



# 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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## CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM #1

*Adam Good*

***The importance of Christians knowing the truth about Islam cannot be overstated. From their respective beginnings, Islam spread by the sword while Christianity spread through reason and persuasion.***

There are an estimated 1.6 billion Muslims in the world. Restated, Islam is practiced by nearly one in four human beings alive today. The term ‘Muslim’ refers to one who submits to Allah, the Islamic god. Christians must prepare to face Islam. Paul exhorted Christians to, “*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong*” (1 Cor. 16:13). In order for the church to carry out its mission of evangelism and to safeguard itself against false doctrine, Christians must have a working knowledge of other systems of belief and how they contrast with the “Faith... once delivered” — the Gospel (Jude 3).

Paul’s teaching demonstrates this point. His familiarity with Greek philosophy is made evident in the book of Acts and in his epistles. While preaching in Athens, Paul explained that in God “...we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring” (Acts 17:28). The poets alluded to are Epimenides of Crete and Aratus. Paul quoted Epimenides again in Titus 1:12. In his epistle to the church of Christ in Corinth, Paul explained that evil company corrupts good habits (1 Cor. 15:33). This is similar to a quote from the Greek playwright Menander. Paul’s knowledge of Greek thought enabled him to more effectively evangelize in their communities. He was

familiar with their culture and could tailor his approach to better point them towards the salvation found only in Jesus the Christ (Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5).

The importance of Christians knowing the truth about Islam cannot be overstated. The mouthpieces of diversity and tolerance promote this religion, even as they denigrate Christianity. Such individuals fall under the condemnation spoken of through Isaiah. “*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*” (Isa. 5:20)!

Many individuals believe that Christians, Jews and Muslims worship the same deity. They argue that Jehovah and Allah are just different names for the same God. Consequently, political and religious leaders call for ‘interfaith’ cooperation. In order to hold this position, one must cast aside the teaching of the Bible and accept Islamic doctrine. Interfaith cooperation is only possible when Christianity compromises and submits to Islam. These points are substantiated in the following three examples.

In March 2013, Pope Francis held his first interfaith gathering. He commented that Muslims “worship the one living and merciful God, and call upon him in prayer.” His comment reflected

the position articulated on November 21, 1964 by the Second Vatican Council, Lumen Gentium 16: “But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place among whom are the Muslims: these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day.” Is belief in the Creator or the God of Abraham enough for salvation? Jesus the Christ thought differently, declaring, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me*” (John 14:6).

In May 2016, Pope Francis spoke with the French newspaper *La Croix*. He made this startling remark: “It is true that the idea of conquest is inherent in the soul of Islam. However, it is also possible to interpret the objective in Matthew’s Gospel, where Jesus sends his disciples to all nations, in terms of the same idea of conquest.” From their respective beginnings, Islam spread by the sword while Christianity spread through reason and persuasion. What *faithful* Christian has ever taken up physical arms in order to spread the message of “the Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6)? None! Physical conquest and political domination cannot be compared to spiritual con-

*(Continued on page 5)*

**Christianity and Islam...**



Editorial...

## CHANGING THE TREND OF MORAL DIGRESSION

Garland M. Robinson

*The Bible, God's holy inspired Word, is the only means of slowing down and/or stopping the downward trend of departure from the Truth.*

Those who claim to be “something” in worldly thought and deed think of themselves as ever increasing to higher and higher degrees of social achievement. Truth be known, they are the champions of leading the world into an ever increasing downward spiral of digression in every realm, both socially and spiritually. It has always been this way (while some generations are better or worse than others). The apostle John was inspired by God to write these words: “*the whole world lieth in wickedness*” (1 John 5:19). That was God’s assessment in the first century. How could it be any different than the world of today?

The Bible, God’s holy inspired Word, is the only means of slowing down and/or stopping this downward trend of departure from the Truth. It has the power to transform minds, which in turn transforms lives. Heaven tells us, “...*the gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...*” (Rom. 1:16). Those who read its pages and absorb its precepts are those who exhibit decency, morality, uprightness, honesty, veracity, integrity and honor. These are the only people who are truly fostering and advancing this world to be a better place. Modernism, liberalism, progressivism makes no sense whatsoever! These concepts and practices lead away from God, not toward God.

