



Seek The Old Paths

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

Vol. 30, No. 1

January 2019

TROUBLEMAKERS IN THE CHURCH

Jerry Joseph

Let us be careful and cautious lest we become “trouble” in God’s sight.

First Kings 18:17-18, *“And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.”*

Elijah, the prophet of God, was accused of causing trouble in Israel. Ahab thought that Elijah was nothing but a troublemaker. Today, some are charged with causing “trouble” in the church when they are standing for the Truth. Who is the real “troublemaker” in the church?

It is the ONE who...

- **CONFORMS** to false doctrine, not the one who **CEASES** it. *“...Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...”* (Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 5:19-23).
- **COMMENDS** false doctrine, not the one who **CONDEMNS** it. *“...Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God...”* (Eph. 6:10-17).
- **CONDONES** false doctrine, not the one who **CRIES OUT** against it. *“...I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God”* (Acts 20:27-31).
- **CONTINUES** in false doctrine, not the one who **COMES OUT** of it. *“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good”* (Rom. 12:21).
- **COVERS UP** false doctrine, not the one who **CORRECTS** it. *“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”* (2 Tim. 4:2-4).
- **COMPLIMENTS** false doctrine, not the one who **CENSURES** it. *“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince [convict] the gainsayers...Whose mouths must be stopped...”* (Titus 1:9-11).
- Is **CONTENT** in false doctrine, not the one who **CONTENDS** against it. *“...Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”* (Jude 3).
- **CONTRIBUTES** to false doctrine, not the one who **CONFUTES** it. *“...Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them”* (Eph. 5:11).
- **CHEERS** false teachers, not the one who **CHECKS OUT** false teachers. *“...Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”* (1 John 4:1).
- **CHOOSES** to sit at the feet of false teachers, not the one who **CALLS** the names of false teachers. *“...Their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus”* (2 Tim. 2:17-18).
- **COMFORTS** the false teacher, not the one who **CAUTIONS** others about the false teacher. *“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves”* (Matt. 7:15).
- **CALLS** the false teacher sound, not the one who **CALLS** upon the false teacher to speak whereof he stands. *“...Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”* (1 Peter 3:15).

Elijah correctly directed Ahab to the real cause of the trouble in Israel. They had ceased following God’s Word and had commenced following godless ways. When we turn from God’s way, trouble will always be there because we will be in that godless way. Whenever we are confronted about spiritual things let us have the courage to do what the Bible commands and to call upon others to do the same.

Let us be careful and cautious lest we become “trouble” in God’s sight.

PO Box 1385
St. Peters, MO 63376



Editorial...

STANDING FOR THE TRUTH

Garland M. Robinson

It has never been popular to stand for the Truth. Those who do so are always in the minority. The Lord described it plainly in Matthew 7:13-14. *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”*

The vast and broad way of delusion and error is chosen by the masses every time. That is the way of least resistance — the way that is effortless and entertaining. The world loves it! At death, those who have chosen this way find out they’ve been deceived. The broad way leads to hurt, anguish and despair, not only after death, but along the way of life as well. A life of self-interest, a life of “me and mine,” leads no where but the pit of destruction and eternal loss and damnation. Jesus said it very plainly, *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned”* (Mark 16:16).

The life of a faithful Christian, a life directed by the inspired Word of God, a life of devotion and service to the creator of the universe is despised by the world because it exposes everything the world is and loves and stands for.

Notice the words of the apostle Paul. *“Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things)”* (Phil. 3:17-19). Paul exhorts the brethren (us) to “mark” those around us. To “mark” means to look toward, observe, call attention to. We are to “mark,” i.e. notice, inspect, examine, a person’s conduct and manner of life — we observe their actions. It is used in a good

sense in verse 17 and in a bad sense in verses 18 and 19. In verse 17 we look toward faithful brethren that we might follow and imitate their good example (cf. 1 Cor. 11:1). In verses 18-19 we look to the unfaithful, the wayward, the false teachers, the trouble makers, that we might refrain from and avoid their evil influence and example. The context determines whether our “marking” of others is so we might follow them or avoid them — imitate them or flee them.

