



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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TO WHOM ARE WE TO PRAY?

Jon Gary Williams

Is Prayer To Be Offered Only To The Father, Or Can Prayer Be Offered To Jesus As Well?

Prayer fills an essential role within the Lord's church and is an indispensable function in the life of every Christian. Sadly, some today embrace a type of prayer which is foreign to New Testament teaching — that of praying to Jesus. Following, are some key truths regarding biblical prayer.

JESUS TAUGHT THAT PRAYER IS TO BE OFFERED TO THE FATHER

In His sermon on the mount Jesus spoke clearly on several matters of truth, one of which was His teaching on prayer. He explained that prayer is to be offered to the Father. In His words, *“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our **Father** which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name”* (Matt. 6:9).

Later in this same discourse Jesus emphasized once again, *“Ask, and it shall be given you”* (Matt. 7:7). Then, in verse 11, He explained who it was they were to ask. *“...How much more shall your **Father** which is in heaven give good things to them that ask **him**?”*

On yet another occasion, Jesus repeated His statement given in the sermon on the mount. When His disciples specifically asked Him to teach them to pray His response was plain: *“When ye pray, say, Our **Father** which art in heaven...”* (Luke 11:2).

Jesus' words could not have been

more evident. Our **Father** in heaven is to be the recipient of prayer. If prayer can be offered to someone else, surely Jesus would have made mention of this, especially if He knew prayer was also to be offered to Him. The Lord's silence here speaks volumes.

EXAMPLES OF PRAYERS BEING ADDRESSED ONLY TO THE FATHER

A great many passages attest to the fact that in New Testament times prayers were directed only to the Father. Here are but a few:

- Acts 4:24, *“...they lifted up their voice to **God**...”*
- Acts 16:25, *“...at midnight Paul and Silas prayed...unto **God**...”*
- Acts 27:35, *“...he took bread, and gave thanks to **God**...”*
- Rom. 10:1, *“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to **God**...”*
- Rom. 15:30, *“...that ye strive together with me in your prayers to **God** for me.”*
- 1 Cor. 1:4, *“I thank my **God** always on your behalf...”*
- 2 Cor. 13:7, *“Now I pray to **God** that you do no evil...”*
- Eph. 3:14, *“For this cause I bow my knees unto the **Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ...”*
- Eph. 5:20, *“...giving thanks always for all things unto **God and the Father** in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

- Phil. 1:3,4, *“I thank my **God** upon every remembrance of you...in every prayer...”*
- Phil. 4:6, *“...in every thing by prayer...let your requests be made known unto **God**.”*
- Col. 1:3, *“We give thanks to **God and the Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always...”*
- 1 Thess. 3:9,10, *“For what thanks can we render to **God**...for you... night and day praying exceedingly...”*
- 2 Thess. 1:11, *“Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our **God** would count you worthy...”*
- 2 Thess. 2:13, *“But we are bound to give thanks alway to **God** for you...”*
- Rev. 8:4, *“...the prayers of the saints, ascended up before **God**...”*

That our heavenly Father is the only one to whom we are to pray is confirmed by an abundance of Scriptures. In contrast, there are no such Scriptures demonstrating prayers being offered to Jesus. For example, we do not read, *“Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray **Christ**...”* (Acts 8:22). Or, *“...prayer was made without ceasing...unto **Jesus**...”* (Acts 12:5) If early Christians did pray to Jesus, why is the New Testament void of any statements to this effect?

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To Whom Do We pray?...



Editorial...

THE BIBLE IS RIGHT (It's Not Myths & Legends)

Garland M. Robinson

The Bible is the ALL INSPIRED, INFALLIBLE, PLENARY, VERBAL, WORD OF GOD. It furnishes us completely unto ALL things that pertain unto life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). Nothing has been left out. It is the WORD that will judge us in the last day (John 12:48-50). It is that divine revelation from God by which we know the difference between truth and error (John 8:31-32; 17:17). It is THE standard and authority by which we worship God acceptably. It is the Bible that condemns going beyond what is written and/or stopping short of it (2 John 9).

Bible writers wrote what God wanted written, exactly! They did it by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. People around the world refer to the Bible as the WORD OF GOD? There has never been a book produced by man that would or could replace the Bible.