*Liberalism* can not and will not make the world a better place, no matter how much they weep and wail. *Progressivism* can not and will not do it, no matter how much they protest, demonstrate, burn and destroy. They

don’t have the truth on their side, and as a matter of fact, they don’t believe there is such a thing as truth!

When Pilate had the very embodiment of truth standing directly in front of him (Jesus himself), his words of shame and disgust were, “what is truth?” (John 18:38). He did not believe such existed. Nor do the “elites” of today believe it exists. But the Bible, particularly the New Testament, is this world’s absolute standard of truth — right and wrong! Those who differ with it will find themselves on the wrong side of God at the judgment and throughout all eternity. Why won’t they learn? Why won’t they accept it? Why won’t they make an honest investigation into it? Isn’t the answer to these questions in the fact that they don’t want the truth? They don’t want any restraint of their excessive and immoral behavior.

Jesus said he came into the world to “bear witness unto the truth” and that “every one that is of the truth heareth my voice” (John 18:37). Those who do not listen to Jesus do not know the truth. And, more tragically, they do not love the truth. Truth exposes and brings to light the evil works of darkness. This is exactly what every Christian must also do according to Ephesians 5:11, “*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove [them].*” The word “reprove” means to expose the unfruitful works of darkness, take away the mask that hides it, shed light upon it and show it for what it really is. A bandage covers the most gruesome, ghastly, repulsive wound. But when removed, a horrible injury

can make us turn away our face and not look upon it. The truth does the same thing to every vice and wickedness perpetrated within the human race. It removes its covering so we can see what is underneath and be horrified. Why would anyone not want to see the truth that exposes its adversary (error)? I don’t understand. Do you? Jesus said, “...*he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God*” (John 3:21).

Jesus taught the way of God in truth (Matt. 22:16) because he always told the truth (Luke 4:25; 9:27; 12:44; 21:3; John 8:40,45; 16:7). Ephesians 4:21 says, “*the truth is in Jesus.*” He was full of grace and truth and both came by him (John 1:14,17). As a matter of fact, Jesus is “*the way, the truth, and the life*” and no man comes unto the Father, but by him (John 14:6).

Forgiveness of sins is only found in the shed blood of Jesus the savior (Eph. 1:7). Those who turn from their sins in humble obedience can be saved from the penalty of their sins. Jesus, and Jesus alone, is the author of salvation to all who **believe** (Rom. 1:16) and **obey** Him (Heb. 5:8-9). The **KEY** to forgiveness of sins is one’s **faith** and **obedience**. One without the other is useless and void. By inspiration, James recorded the words of the Holy Spirit, “*Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. ... But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? ... Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. ... For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also*” (James 7:17,20,24,26).

Jesus said, “*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say*” (Luke 6:46)? He also said, “*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*” (Matt. 7:21). “*Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, IF ye continue in my word, THEN are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” (John 8:31-32). First Peter 1:22 says, “*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth...*” James 1:18 records these words from heaven, “*Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth...*”

The “word of truth” sets us apart



from the rest of the world (John 17:17). Worship is only acceptable to God when it's according to "truth." Notice what Jesus said to the woman at Jacob's well. "...*True worshippers... worship the Father in **spirit** and in **truth**: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God [is] a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [him] in **spirit** and in **truth**.*" Jesus told her that worship, in order to be approved and accepted by God, is in "spirit" (from the heart, genuine) and that is must be done according to "truth" (God's word, the Bible). It's not enough to be sincere in worship. It must also involve actions authorized by the Holy Scriptures (the New Testament).