Continuing with the text of Philippians 3 (verses 20, 21 and 4:1) tells why we “mark” and “avoid” the enemies of the cross of Christ. It’s because *“...our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved”* (Phil. 3:20-4:1).

In standing for the Truth, other passages also demand that we “mark” and “avoid” false doctrine and those who teach, practice and promote it. The Holy Spirit reveals the words of Romans 16:17-18, *“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”* Those who “cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine” of Christ are “enemies of the cross of Christ” (cf. Phil. 3:18-19 above). Oh, but many say “brother ___ is so loving and nice. We all just need to get along and not stir up trouble.” Loving the Truth and contending for the Faith is not stirring up trouble. The devil and his workers want us to believe it is, but it is one of his biggest

lies. Holding to God’s unchanging word is the most loving thing any of us could ever do. If we love our own soul and the souls of others, we will stay with God’s word and not turn from it “to the right hand or to the left” (cf. Deut. 5:27-33). The churches of Galatia were condemned for turning away from the pure and unadulterated Gospel of Christ unto a another “so-called” Gospel which was not the Gospel at all (cf. Gal. 1:6-9).

Error condemns our soul, truth saves it. But, the truth is not popular. People love themselves more than they love God. Personally, I hate controversy. But I don’t get to choose what I like. I have to put down my feelings and choose what God says. The same must be so with you.

Only the Truth (God’s word) brings harmony and peace — the peace *“which passeth all understanding”* (Phil. 4:7). Error disrupts harmony and peace. Jesus said himself, *“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother; and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes [shall be] they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it”* (Matt. 10:34-39). Jesus says families are divided when some obey God and others resist it to follow something else. To not obey God means one loves something more than God. What joyous peace would prevail if all in the family loved God above all else. To put the Lord first (Matt. 6:33), even above family, does not mean you forget and abandon your family, on the contrary, it means you love them and do them good because that is the Lord’s way (cf. John 13:35). Many times some in the family won’t accept the Lord’s way and division results because they don’t love God.

The Lord Jesus is the prince of peace (Isa. 9:6). The Truth is the Gospel of peace (Rom. 10:15). Yet Jesus said he did not come to send peace on earth (Matt. 10:34). So, what

did he mean that he did not come to bring peace? He is emphasizing the distinction between truth and error, between fact and fiction, between success and failure. He knew well that vast numbers of people would not choose to follow the path that leads to everlasting life. He is emphasizing the decision people must make. We either choose to serve ourselves or choose to serve God. We all must decide. He's pointing out that when one chooses righteousness (God's way), that deci-

sion will automatically put you in opposition to all who do not make that same choice.

The Gospel (the Truth) separates families and friends. But it's not really the Gospel that separates, it's actually the refusal to embrace the Gospel that separates. If everyone chose obedience to the Gospel, the world would have harmony and peace. But when people refuse the Gospel, there's chaos and turmoil. The way of Error is broad and wide. The way of Truth is

narrow and confined. Jesus contrasted these opposites in Matthew 7:13-14.

The choice is ours. We can love the Truth and stand for it or we can refuse the Truth and oppose it. We can work to bring peace or we can scatter and destroy. Jesus said it plainly, "*He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad*" (Matt. 12:30).

BUY THE TRUTH

Robert Stapleton, deceased

Proverbs 23:23, "*Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.*"

We are living in a world of buying and selling. Directly or indirectly, we are dependent upon it for our livelihood. In the text for this article, the commercial terms "buy" and "sell" are used to teach an important lesson relative to the importance of accepting the truth. With this article we want to consider what it means to "buy the truth and sell it not."