Many individuals have set out to debunk and destroy the Bible, and in their words, "expose it to be the fraud and deception it is." One such example is that of *Sir William Mitchell Ramsey* (1851-1939), the foremost authority of his day on the history of Asia Minor. He doubted the accuracy and reliability of the New Testament, especially the book of Acts, and set out to put the writer of Acts to the test. He fully expected his research would prove Acts to be hopelessly inaccurate and spent his life to prove it. After years of intense labors he reported that his study "...showed that the book could bear the most minute scrutiny as an authority for the facts of the Aegean world, and that it was written with such judgment, skill, art and perception of truth as to be a model of historical statement" (*The Bearing of Recent Discovery*, p.85). On page 89 of this same book he wrote, "I set out to look for truth on the borderland where Greece and Asia meet, and found it there [in Acts]. You may

press the words of Luke in a degree beyond any other historian's and they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment." Faithful Christians could have saved him the trouble, but some people have to find things out the hard way.

Why is it that so many hold the Bible to be suspect, a book of myths and legends? Why do they try so desperately to use their own ingenuity and brilliance to prove the Bible wrong? Is it that they can't stand to acknowledge a higher power, the God in heaven that knows all and dictates to man the absolute standard of proper conduct and morality? Man wants to be left to his own standard, not God's absolute standard of right and wrong. Man doesn't want to be restrained. He's just like a dog who jerks and pulls, twists and bites, rolls and spins when his master puts a collar and leash on him for the first time. The dog doesn't know it's for his own good. But in time, he learns to submit and walks alongside his owner with the greatest of comfort, ease and safety. Why can't man learn that lesson?

Man, left to himself without the proper training of the Master in heaven, will buck and rebel, fight and refuse to submit to God's righteousness. As a result, he rushes head-long on the road to absolute disaster and then wonders why things do not go well with him. Notice these words from Psalm 2. "*Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, [saying], Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*" Now, notice God's reaction in the next two verses, *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore dis-*

pleasure."

"Inspiration is that miraculous power which the Holy Spirit exercised on Biblical speakers and writers, enabling them to speak and to write without error, as Deity directed" (Guy N. Woods). Therefore, over a period of 1,600 centuries, 40 different writers guided by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit produced 66 books that have been compiled into one volume called the BIBLE. Its accuracy regarding every subject on which it speaks is impeccable. While not a *history* book per se, its accounts of history regarding nations and people is painstakingly accurate. While not a book of *geography*, its depiction and description of the subject is precise and distinct. While not a *science* book, every scientific point mentioned is absolutely correct and cannot be re-proved. While not a book on *philosophy*, it stands as humanity's absolute standard of morality, decency and ethics. When it speaks of *agriculture, cooking, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, engineering, health, biology, surgery, psychology, navigation, topography, construction*, etc., it can be trusted with the greatest of confidence with no fear of contradiction or refutation. It is completely and totally accurate to the very last word on every single subject it mentions.

Men of every age and in all generations have recognized God as the author of the Bible. People everywhere refer to the Bible as the "word of God." We are impressed with the frequent use of expressions such as: "thus saith the Lord," "thus said the Lord," "the Lord said," "God spake," "God said," "the Lord hath spoken it," "God hath said" and many other expressions are found as many as 2,500 times.

God's word is true and is for our benefit. Someone rightly said, "The more I read the Bible the more I realize that I am the one who is on trail and not the Bible." Psalm 119:160-161, "*Thy word is true from the beginning and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever. ...my heart standeth in awe of thy word*" (ASV, "the sum of thy word is truth"). Psalm 33:9, "*God spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast.*" Psalm 12:6, "*the words of the Lord are pure words.*" Psalm 119:130, "*The entrance of thy words giveth light.*" We need the kind of preaching

Peter demands: *“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God”* (1 Peter 4:11).

In Luke 24:44, Jesus gives his stamp of approval on the entire Old Testament when He says, *“All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.”* Jesus endorsed the New Testament before it was even written. He promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would enable them to know “what” to say and “how” to say it (cf. Matt. 10:19). John 16:13 affirms that the Holy Spirit would guide them into

all truth! To receive the apostles was to receive Christ — to receive Christ was to receive God (cf. Matt. 10:40).