Men can become so deeply captivated by error, so accustomed to evil, that truth is seen as a radical concept. Truth is strange — so outside their box they can't imagine it. Paul encountered this reaction while preaching at Athens. "*Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbling say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of **strange gods**: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this **new doctrine**, whereof thou speakest, [is]? For thou bringest certain **strange things** to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean*" (Acts 17:18-20). Years later while Paul was making his defense before Agrippa and Festus, he reasoned with them concerning the resurrection of Jesus, and while doing so "*Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.*" To them, the resurrection of the dead was ridiculous — to the point of madness! Paul's response was to point them to the fact that he was not "mad" (insane) but speaking "*words of truth and soberness*" (Acts 26:22-25).

When one learns the truth (John 6:44-45) and obeys it (Heb. 5:8-9) to become a Christian (Mark 16:16), their whole life changes. Peter reminds us "*That he no longer should live the rest of [his] time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of [our] life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revel-*

*lings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein **they think it strange** that ye run not with [them] to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of [you]"* (1 Peter 4:2-4). To the ungodly world, living a moral, honest, decent, upright life is "strange." They can't imagine it. Yet, it's the only way to heaven.

Are you living according to the truth or according to error? Only truth will save you from the penalty of your sins. Are you ready to obey the

Lord according to truth? **Hear** the Gospel (Rom. 10:17), **Believe** it and what it says about Jesus the Son of God (John 8:24), **Repent** of your sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30), **Confess** him as the Son of God and Savior of the world (Rom. 10:9-10), and be **Baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21). You must then **Live Faithful** to him all your life (1 Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:10).

## GREAT GODLY WOMEN

Bill Boyd

**T**here were many great women in the New Testament church. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is mentioned for the last time in Acts 1:14 and with her were other women who were important in the life of Jesus. In Acts 2 Peter quotes Joel reminding us that "daughters" and "handmaidens" would receive gifts of the Spirit, and we see this in the four daughters of Philip in Acts 21:9. Acts 5:14 says "*believers were the more added to the Lord, both men and women,*" and when Philip went down to Samaria they were baptized "*both men and women*" (Acts 8:12). Acts 8:3 and Acts 9:2 tells us that women in the church endured persecutions along with the men. Dorcas was distinguished for her good works and almsdeeds, and Peter raised her from the dead (Acts 9:36-42). John Mark's mother, Mary, hosted a prayer meeting in her home in Acts 12:12-17 and at that gathering was a damsel named Rhoda. Acts 16:1 and 2 Timothy 1:5 honors Lois and Eunice, the grandmother and mother of Timothy, both for their faith and how they passed their faith on to Timothy. Acts 16:14 tells of Lydia, a business woman, and a worshiper of God, who with the women with her were the first to receive the Gospel in Europe during Paul's second missionary journey, and of her hospitality in hosting Paul and his company in Philippi. When Paul preached in Thessalonica those who believed included "*chief women not a few*" (Acts 17:4), and among the believers in Berea were "*honorable women which were Greeks*" (Acts 17:12). Most mocked Paul when he preached in Athens, but among those who heard was "*a woman named Damaris.*" From Corinth, to Ephesus, to Rome among Paul's fellow laborers were Priscilla and her husband Aquila (Acts 18:18,26, and Rom. 16:3). The mothers of Tyre brought their children to see Paul in Acts 21:4. There are many women commended by name in the epistles.

Some search the Scriptures for women preachers (Philip's daughters in Acts 21:9?), women deacons (Phoebe in Rom. 16:1?), and even women apostles (Junia in Rom. 16:7?), but it is not possible to demonstrate that women in the New Testament church filled the roles they filled in the same manner as men. Paul clearly distinguished between the role of men and women in the assemblies and in the positional leadership of the church in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-35.

Those who honor Paul's distinctions are accused of relegating women second class citizens in the kingdom and demeaning their potential contributions, but far to the contrary, God honors women who serve with modesty, reverence, purity, reserve, and inward quietness (1 Tim. 2:9-11, 1 Peter 3:1-4). Men with titles and public roles receive a lot of attention, but God sees not as man sees and in God's eyes the "*greatest among you will be your servant*" (Matt. 23:11).

I am convinced that faithful godly women have always been among the greatest in the church. You may not find them in the history books, but what of that, their names are written in heaven.