BUY THE TRUTH

Truth is the commodity we are urged to "buy." With that in mind, we ask the question that Pilate asked of Jesus, "*what is truth*" (John 18:38)? First, we see that it is the Word of God (John 17:17). Second, we see that Jesus is the manifestation of the Truth (John 14:6). Third, we take note that the Gospel with its commands, facts and promises is the truth (Acts 26:25; Gal. 2:14). Once we come to the understanding of what the truth is, we ask, why "buy" it? The answer to this question is simple, **it will save our soul** (James 1:21) and is needed in every effort to live the Christian life.

It is not sufficient to hear about it. It is not sufficient to hear and know about it. It is not sufficient to recommend it to others. It is not sufficient to intend to buy it. To be blessed by the truth, we must "buy" — accept it (Matt. 7:21-23; John 8:32; Heb. 5:9; James 1:22).

BUY ONLY THE TRUTH

We realize that not everything that is sold is as good as it is said to be. We must be careful so as to buy what is authentic and not a "knock-off." With that understood, we take note that not everything said to be the truth is the truth. Due to this, we need to examine what is said before we "buy" or accept it. We need to examine the doctrine that is taught to verify that it is from God (Acts 17:11; 1 Thess. 5:21). If the Bible teaches it, if it is in harmony with what the Bible teaches, then we should accept it. But if not, it should be rejected! We must discriminate between truth and error (John 5:39). Just about everything of importance has been counterfeited. When it comes to matters of religion, it is important to reject all error, no matter who is teaching it.

BUY ALL THE TRUTH

It is just as bad not to "buy" all the truth as to "buy" what is not truth. Whether we buy a car or a sewing machine we want all of it. It will do no good to have just part of it. When it comes to the Bible, some will accept part of the truth, but not all of it. Some accept the truth concerning the need for salvation, but want to leave out baptism. Others accept the truth when it comes to the need to worship, but want to leave out the Lord's supper or congregational singing.

BUY THE TRUTH REGARDLESS OF THE PRICE

We need to be willing to "pay" whatever the price is (Luke 14:26-33). We must be willing to "pay" the price of self-denial (Luke 9:23). Whatever is necessary, we must be willing to "pay" the price, even to the very point of death (Rev. 2:10).

BUY THE TRUTH NOW

Scripture teaches the urgency of obeying NOW (2 Cor. 6:2; James 4:14). Look at all the "cases of conversion" in the book of Acts. Notice that in each case they obeyed when they heard, not putting it off, realizing the urgency of prompt acceptance of God's Word. Too often we put it off until it is too late, and the "damage is done" (Acts 24:25; 26:28).

SELL IT NOT

When "purchasing" the truth, we need to do so as a permanent investment. It should be "purchased" as that which we intend not to part with. We do not "sell" it for livelihood, pleasure or anything else. We are cheated when we bargain it away, even if we do so for the whole world (Mark 8:36-37).

It is important to "buy the truth and sell it not" while we can. Tomorrow may be too late. For those of us who have already "bought" it, we must be careful to not bargain it away as we are drawn away after worldly desires (James 1:14).

THAT THOU MAYEST LIVE LONG UPON THE EARTH

Bill Boyd

A society where the children do not honor their parents is a society in decline, and cannot continue to prosper through many generations. Societies where children honor their parents are both beneficial and enduring.

A black hole is said to be a collapsed star that becomes so dense that its gravity becomes so great that it swallows all that comes near, and even light cannot escape its gravitational pull. Some become so enamored with a single idea that it becomes to them as a mental black hole to all their thoughts. The **renewed earth theory** appears to have become such a mental black hole to some of its advocates. Captured by the power of its appeal, they have pulled passage after passage out of context to serve as proof texts or support passages of their theory, and the spiritual light that should come from these passages is obscured.