The Bible, God’s Word, is described as a “fire” that burns and a “hammer” that smashes (Jer. 23:29; 5:14; 20:9). Yet, it is sweeter than “honey” when we obey it (Psa. 19:9-10; 119:103; Ezek. 3:3) and “bitter” when we do not (Jer. 4:17-18). It’s like a “sword” that cuts and pierces (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:23). It’s a “lamp” and a “light” (Psa. 119:105; Prov. 6:23). It is both “milk” and “strong meat” (Heb. 5:13-14). It is good, incorruptible “seed” (Luke 8:11; 1 Peter 1:23). It’s

pure as “silver” (Psa. 12:6) and designed to “reprove, rebuke, exhort” (2 Tim. 4:2). It is to be received with “meekness” and is able “save” our souls (James 1:21). By heeding (obeying) it we are “born again” (1 Peter 1:23; John 3:3-5). It “liveth and abideth forever” (1 Peter 1:23).

Let us love the Bible and continue to be, *“steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”* (1 Cor. 15:58).

DECISIONS

Marvin L. Weir

The Bible warns of the folly and dangerous consequences of indecision. Elijah challenged God’s people long ago, saying, *“...How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD [be] God, follow him: but if Baal, [then] follow him. And the people answered him not a word”* (1 Kings 18:21). Hosea said of Israel: *“Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images”* (Hosea 10:2). Jesus affirms that indecision is not a virtue in teaching, *“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”* (Matt. 6:24). James describes *“A double minded man [is] unstable in all his ways”* (James 1:8). James also says, *“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin”* (James 4:17).

People of the age of accountability must decide **whom** they are going to serve. It would be well for all to remember that one’s **indecision** to obey the Gospel or one’s refusal to faithfully serve in the kingdom is a **decision** to serve the devil. Christ taught this truth in saying, *“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad”* (Matt. 12:30).

Let us profit by studying what a decision to become a New Testament Christian means. It means:

The old man of sin is now dead! The apostle Paul mentions the

“old man” three times in his epistles. First, Paul tells the Romans that when one is buried with Christ in baptism (Rom. 6:4), the old man is crucified *“that the body of sin might be done away”* (Rom. 6:6). Second, Paul tells the Ephesians that concerning their former manner of life they were to *“put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts”* (Eph. 4:22). Third, Paul informs the Colossian brethren that they are to *“lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds”* (Col. 3:9). A person who continues to cling to the world and its worldly ways has not **buried** the old man of sin. One who becomes a child of God must make the decision to part company with the ways of the world.

The man in Christ is now a new creature! The Holy Spirit through Paul, words it like this: *“Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”* (2 Cor. 5:17). Notice that the “old things” are now dead! Gone are the past loves, past sins, and past ungodly actions and affections! **Gone!** A Christian is not to resurrect the old ungodly way of life when he decides to enjoy himself or have a little fun.

The decision has been made to follow Christ! The Christian, as the word suggests, is to be a follower of the Lord and Savior. The apostle Peter notes, *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye*

should follow his steps” (1 Peter 2:21). One does not follow Christ by cursing, drinking, gambling, lying, stealing or by engaging in immoral acts. One only deceives himself who thinks he is following Christ when he lives his life by worldly standards.

The Lord’s kingdom (church) now takes top priority in one’s life! Jesus admonished, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”* (Matt. 6:33). The church is not to be worked into one’s schedule; one’s schedule must be worked around his obligations to the Lord’s church! Aunt Suzy and Uncle John are *not* more important than the Lord’s church. Not even if you have not seen them in ten years! Our children are *not* more important than the church. Our financial security is *not* more important than our eternal security. Thus, one’s job is *not* more important than the church. Neither is school, baseball, football, basketball, soccer, scouting, T-ball, little league or any other man-made activity more important than the Lord’s church.

“Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment” (Matt. 22:36-38).

What decision have you made regarding Christ?

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SHALL WE HEARKEN UNTO MEN?