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## Elder's COLUMN

Thought influences behavior. The wise writer of Proverbs affirms this in Proverbs 4:23. *“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”* The heart is the center of reasoning, will, motives, and the emotions of man. That which enters into this sanctuary of man will express itself in behavior. *“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he...”* (Prov. 23:7).

Throughout the course of history, many “thought systems” have existed. These thought systems influence the thinking and the behavior of the citizens of nations. These systems of thought spring from literary movements. Authors at various points in history influence the minds of those who read their works. In turn, the readers act in accordance with the thoughts they have been given.

The Christian knows that the thought systems of man often run contrary to the thinking of Christ and His holy Word. When an “evil thought system” contradicts the Word of God, war is ignited. Truth cannot let this evil system take root. Paul understood this and wrote the following words to the church at Corinth: *“But I beseech [you], that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”* (2 Cor. 10:2-5). Paul realized that the Christian’s battle is not physical, but spiritual. It is a battle for the minds of men and women. Strongholds, imaginations, and high things must be cast down in order for God’s will to prevail.

With Bible knowledge at a very low ebb, the thought systems of man and of Satan have permeated the thinking of the citizens of the world,

# POSTMODERN THOUGHT #1

Victor M. Eskew

*The Christian’s battle is not physical, but spiritual. It is a battle for the minds of men and women. Will you let the devil influence your mind?*

the United States and the church in a negative way. Since the late 1800s unto the present, two evil thought systems have infiltrated our nation. One of them is called **Modernism** (late 1800s – 1960s) and the other is referred to as **Postmodernism** (1960s to the present). Some of the tenets of modernism have been carried over into this postmodern era. Postmodernism has taken modernism to a higher level and has added to it additional ways to approach the issues of today’s world.

This article is the first of a series of articles where we are going to examine five fundamental principles of postmodern thinking: 1) Pluralism, 2) Relativism, 3) Tolerance, 4) Secularism, 5) Pragmatism. These principles form the foundation for the other beliefs that are advocated by postmodernists. When these principles are understood, a person develops a better understanding of what is happening to our nation and of what is taking place in the church.

Some people might wonder how these systems of thought infiltrate a nation of people. There are several venues that disseminate the concepts of postmodernism. One avenue is our *colleges and universities*. Colleges and universities house the thinkers and many of the authors of our society. Many of these scholars, professors, and authors believe the foundational elements of postmodernism. They write, lecture, and teach about these things regularly. All that goes into the minds of those who hear these individuals involves postmodern thought. Youth go to these houses of “higher learning” innocent, eager to learn, and questioning the world around them. Their professors take advantage of this and fill their sponge-like minds with the poison of postmodern thought. Many of our youth come out of these institutions as warriors on the side of postmodernism.

The *media* is another big proponent of postmodern thought. News-casters, journalists, and the guests that are invited on their shows have been

educated by the teachers of postmodernism. Their media outlet gives them a way to advocate for postmodern thought. Television, radio, newspapers, and magazines push the postmodern agenda. These advocates make fun of all those who oppose postmodern thinking. They call their opponents dumb and uneducated. They would have all to believe that those who promote godly thinking and moral values are high school educated hicks who live lives in rural America (‘middle America,’ between the East and West coasts) or who are lowly factory workers in our cities. If you raise the Bible in defense of Christian thought, you are brutally persecuted. Your thoughts are said to be based upon myth, superstition and man-made material that is old and irrelevant to twenty-first century man.

Dear readers, we must come to understand that we are in a war. Each of us must be willing to “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12). We must be willing to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3). To do this, we must put on “the whole armor of God” (Eph. 6:10-17). We must learn how to wield “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Eph. 6:17). We may have to repent of some of the false teaching of postmodernism that has infiltrated our minds (Luke 13:3). Then, with courage and God on our side, we must go out into the world in an effort to fill it with truth and righteousness (Mark 16:15).

We pray that each reader will digest this series of articles with eagerness. Then, let us go out into our communities with a desire to cast down strongholds, imaginations, and high things that oppose God’s will. We will replace this evil thinking by bringing every thought of man into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).