I have previously written about how Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, *“The meek shall inherit the earth”* (Matt. 5:5), and how he taught us to pray, *“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”* (Matt. 6:10) (S.T.O.P., Sept. 2018, Vol. 29, No. 9). I followed this with an article about *The Peaceful Kingdom* of Isaiah 11 (S.T.O.P. Oct. 2018, Vol. 29, No. 10). I returned to the words of our Lord as he spoke of *“the regeneration”* in Matthew 19:28 (S.T.O.P., Nov. 2018, Vol. 30, No. 11), and another article discussing *“the times of restitution of all things”* spoken of Peter in Acts 3:21, (S.T.O.P. Dec. 2018, Vol. 31, No. 12). All of these articles remain available online at www.seektheoldpaths.com. In context, none of these passages give support to a renewed earth theory. Even if the theory were true, these passages do not teach it.

I have submitted these articles to renewed earth theory advocates requesting their criticism, but I have received very little from them about their substance. Some tell me that I have not correctly represented their particular views, and that may be so, for there seems to be almost as many theories of the renewed earth doctrines as their are advocates. Others

have chastened me for not dealing with other passages to which they appeal. Of course, I cannot deal with every passage in every article, and others are already dealing with their more commonly used proof texts. I am merely trying to gather up some of the scraps. I have been gratified by the response from some renewed earth advocates for telling me that the passages I have chosen are not the ones to which they, themselves, would appeal. Perhaps some of them should say they would *no longer* appeal to them, but I am not going to press that point as long as they are listening. We are making progress.

In this article, I turn our attention to Ephesians 6:1-3, which reads, *“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.”* I was surprised when a popular renewed earth advocate appealed to this passage. I am afraid his passion for his theory has become his mental black hole. I was tempted to let it pass, but it has surfaced from a second source, so in kindness I will address it here.

In the minds of these renewed earth advocates, they do not read, *“that thou mayest live long,”* but *“that thou mayest live eternally,”* and in their minds they do not read that this life is *“on the earth,”* but *“on a renewed earth.”* They think this is a promise of living in bliss for eternity on a renewed earth. There is a big problem with this; there is no such promise.

When I read this passage, I am reminded of a local news program I once watched of twin sisters who were celebrating their one hundredth birthdays together in the same nursing home. When they were asked to what they attributed their long lives they looked at each other, and one of them said, *“We obeyed our parents.”* It was so sweet, and precious, and innocent

that I laughed aloud with delight and love for them. This is a common misunderstanding of this passage. It is true that many young people would have lived much longer if they had obeyed their parents, but that is not what this passage is teaching.

Paul is referring to the fourth commandment of the ten given to Israel in Exodus 20:1-17. It is the first of the ten with a promise. The commandment and the promise are in the same verse; *“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee”* (Exodus 20:12). Moses was leading the children of Israel to the land God had promised them through Abraham and their fathers. Their ability to sustain themselves in this land would come through their keeping of God’s commandments, including the one to honor their fathers and their mothers. Solomon sadly wrote, *“There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother”* (Prov. 30:11). A society where the children do not honor their parents is a society in decline, and cannot continue to prosper through many generations. What Moses calls *“the land”* Paul calls *“the earth.”* Paul is not teaching that the church will inherit the land God promised to Israel, neither is he teaching that obedient children would someday live forever on a renewed earth. Paul is reminding his brethren in Ephesus of the fundamental importance of the commandment to honor our parents, and making a general application of the principle. Societies where children honor their parents are both beneficial and enduring. Paul is applying a principle associated with the land promise much the same as our Lord had done in Matthew 5:5 when he said, *“The meek shall inherit the earth.”* Neither passage affirms a renewed earth.

wmhboyd@aol.com
647 Finger Bluff Road
Morrison, TN 37357

DANGERS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS #7 (REVISED STANDARD VERSION)

Randy Kea

Before I specify some erroneous translations of the RSV, it is a good place to note two important (often overlooked) points about modern translations.