Denver Thomas

In Acts 4:16-20 we read “What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them [is] manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny [it]. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”

The recent case in the neighboring state of Kentucky involving a county clerk who was imprisoned for refusing to issue marriage licenses to gay/lesbian couples based on a belief in God should be an example to anyone who claims any allegiance to God. Even though the clerk is not a member of the Lord’s church, she is to be lauded for her stand for God over man. The judge is quoted as saying “Her good faith belief is simply not a viable defense.” Really, says who? It should be noted that this particular judge was appointed by former President George W. Bush. His pronouncement along with the President Reagan appointed Supreme Court

justice (Anthony Kennedy) who wrote the majority opinion in the recent case making same-sex marriage legal for all should sound a clear message that there are no conservatives left in the judicial system. It is clear that Satan is having a heyday in this country!

How sad it is that those claiming allegiance to the Lord’s church have failed to take a stand against all the evils that are being promulgated in recent days. Very few if any took a stand against the *Roe v Wade* decision some fifty years ago and it became “the law of the land.” It would appear that even fewer have taken a position against the same-sex marriage case. ▶

Elder's COLUMN

THE CHRISTIAN AND FACEBOOK

Mark Lance

Some people love Facebook while others seem to think it’s evil. The truth may be somewhere in between. It depends on how we use something, whether it is good or bad. Alcohol is a wonderful thing when it is used properly. It can cleanse and sterilize. But it’s a terrible thing when it is misused. When used wrongly it can lead to someone cheating on their spouse, or it can even cause someone to be involved in an automobile accident killing themselves or someone else. It all depends on how it is used. God gave it to us, but He expects us to use it wisely.

Facebook can be a great tool used to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Some preachers post messages every day that are very inspiring. They strengthen those who read them and put them to use in their lives. Facebook can be a great way to encourage those going through difficulties. Friends can stay in contact with each other and see what is going on in the lives of others that they may not otherwise know. We can share our funny stories. We can share the pictures of the family as we go through our daily

lives. Facebook can truly be a wonderful tool when we use it as is proper in God’s sight. We should even thank God that it is available, and we can reach around the world in a matter of seconds.

Facebook can be a deadly tool when misused. Unfortunately this happens all too often. Even those professing to be Christians are posting pictures that, to say the least, are not approved by God. Pictures that show people dressed immodestly. Pictures that show people doing ungodly acts. One thing that is very disturbing is to see those who post things they shouldn’t and Christians hitting their “like” button. Why would any person professing to be a child of God want to put their approval on something that God condemns? In the words of James, “My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (James 3:10).

Another area on Facebook that is causing great harm to the body of Christ are those who are posting things about other brethren that otherwise would not have been known. Jesus said, “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell

him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican” (Matt. 18:15-17). It is possible to have truth and misuse it. When it is posted on Facebook, even non-Christians are seeing things that should have been handled privately.

Yes, I know there will be brethren that will encourage the ones posting such things with their “teach the truth brother” and “I am with you brother”, but we should remember the approval of men is not the same thing as the approval of God.

Dear brethren, may we use Facebook, and all things, to bring glory to our loving Father in Heaven. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen” (1 Thess. 5:28).

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The explanations being offered are certainly not based on putting God before man. One such “explanation” told how preachers are speaking out in their congregations. So what? Telling a strait person that sodomy is an abomination is superfluous because such a one already knows as much. Telling a congregation that murder is wrong is also of no avail as Christian people understand abortion to be the murder of the innocent, helpless unborn and contrary to sound doctrine. Instead, we need those to stand up in number and be counted before those who matter.

Looking back as much as fifty years, it is quite obvious that those claiming to be proclaimers of God’s Word have “dropped the ball” as one such person is known to have said recently. And, to be sure, that one did not suggest we ought to pick up the ball and get moving again. A voice for the Lord’s church is not to be heard these days outside safe havens where there is no chance for challenge. Quite frankly, very little, if any is being heard from most outside the walls of their respective edifice. They have taken up “edifying” the church and have no time for anything else. They have neither the time nor the inclination to earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 3) or to seek the lost (Matt. 18:11).

From the very beginning of time, there have been those who thought there must be a better way than that provided by the Lord God. And, since so many today have redefined their envisioned role in the service of God, it can be seen that they just do not believe what that book really has to say. But John 12:48 very clearly states that all humanity will be judged by that word (Bible) and there will be no exceptions to that rule!

Unlike days of yore, it seems the Lord’s church has little, if any, influence in most communities today; and yet it ought to be the great proclaimer of righteousness for the entire world to see. Jesus said in Matthew 5:13-16 “*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick;*

and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

How do we measure up today? Are we that peculiar people that we are supposed to be? “*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 2:14). “*But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*” (1 Peter 2:9).