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**NOTE:** In the coming months, we are going to examine five fundamental principles of postmodern thinking: Pluralism, Relativism, Tolerance, Secularism, Pragmatism.



# ARE YOU READY FOR THE DAY OF JUDGMENT?

Ivie Powell

**I**t should be a very sobering thought to realize that each of us will one day stand before Christ to be judged! Some 2,000 years ago Christ ascended to heaven. “*And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*” (Acts 1:9-11).

When the return of Christ occurs, every person on earth will instantly know. Truly the return of our Lord will be a spectacular event! According to the Bible, His coming will be:

**VISIBLE!** “*Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen*” (Rev. 1:7).

**WITHOUT WARNING!** “*For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night*” (1 Thess. 5:2).

**IN THE CLOUDS!** “*Jesus said...Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven*” (Matt. 26:64).

**WITH ANGELS!** “*For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works*” (Matt. 16:27).

**IN FLAMING FIRE!** “*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

**ALL THE DEAD WILL BE RAISED!** “*Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the*

*resurrection of damnation*” (John 5:28-29).

**EARTH DESTROYED BY FIRE!** “*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and works that are therein shall be burned up*” (2 Peter 3:10).

Observe carefully that all of these events will occur simultaneously and instantaneously! The doctrines of the so-called rapture, tribulation, and a thousand year reign of Christ on earth are NOT taught in the Scriptures!

Christ’s second coming will declare the day of judgment! The One who will judge is Jesus the Christ, for God has committed all judgment to His Son. “*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to His Son*” (John 5:22). That which Christ will use to judge the souls of all humanity is **the word of God**. “*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).

As we stand before Christ to be judged, we will stand as individuals to give an account of our lives. “*So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God*” (Rom. 14:12; Also read 2 Cor. 5:10).

It will be a day of final reckoning! A day of unspeakable joy for the faithful who will hear the welcome words of our Lord and Savior, “*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*” (Matt. 25:34). But, it will be a time of horrific sorrow of which the Lord warned time and time again: “*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*” (Matt. 25:41; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:14-15)!

Beloved, are you ready for the day of judgment? I plead with you, if you haven’t put Christ on in baptism for the remission of sins, do so today! (Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27). If you are an unfaithful child of God, we beg you to repent and return to the Lord (James

5:19-10)!

Yes, the day of judgment is coming! Are you ready for that day?

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## Christianity and Islam...

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version.

On February 3, 2016, President Obama addressed the Islamic Society of Baltimore. Throughout his speech, he equated Allah with the God of the Bible and enjoined unity between Christians, Jews, and Muslims. He quoted with approval a Muslim who said “in the name of God, the God of Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad.” Did these four individuals truly worship the same deity? Many in the United States are confused and uncertain.

It is one thing to denounce Islam as the false and pernicious religion that it is, but how would one go about proving this to others? Paul instructed Christians to “*Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech [be] alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man*” (Col. 4:5-6). He commanded the Ephesian brethren to “*have no fellowship with the unfruitful work of darkness, but rather reprove (expose) them*” (Eph. 5:11). It is not enough to refrain from sinful activity or to condemn it when among fellow Christians. Error must be publicly exposed for what it is by the light of God’s Word.

In order to evaluate the claim that Christians and Muslims follow the same deity and that Christianity and Islam are therefore compatible and can coexist, it is necessary to compare the teaching of the Bible with the teaching of Islam.

Subsequent articles will compare several Christian and Islamic beliefs. This study is not intended as an academic exercise in comparative religion. This is about truth and the eternal destiny of billions of souls.

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# CAN ONE BE "DONE" WITH GOD'S WORD?

Marvin L. Weir

The thinking of many seems to be that one can ignore or cast aside God's Word and be done with it. The wisdom and philosophies of men may encourage such erroneous thinking, but the Holy Scriptures warn to the contrary. Could Israel cast aside or turn from God's Word and be done with it? No, and she was so warned: "But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, [but] that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you" (Lev. 26:14-17).

