, but I'm 90 years old and my eyes are too bad to try to read it. I think you are doing a great work and I hope this little check will help. Postage is so high. Maybe dropping one mailing will help. Keep up the good work" ...**Gladys Daugherty, Weaver, AL.** "Thank you for all your great work" ...**Martha Behle, Old Monroe, MO.** "Thanks" ...**Edgar Beard, Chattanooga, TN.** "We enjoy reading these from cover to cover. I'm asking my name to be withheld if published in your paper" ...**Name Withheld, IL.** "Please send a dozen of your August publication of STOP. You have very good sound articles in this publication. We enjoy receiving them. Thank you" ...**David Carver, Gracey, KY.** "Please remove our name and address from your publication's mailing list as we are able to access your publication by way of the internet" ...**Richard Sanders, Camden, AR.** "We have enjoyed receiving STOP for some time now, and pray that your work continues successfully for God. We have been receiving a bundle of 10 papers and now that most of our brethren receive the paper individually, we no longer need 10 papers. Is it possible to get a bundle of 5 papers? Thank you again for your work for the kingdom" ...**Charles Coats, Webberville, MI.** "Would you please remove my name for *Seek The Old Paths* as the congregation where I attend receives them and I can pick up a copy there. That way it will also save you postage. Thank you very much" ...**Rachel E. Riddle, Indianapolis, IN.** "Thanks for your faithfulness to God's word. We enjoy the articles in STOP. We are enclosing a check to help with postage" ...**Earl Claud for the Land Between the Lakes church of Christ, Dover, TN.** "May God always bless you all in the work of the Lord with STOP" ...**H. D. & Redah Price, Andrews, TX.**

**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**

<http://www.seektheoldpaths.org>

EAST END CHURCH OF CHRIST  
102 EDISON ST.  
MCMINNVILLE, TN 37110-2216  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
P A I D  
Permit No. 349  
McMinnville, TN