So one might ask, “Are we listening to man or to God?”

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WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Bill Boyd

The Holy Spirit can be an intimidating subject. A lot of people say a lot of things about the Holy Spirit that are confusing. I saw a video where a young lady indicated she was being led by the Holy Spirit to do something contrary to God’s word! She could tell it was the right thing to do because she felt it, and she was at peace with it.

Sometimes I hear people say “I think God is trying to tell me something.” They are talking about God telling them something directly, either apart from or in addition to his word. I never read in the Bible where anyone ever said they thought God was trying to tell them something; they always knew when the Spirit was speaking directly to them, and when necessary, they provided the evidence. I once heard a man say that when he wanted to say something he did not know if he was wanting to say it or if it was the Holy Spirit wanting him to say it. I asked him how he knew it wasn’t the devil wanting him to say it. He stood before us in silence and sat down without answering. I once knew a preacher that said he never studied his Bible for his sermons; he just stood before the church and let the Spirit tell him what to say. I asked him how he knew it was not the devil telling him what to say. He replied, “Sometimes the devil does tell me what to say!” I asked, “How can you tell the difference?” He said, “You have to study the Bible and figure it out.” I said, “Maybe you ought to study your Bible first.” Once a man came to my father with an idea that he said he got from the Holy Spirit. After discussing it, he decided it was not a very good idea after all; but he still thought it came from the Holy Spirit. I always thought that was strange. I have found that it is more difficult to understand what people say about the Holy Spirit than it is to understand what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit.

All we know about the Holy Spirit is what the Bible says. There are many things we do not know because the Bible does not say; and, it is not necessary for us to know those things or the Bible would tell us about it. We should be content to let our knowledge be limited by that which is revealed in the Scriptures. That said, there are three fundamental things the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit we ought to know, and if we keep these three things in mind, most of the rest falls into place. Those three things are:

1. The Holy Spirit gave us the Word of God.
2. The Holy Spirit gave men the ability to perform miracles, signs and wonders as evidence they were speaking the Word of God.
3. The Holy Spirit works on our spirit through the word of God.

You can list almost everything the Bible says about the Holy Spirit under one of these three headings. Beyond that which is revealed in the Bible, is a mist and a mystery where we do not need to go.

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NOT ALL BAPTISMS ARE SCRIPTURAL

Ivie Powell

Since God does not accept any denomination, what makes brethren think God will accept denominational baptism?

There are no short cuts or substitutes for obeying the Gospel. All accountable people must **Hear** the Gospel (Rom. 10:17), **Believe** in Jesus as God's Son (John 8:24), **Repent** of their sins (Acts 2:38), **Confess** Jesus the Christ as the Son of God (Matt. 10:32) and be **Immersed** into water "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). When this process is completed, the Lord adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47).

While all sinners may be at different stages on the journey to become a child of God, all must go through the same process in order to become a child of God. What does it mean by people being at different stages prior to conversion? Some believe in God and Christ, but haven't repented of sins, confessed Christ, and been baptized in water. Others may believe, repent and confess Christ, but have not been immersed "for the remission of

sins." Unless one has obeyed God's entire process of conversion, they are still in their sins! Again, there are no short cuts or substitutes in becoming a Christian.

Some are of the erroneous opinion that any baptism is acceptable to God as long as the individual is satisfied. Others are willing to risk their eternal salvation upon a denominational baptism insisting it was "for the remission of sins." Friends, listen please, there is one and only one baptism, "*One Lord, one faith, one baptism*" (Eph. 4:5). There is one and only one church that Christ built (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16) whereto the Lord adds the saved (Acts 2:47). As hard as it may seem to many, God does not accept denominational churches! Neither does He accept denominational baptisms! As my old friend Bill Graddy used to say, "In the eyes of the Lord denominational churches do not

exist! The church of our Lord DOES exist and one MUST be baptized into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13)." Brother Graddy went on to say, "To take the position that one is scripturally baptized into a denominational church is to teach that denominational churches are equal to the Lord's church!" (The Pillar, *Baptized Into Nothing!* May 1977).