1. *Transmission of the text (preservation).* Modern translations are corrupt because of faulty presuppositions of textual critics. Modern textual critics treat the Bible as any other book. They don't believe in *verbal inspiration* and they certainly don't believe in *verbal preservation*. In other words, they don't hold to what the Bible claims for itself. Bible words are *inspired* (1 Cor. 2:13). Bible words are *preserved* (Matt. 24:35). Westcott and Hort (two heretics from the church of England in 1881 who published a Greek text rejecting the Textus Receptus) did not believe in *verbal inspiration or verbal preservation*; therefore had no problem in changing the text (Textus Receptus — King James Version) in over 5,600 places involving almost 10,000 words. The modern Nestle/Aland Greek Text is essentially the Westcott/Hort text (this is the Greek text that underlies modern translations). Dr. Kurt Aland was the principal editor of the Nestle/Aland Greek text. It can be demonstrated from books he wrote that he denies the verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture. Textual critics who do not believe in *verbal inspiration or verbal preservation* will have no problem in tampering with the text (cf. Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18-19).

2. *Translation of the Text.* Modern Translations are corrupt also because of faulty presuppositions of the translators. By surveying the views of modern translators concerning *verbal inspiration* and *verbal preservation* one is not surprised that they would produce translations saturated with doctrinal error. For example, Harry Orlinsky, an unbelieving Jew who does not believe that Jesus is the Christ, is a prominent translator of the RSV (see Isaiah 7:14, "young woman" instead of "virgin"). Another example, Edward Palmer (a rank Calvinist), was the executive secretary of the NIV translating team (consider the repeated mistranslation "sinful nature" instead of "flesh"). No wonder the

RSV and the NIV are so corrupt.

"New translations are no better than the new theology of the translators" (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., *A Review of the New Versions*, p.298). Brother Wallace, I believe, foresaw the immensity and pervasiveness of the modern translation issues among churches of Christ.

Let us now point out several attacks on the deity, sonship, and virgin birth of Christ by the Revised Standard Version (RSV).

- 1) By removing "firstborn" from Matthew 1:25.
- 2) By removing "God" from First Timothy 3:16.
- 3) By changing "only begotten" to "only son" in John 1:14, 3:16, etc.
- 4) By changing "Joseph and his mother" to "his father and his mother" in Luke 2:33.
- 5) By changing Mary's statement "I know not a man" to "I have no husband" in Luke 1:34.
- 6) And perhaps the most infamous, by changing "virgin" to "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14.

To further demonstrate the loose, liberal, and irreverent handling of the text of the Bible, I have in my possession a copy of the Revised Standard Version (copyright 1946) that at the end of Mark's account of the Gospel takes the last 12 verses of Mark 16 (vs.9-20) and relegates them to a mere footnote, and then in a later edition puts them back into the text with only a marginal note comment. Well, should they be in the text of the Bible or not?! It would seem these so-called translators can't make up their mind. The ending of Mark has been vindicated as scripture by a legion of competent Bible-believing scholars and critics.

In addition, please consider carefully (once again, as in so many other modern versions) the Revised Standard Version, in Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15, make Paul and Jesus contradict each other. Also, note the phrase "new world" as a translation of "regeneration" making a premillennial slant in Matthew 19:28.

Finally, we list First Corinthians 2:14 which says in the RSV, "The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them." The KJV says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." Paul, by inspiration, is contrasting "inspired men" with "uninspired men," not Christians and non-Christians. Also, there is a big difference between knowing something and understanding something. We do not naturally know the "things of God;" they must be revealed to us through inspired men. See verses 9-13.

1515 N 30th Ave.
Humboldt, TN 38343

CONTRIBUTIONS

Anonymous	\$50
Midway C/C, Murfreesboro, TN	\$200
Jimmy & Monika Coates	\$25
Anonymous	\$80
Broadway C/C, Timberville, VA	\$100
Linden & Hilda Pierce	\$100
Jean Ware.....	\$25
Anonymous	\$50
Wood C/C, Woodbury, TN	\$50
James & Betty Hendrix	\$100
Anonymous	\$25
Anonymous	\$50
Marion & Linda Schow	\$400
Anonymous	\$25
Charles D. Wilson	\$10
Bradford C/C, Bradford, TN.....	\$50
Neely's Bend C/C, Madison, TN.....	\$125
Wood C/C, Woodbury, TN	\$50
Anonymous	\$1,000
Gary & Luella Schow	\$200
Donald E. Layman	\$100
James & Barbara Austin	\$25
Anonymous	\$100
Jo Ann D. Hudson.....	\$100
Jean Ware.....	\$25
Baker C/C, Baker, FL	\$25
Del Brantley.....	\$50
Arlington C/C, McMinnville, TN	\$50
Anonymous	\$25