Today, in the New Testament age, these words from the Lord are applicable to all: "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. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John 12:48-49).

These words of James Smith should cause folks to reflect seriously upon the sacred Word: "The Book of God, like the people of God, has, in every age, suffered persecution. It has been tortured and ruptured, pierced and ridiculed, burned and buried, but it has quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, stopped the mouths of lions, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

Let us learn a powerful lesson from one who decided to cut out and burn God's Word and be done with it. Regarding king Jehoiakim...

**The Command Was Given!** The words of God are simple and straightforward: "And it came to pass in the

fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, [that] this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin" (Jer. 36:1-3).

These words were a solemn warning of tremendous importance sent by a loving and merciful God. The Creator was hoping that Judah would turn from her evil ways so He could forgive her. The Gospel message today can be likened to these words of Jeremiah to Judah. The Gospel is God's power unto salvation and must be obeyed if mankind is to be forgiven and saved (Rom. 1:16).

## **The Command Was Heard!**

The king sent Jehudi to "fetch the roll" and he "read it in the ears of the king and in the ears of all the princes that stood beside the king" (Jer. 36:21). What a blessing it is to be privileged to hear the message of the Creator! After hearing, however, follows the responsibility of accepting and obeying God's Word. Such a moment is not only critical in the life of a king, but in every person that is privileged to be taught from the Holy Scriptures.

## **The Command Was Rejected!**

The attitude of one hearing the Word of God is of utmost importance. Jehoiakim's attitude toward this revelation from God is revealed in these words: "And it came to pass, [that] when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast [it] into the fire that [was] on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that [was] on the hearth" (Jer. 36:23). It is the epitome of foolishness to rebel against and cast aside the Word of God and believe that burning it destroys it!

Jehoiakim has many relatives today who eagerly use the "penknife" on the Sacred Scriptures. Many folks

who profess to be religious and concerned about the souls of men use the "penknife" on God's plan of salvation. Baptism, as a prerequisite to salvation, is cut from the Scriptures and cast aside. The Lord says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (Mark 16:16). Penknife preachers declare, "He that believeth and is **not** baptized shall be saved" (Penknife 16:16).

After Peter's declaration as to who He was, the Lord promised, "upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Paul, by inspiration, taught that Christ was given "to be head over all things to the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1:22-23). Paul also taught that "there is one body" (Eph. 4:4). Penknife theologians and those who follow them encourage people to "attend the church of their choice."

It is a fact that "an evil heart of unbelief" (Heb. 3:12) can cut to pieces God's Holy Word. However, the wonderful and encouraging truth is that "the word of the Lord abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:25). It was not "the roll" (Jer. 36:23) that Jehoiakim despised, but the God of the roll! There are many people today who would not dare burn the Bible, but they nonetheless use their penknife unmercifully on the sacred Word of God.

**The Command Renewed!** Jeremiah takes "another roll" and "all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire" (Jer. 36:32) were contained therein. God will not dispose of His laws because of man's disdain for them. No man who rejects and seeks to destroy God's Word is done with it! Unbelief will not render the Holy Scriptures useless.

Can one be done with God's Word? Absolutely not! Do not forget the Lord said, "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).

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# WRONG IS STILL WRONG, AND RIGHT IS STILL RIGHT

Roger D. Campbell

There are numerous Bible exhortations for God’s people to follow that which is right and stay away from that which is wrong. In the spiritual realm, it is God alone Who determines what is right and what is not. Here are three New Testament passages that point to the need for Christians to stay with what is good:

“Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. ... Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:9,21).

“Prove (test) all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21,22).

“Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good” (3 John 11).

Regardless of what happens in life, regardless of what others do or say, the Lord’s will does not change. Wrong is still wrong, and right is still right. Let us look at some applications of this truth.

Wrong is still wrong, even if you are a King. King David slept with another man’s wife. “But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD” (2 Sam. 11:27).