Unfortunately, many unconverted, compromising elders and preachers have accepted into membership those who have not been scripturally baptized. It must be pointed out that although they have accepted them into the local church membership, God has not accepted them! The reason being, they have not complied with His will. Jesus 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*"

To Whom Do We Pray?...

(Continued from page 73)

JESUS IS THE AVENUE OF PRAYER TO THE FATHER

What role does Jesus play in prayer? Prior to the coming of Christ, prayers were offered directly to God. This practice has not changed in the Christian dispensation in which we live, except in one particular aspect — Jesus is now the avenue of prayer to God. Hear what Jesus himself said about this:

- "And whatever ye shall ask in **my name**..."
- "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in **my name**" (John 15:16).
- "...Whatever ye shall ask the Father in **my name**..." (John 16:23).
- "At that day ye shall ask in **my name**..." (John 16:26).

In Romans 1:8 the apostle Paul plainly declared, "...I thank my God **through Jesus Christ** for you all."

In Romans 7:25, he said, "I thank God **through Jesus Christ** our

Lord!"

In prayer, Jesus is our advocate, our intercessor. The apostle John said, "And if any man sin, we have an **advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1), and in Hebrews 7:25 we read, "...he ever liveth to make **intercession**..."

While the Scriptures convey that prayers are to be offered to the Father through Jesus, they never teach that prayers are to be offered to Jesus. Important Questions:

- Do the Scriptures teach that it is essential that prayers be offered to Jesus?
- Do the Scriptures teach that praying to Jesus accomplishes anything that praying to God would not?

The obvious answer to both of these questions is no. Beyond doubt, this confirms that praying to Jesus is unnecessary.

THROUGH WHOM WOULD PRAYERS TO JESUS BE OFFERED?

The fact that conflicting answers are given to this question, shows a

lack of clarity and certainty among those who hold this view. This illustrates another serious weakness in this position.

IS IT SCRIPTURAL TO PRAY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Some argue that since Jesus is Deity, prayers can be offered to Him. It must be noted, however, that the Holy Spirit is also Deity (Acts 5:3,4). So, to be consistent, those who condone praying to Jesus are compelled to also advocate praying to the Holy Spirit. This shows the slippery slope on which those who hold this view find themselves.

Indeed, prayer is a vitally important part of the Christian's life. Therefore, proper attention must be given to what the Scriptures reveal about this wonderful privilege, for the sincere Christian desires to engage in prayer as God has directed.

This article has been printed in a tract. Free copies are available in any quantity.

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(Matt. 7:21). To accept those whom the Lord does not accept amounts to high-handed treason! Brethren, once the banner of truth is lowered, the door is opened for other sinful practices!

Concerning baptism and the Lord's church, the Bible unequivocally states:

- There is only one baptism (Eph. 4:5).
- The one baptism is water baptism (Acts 10:47).
- New Testament baptism is immersion (Matt. 3:13-17; Acts 10:36-39).
- Baptism is "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).
- The one body is the church (Eph. 1:22-23).
- The Lord adds those who have been scripturally baptized to His called out body, the church (Acts 2:47).

Let it be clearly understood, Biblically speaking, God does NOT recognize (accept) any denomination as a part of His church! Since God does not accept any denomination, what makes brethren think God will accept denominational baptism?

One cannot be taught wrong and

baptized correctly (John 6:44-45)! Often, sincere people will hear the truth about baptism and assume they were scripturally baptized while in a denomination. Since God does not recognize or accept any denomination, how can being baptized in accordance to denominational teaching be according to the scriptures? The answer is, it cannot!

Observe, please, Acts 8:12, "*But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*" Since the kingdom and the church are one and the same (Matt. 16:18-19), it follows they were taught about the church — the one that Christ is the head of and wherein He adds the saved! Therefore, when one believes as they did in Acts 8, they will do exactly what they did and thus become a member of the Lord's church, the church of Christ!

Have you been scripturally baptized? Consider those who were baptized in Acts 19:1-5.