Beginning Balance	\$6,360.97
Contributions.....	\$3,215.00
Debits	
Postage	\$2,162.81
Paper	\$937.50
Supplies.....	\$43.06
Repairs.....	\$110.26
Ending Balance	\$6,322.34

MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?

Victor M. Eskew

As Jesus was nailed on the cross of Calvary, He spoke seven sayings.

- 1) "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)
- 2) "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43)
- 3) "Woman, behold thy son!...Behold thy mother!" (John 19:26-27)
- 4) "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46)
- 5) "I thirst." (John 19:28)
- 6) "It is finished." (John 19:30)
- 7) "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." (Luke 23:46)

These seven sayings are powerful and touching. Each one contains so much meaning. One of them has been extremely difficult for commentators to truly define. This saying is recorded by Matthew and Mark. Matthew's Gospel records the words as follows: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" (Matt. 27:46). Mark's Gospel is very similar. "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" (Mark 15:34).

The words are difficult as one looks on both sides of the coin. First, would God the Father ever forsake the Christ? Surely not! Jesus had been faithful to His heavenly Father in all things (John 8:29). Even on the cross, He was fulfilling the Father's will (Matt. 26:39). God would never forsake a disciple who was doing His will. He would always be present with him to the very end. This was especially true of that disciple who was His only begotten Son.

Second, would Jesus ever really believe that God the Father had forsaken Him? Wouldn't such a statement manifest a lack of trust in the Father? Would the Son of God ever really believe that His Father had forsaken Him, even for a minute? Surely

not! Earlier in His ministry Jesus had said: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). Jesus knew God was always with Him. He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. He prayed on the cross. He knew His heavenly Father was near.

Some have tried to explain the statement relative to the act of atonement. Jesus was offered as a sin offering for mankind. The sins of the world were placed upon the Christ while hanging on the tree. Some will point to 2 Corinthians 5:21 as a proof-text. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin..." The explanation goes like this: "When the sins of the world were placed upon Jesus, the heavenly Father turned His face from Him. In essence, He forsook Him because of the sins that were upon Him." This is a comforting interpretation, but it still has God forsaking His faithful servant in a time of need.

Recently, this writer heard another interpretation placed upon the words: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This interpretation seems to be one of the best explanations of these words. Jesus appeared to be forsaken by God as he hung on the cross. The Jews laughed and mocked Him wondering where His God was now (Matt. 27:43). In the midst of their disparaging remarks, Jesus cries out with this puzzling statement. This declaration, however, was very familiar to the Jews who were versed in the Law of Moses. They had read it numerous times. It is a quote from one of their heroes, King David. These words open one of David's psalms, Psalm 22. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring."

In essence, Jesus was not claiming to be forsaken by God. He was pointing the unbelieving Jews to a very familiar Psalm. This Psalm was not just the message of a forsaken king of old. The words of this Psalm are messianic in nature. Listen to some of the words that point the Jews to the Christ. "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him de-

liver him, seeing he delighted in thee" (vs.7-8). "Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion" (vs.12-13). "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of the earth" (vs.14-15). "...They have pierced my hands and my feet" (v.16). "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (v.18).

Jesus was trying to get the Jews to see that He was the fulfillment of this majestic Messianic Psalm. They should have been able to see that the events of that very day were being fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Rather than reject Jesus as a troublemaker, they should have accepted Him as the Messiah long predicted by the prophets. Their hearts, however, were too hard. They failed to grasp the significance of His words that day. The Jews, for the most part, continued to reject the Christ and rebel against God.