Wrong is still wrong, even if you are my brother in the flesh. When Aaron led the Israelites in making a golden calf, regardless of the fact that he was Moses’ older brother, Moses properly called Aaron’s action a “sin” (Exodus 32:21).

Wrong is still wrong, even if you are my cousin. Korah’s rebellion against the authority of Moses and Aaron was wrong, even though he was their cousin (Numbers 16:1-11).

Wrong is still wrong, even if you were faithful to the Lord in the past. Good conduct in the past does not offset or cover up present evil. The churches of Galatia had run well, but someone later hindered them from obeying the truth (Gal. 5:7). Past faithfulness does not negate current negligence.

Wrong is still wrong, even if you are a Gospel preacher. When Peter acted as a hypocrite, Paul rebuked him to his face (Gal. 2:11-14).

Wrong is still wrong, even if you are my friend. None would doubt that Judas sinned when he betrayed Jesus, though the Bible calls Judas the “familiar friend” of the Messiah (Psalm 41:9).

Wrong is still wrong, even if many people support wrongdoing. The Jewish leaders that wanted to see Jesus killed got the backing of “the multitudes” in crying for His death. Nonetheless, their action was evil (Matt. 27:17-24).

Now consider the other side of the picture.

Right is still right, and truth is still truth, even if the one that tells me the truth is arrogant. His arrogance is unacceptable, but if he shows me that the Bible says Jesus is the Head of the church, then his arrogance does not change that fact (Eph. 5:23).

Right is still right, and truth is still truth, even though the one who tells me the truth is inconsistent in their own life. One may not “practice what he preaches” in the matter of being prejudiced toward others, but if he shows me from James 2:1-9 that partiality and racial prejudice are wrong, then the truth he has proven from the Bible is not negated by his own personal inconsistency.

Right is still right, even if the one that tells me the truth has a bad attitude. The one who points me to the truth that Jesus wants us to seek the kingdom (church) first may be an envious, bitter, grumpy man that simply cannot stand people, but what he says about Jesus’ demand is still true (Matt. 6:33).

Right is still right and the truth is still the truth, even if I do not like it. An advocate of a modern “Women’s Rights” group may not like what God says about women not being allowed to have dominion over men in spiritual activities, but God’s instruction remains true, whether any human likes it or not (1 Tim. 2:11-14).

Right is still right, even if other people make fun of it. Jesus endured mockery more than once, but His message and course of action were correct, regardless of men’s negative reaction.

We read about it in the Bible time and again. We see it demonstrated in the lives of people in our generation over and over again. People who are doing wrong often try to come up with some kind of defense to justify their wrongdoing. They may be able to smooth it over with others, but God still sees and knows. Wrong is still wrong. At the same

time, people who are told what is right, either about religious truth or else the reality of their own personal activities, sometimes try to dodge the truth by appealing to some fault in the messenger of truth or in other people. When all is said and done, however, right is still right.

May the Lord help each of us to have a love for that which is right and an equally strong hatred for all that is wrong in God’s eyes. May we each be committed to doing good and abstaining from evil.