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THE DEVIL

According to 1 Peter 5:8, we have an adversary the devil, who desires to devour us. "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*" He is our enemy and wants to deceive and destroy us. He desires that we:

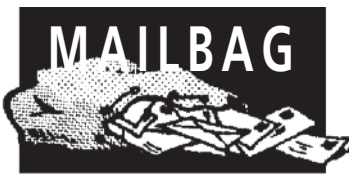
- Acknowledge, "There is no God" (Psalm 14:1)
- Attack the authority of God's Word (Col. 3:17)
- Approve of Sin (Rom. 1:21 32)
- Abuse God's Word (2 Peter 3:16)
- Avoid obeying the Gospel (2 Thess. 1:7 9)
- Abandon God (James 5:19 20)

As we understand his desires, it should help us to be more determined to overcome him. What can we do to do this?

- Acknowledge the reality of the devil (1 Peter 5:8)
- Abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22)
- Avoid the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:10 17)
- Adhere to God's Word (Psalm 119:11)
- Approach God in prayer (Matt. 26:41)
- Anchor our hope in God (James 4:7)

One must obey the Gospel and live a faithful and dedicated life. James declared, "*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*" (James 4:7).

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“Keep printing the Truth of the Bible. I look forward for each issue every month. May God bless you all as you keep printing STOP” ...**Lorene Wilson, Binger, OK.** “We appreciate your work for the Lord and will continue our support and prayers” ...**Name withheld by request, AL.** “Dear Brother in Christ, I so appreciated your article ‘*The Reliability of the Bible*’ (June/16). I wish you would expand that thought — ‘The Reliability of Different Versions.’ Young people seem to be intent on rejecting the ‘old’ King James Version (as they call it). Their attitude seems to be ‘any version will do just so long as we get the ‘general idea’ of what the Bible says.’ They do not have any appreciation for the fact that great Soldiers of the Cross confronted and defeated religious error through the avenue of debates using the King James Version. God Bless you in your work” ...**Don Layman.** Please put me on your mail list for your newspaper” ...**Kay Wooding, South Bend, IN.** “Please REMOVE me from the mailing list. Thank you” ...**Jeff Thrower, Baileyton, AL.** “I was wondering if I could please receive *Seek The Old Paths* in the mail. Thank you so much” ...**Emily McCabe, Mableton, GA.** “I have used your publication for some Bible class resource, as well as for my personal learning enhancement. My copies have come from within the congregation; but I would love to receive copies at my residence. Thanking you in advance, commending you for your wonderful work” ...**Robert L. Wright, Fayetteville, NC.** “Please take my name off your mailing list. Thank you for all the years for sending it” ...**Arthus Thrasher, Cookeville, TN.** “I would like to thank you for sending the *Seek The Old Paths* publication. I have enjoyed it and have grown from it. I now have the means to read it online. So, to save postage, you can take me off the mailing list. What you are doing is a great work for the Lord. I pray God’s blessing be upon this work and on you and the family of God who oversees this work. Thank you” ...**Alan J. Conkling, Bristow, OK.** “Sister Reba Simpson loves you paper very much. Please change her address. Thank you so much” ...**Adel, GA.** “I have just read your *Seek The Old Paths* booklet and I was very impressed by it. I would appreciate it if you could send a copy to the people listed below. I am enclosing a small contribution to help with mailing. Keep up the good work and may God bless you richly” ...**Stanley Henderson, Goshen, AL.** “Would like to receive *Seek The Old Paths*. Thank you” ...**Verla Franklin, Goodyear, AZ.** “I currently receive a paper copy of *Seek the Old Paths* and I very much appreciate getting it and learning from the writers since they provide Scriptural references to support what they write. Is there a way that I can read these online also? Thanks and keep up God’s work” ...**Donnie Meaders, WeWoka, OK** [NOTE: Yes. All current and back issues are posted online at: seektheoldpaths.com/stop.htm. You can print them and distribut them if you like.] “I would like to receive your publication. Thanks” ...**Tony Duncan, Centerville, TN.** “I just started reading this publication, and I am interested in receiving this publication. Member at Parkway Church of Christ” ...**Toressa D. Hightower, Lubbock, TX.** “I am currently receiving your publication in the mail. Please remove me from your mailing list” ...**Steve Christensen, Payson, AZ.** “Please add me to your monthly publication via email” ...**Adam Fowler.** “I am now preaching at the Lynn Haven Church of Christ in Lynn Haven, Florida. I would like to request, if possible, that you please send 10 copies of *Seek the Old Paths* to our congregation each month. We are a small congregation of about 20 members, and it

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