Let's summarize what we believe to be the meaning of the words: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" They were a cry of Jesus to the scornful Jews to remember Psalm 22, a Messianic psalm. If they had been honest, they would have immediately seen the fulfillment of David's prophecy. They would have come to understand that Jesus was truly the Christ the Son of the living God. This interpretation makes extremely good sense. God does not forsake the Christ. Jesus does not believe that God has forsaken Him. He is merely trying to get the Jews to see that He is the fulfillment of the Scriptures. It was He who had told them in the past: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39).

13695 Covington Creek Dr.
Jacksonville, FL 32224

FACE TO FACE WITH THE ENEMY

Marvin L. Weir

We live in a sin-sick and evil world where if righteousness and godliness is to be our course of action, it is imperative we choose how to behave when we are face to face with wicked men. The tentacles and influences of unrighteousness seem to become more powerful and prevalent with the passing of every year. Let us learn several principles from the Psalmist that will serve us well in overcoming Satan's snares in this world.

May we benefit and grow stronger from meditating upon the principle of:

Trusting. *"O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust"* (Psa. 7:1a). The Bible Knowledge Commentary notes that "David confidently prayed for deliverance from his enemies who were about to tear him to pieces like a lion. He knew that if God did not rescue him, no one could."

As David did, we today who seek to live righteously must possess **strong confidence** in God. A child of God is helpless when he does not take *"up the shield of faith"* in order to *"be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil (one)"* (Eph. 6:16). May we be persuaded that *"they that trust in Jehovah are as mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth for ever"* (Psa. 125:1).

Praying. *"Save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me"* (Psa. 7:1b). David knew that God was quite capable in His righteous anger of coming to his defense against his enemies (Psa. 7:6). Christians must learn that it is not military might nor man's wisdom that will prevail against the devil and his helpers. As is forthrightly declared in the inspired Word, *"The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed"* (Psa. 103:6). God will not forget the trials of His servants, and He will indeed act in a timely manner of His choosing!

Searching. *"O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands; If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy)..."* (Psa. 7:3-4). The one who seeks to be acceptable to God will

search his heart to make sure sin is not the cause of Jehovah's disfavor. We must heed Paul's admonition to the Corinthians: *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates"* (2 Cor. 13:5)? May we understand as did David, *"If [we] regard iniquity in [our hearts], the Lord will not hear"* (Psa. 66:18)!

Declaring. All people, as did David, must realize that *"The LORD shall judge the people..."* (Psa. 7:8a). It is not world leaders/rulers that will be our judge in that Day. Thus, if we profess to be followers of Christ, let us not fear to speak out and forthrightly declare His sovereignty and righteousness. Many cower in terror and fail to boldly proclaim a *"thus saith the Lord"* because they fear retaliation from the immoral and spineless politically correct crowd. Let those who value their souls remember that God will reward us according to our righteousness and the cleanness of our hands (Psa. 18:20)!

Confessing. The Psalmist exclaims, *"My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart"* (Psa. 7:10). But who has God promised to save? Sin is an enemy that must be faced and not ignored. Too many simply sweep sin under the proverbial carpet and the devil remains in the driver's seat. It does indeed matter as to whether one is striving to be *"upright in heart."*

The Bible teaches that Christians must be willing to **confess** and **repent** [turn from] their sinful behavior. The Scriptures implore, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:8-9).

Warning. *"God is a righteous judge, yea, a God that hath indignation every day. If a man turn not, he will whet his sword; He hath bent his bow, and made it ready"* (Psa. 7:11-12). The devil loves nothing more than for the righteous to become intimidated by the unrighteous! Edmund Burke captured this thought really

well in saying, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

People who honor, respect, and fear God err greatly when they refuse to boldly speak out against the forces of evil. Truth matters! The apostle Paul understood this and thus ask the Galatians, *"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth"* (Gal. 4:16)?