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## SEEK THE OLD PATHS

church was founded upon (Heb. 5:12; 2 Tim. 4:1-5). WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FULL-TIME, SOUND GOSPEL PREACHER. Those interested may contact: Glenn Zumalt (918-224-2688, glzumalt@outlook.com), Bill Patterson (918-807-0029), or Bill Lewis (918-227-5366). The info for the church is: **Lee & Walnut Church of Christ (918-224-2024), 101 S. Walnut, PO Box 690, Sapulpa, OK 74067, leeandwalnutchurchofchrist.org** ...**Bill Lewis, Sapulpa, OK.** "I enjoy *Seek The Old Paths*. Keep up the good work. Thank you" ...**Andrew Lancaster, Baileyton, AL.** "An Elder at our congregation in Belle Chasse, Louisiana, gave me the Sept/16 issue to read. I would greatly appreciate being put on the mailing list to receive your publications each time you send them out. It is wonderful to see articles written that are straight from the Bible with no 'manmade thoughts included!' Thank you" ...**Cynthia Peacock, Marrero LA.** "Keep up the good work. It is so needed" ...**Manchester, TN.** "So much is happening in the world and the church of our Lord that it's mind boggling. Many are sitting with closed lip, trying to ride out the storm (letting go of trying to change world views); and, let God handle it. Someone will have to draw the line in the sand as Moses did, and Elijah followed up. We'll have to take a stand (denounce government) and perhaps run for our lives. Or, rebuke (family/friends) and be scorned. We certainly cannot afford the wrath of God if we do nothing! Giving all diligence..." **Jo Ann D. Hudson, Chicago, IL.** "My husband and I are of the church of Christ at Well River Road. I really enjoy the *Seek The Old Paths*. I just finished the article, 'A Natural Progression of Evil' (June/2016). I get mine from church. Please keep them coming. I have learned a lot. Thank you" ...**Teresa Barrow, Pinetown, NC.** "Thanks for the *Seek The Old Paths*" ...**Charlie & Shirley Rector, Dayton, TN.** "Please add me to your mailing list" ...**Richard Henderson, Culloden, NC.** "Please discontinue sending me three copies of *Seek The Old Paths*. I am now able to keep up with the reading online. Thank you" ...**Rosemary Caine, Lagrange, GA.** "Thank you brother for sending STOP to our congregation. We are grateful for your sound words on each subject" ...**Maurice Brown, Broadway C/C, Rockford, IL.** "Thank you for sending copies of *Seek The Old Paths* to the Bucyrus, Ohio, congregation. We appreciate receiving the Gospel paper. I am enclosing a small donation to assist with your expenses. Thank you again" ...**Wayne Crum, Bucyrus, OH.** "Lots of good stuff. I usually get my copy at the Davison C/C" ...**Earl Davis, Burton, MI.** "I have been receiving *Seek The Old Paths* for a number of years and have been sharing it with others while trying to keep some articles for future use. Our preacher has been borrowing my copy and I would like to see about getting him his own copy. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this and thank you for the work you are doing. I have gained much knowledge from this publication and, when I 'filled in' due to the lack of a preacher, found it helpful in preparing lessons" ...**Charles Keeton, Chelan, WA.** Joe C. Britt has passed away. He was a long time faithful Gospel preacher" ...**Cookeville, TN.** "Refused" ...**Erin Schaffter, Sturgis, KY.** "I want to say how much I enjoyed your article

"I have received your paper, *Seek The Old Paths*, for years and know it to be a sound paper of sound teaching. So many of the church of today have gone after the liberal and progressive movement leaving the first principles of which the

(The Land Defiled #1, Nov/16) and how befitting it is these sordid days and I look forward to the 2nd part. I hope you do not mind, but I made copies for each member of my adult Bible class and asked that they read it. I was reminded of something I had written earlier and thought it might be appropriate for your kind consideration. I continue to ask God's great blessing on the good work you are able to do and how far-reaching it has become" ...**Denver Thomas, Milton, WV.** "Brethren, the congregation, 'Duffield church of Christ' located in Duffield, VA is no longer in existence. Please discontinue sending *Seek The Old Paths*. Your help was much appreciated" ...**Roy Newton.** "Please unsubscribe me" ...**Stanley Adams, Memphis, TN.** "Great job!" ...**Jason Gann, McMinnville, TN.** "May God bless you for teaching the True Gospel" ...**Lorene Wilson, Binger, OK.** "I have recently moved and would like to continue to receive *Seek The Old Paths* at my new location. There is no church of Christ outreach with the South Carolina Department of Corrections which makes *Seek The Old Paths* extremely important to those seeking the truth. Thank you for your kind attention to this request" ...**Paul Mash, Kershaw, SC.** "I enjoy this paper very much and I don't just read them once, I go back for an article that helps make a subject clearer. Thanks to you and all who make this paper possible. Would you happen to have some back issues I need?" ...**Wilburton, OK.** [All back issues are online at: [seektheoldpaths.com](http://seektheoldpaths.com). They can be printed and distributed as much as you like. -gmr, editor].

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