The threatening and scorn of the unrighteous must never keep the faithful from sounding forth the warning regarding abominable conduct. The Lord's church on many occasions has remained silent while the devil's false and soul-damning doctrine has been trumpeted on every occasion in today's society. Christians must not forget the words of God's mouthpiece of old: *"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked [man] shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul"* (Ezek. 3:18-19). One not willing to bear fruit for the Lord needs to know that the axe lieth at the root of all fruitless trees (Matt. 3:10). So, beware of false prophets who dress in sheep's clothing but are nothing but ravening wolves seeking to devour souls (Matt. 7:15)!

Praising. *"I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high"* (Psa. 7:17). A heart filled with gratitude and a mind that is determined to praise God for His care, concern, and wonderful blessings is not nearly as likely to be seduced by the sins of the world and the devil's servants who *"fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness"* (2 Cor. 11:15)!

484 CR 44700
Blossom, TX 75416

SEND YOUR
CHANGE OF ADDRESS



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

"I got a Sept/16 issue of STOP and would like to receive it regularly" ...**Brenda Garlington, North Las Vegas, NV.** "Thank you for STOP. I look forward to receiving and reading it every month. God bless all of you" ...**Marian Tillman, Fresno, CA.** "We are working with the congregation located in Willis, Texas, made up mostly of senior citizens. We believe they would benefit from receiving printed copies of *Seek The Old Paths*. If possible, could you please send a bundle of 30 copies each month?" ...**Hudson family, Willis, TX.** "Thanks for all the things you do" ...**Mary Welch, Johnson City, TN.** "Please mail the paper to me" ...**Ronnie McDaniel, Columbus, MS.** "I appreciate your monthly publication. You stick to God's word, so needed in today's world. Thanks so much" ...**Barbara Reedy, Union City, TN.** "Please remove my name from your mailing list. Thank you" ...**Jewell Ewart, West Helena, AR.** "Please remove this address from your distribution list of *Seek The Old Paths*." We do not wish to receive this publication. Thank you" ...**FL.** "Please accept this contribution from our congregation to be used for the publication and mailing of STOP. We appreciate this fine truthful paper and our members find it very informative. Thank you" ...**Smyrna C/C, Culleoka, TN.** "Esta Dawson has passed away" ...**Westminster, CA.** "I really enjoy your *truthful* articles. I am really concerned how some of our congregations are going. Thanks" ...**Henderson, TN.** "Thanks for putting our congregation on your mailing list. We hope that the enclosed check will help defray some of the printing and mailing costs of STOP. Thanks" ...**Robert W. Mayo, II, Mexico Road C/C, Edenton, NC.** "Thank you and God bless" ...**Lozell Milligan, Corinth, MS.** "Thank you for your interest and help. This is a great publication and a godly work. Please make sure we continue to get *Seek The Old Paths* sent to us as we value and look forward to receiving it each month" ...**M/M Timothy Lawrence, Lebanon, TN.** "Please remove me from your mailing list" ...**Tom Seliga, Livingston, TX.** "Please add us to your mailing list. Thank you" ...**M/M Joey Dinsmore, Pueblo, CO.** "We really enjoy the articles in *Seek The Old Paths*. Please subscribe me" ...**Ted Brooks, Madison, FL.** "May the Lord bless and keep you" ...**Romona Allums, Carthage, TX.** "Keep up the good work" ...**St. Clair C/C, St. Clair, MI.** "Thank you for your sound publication which is a blessing to us. The articles are excellent and true to the book. God bless!" ...**Broadway C/C, Rockford, IL.** "Keep up the good work of STOP. Greatly appreciated" ...**Dorcas McLeod, Lucedale, MS.** "Jim Kemp has passed away" ...**Conway, AR.** "Really enjoy STOP. Keep the faith" ...**Doug English, Belmont, MS.** "Please take Margaret Smith off the mailing list" ...**Lebanon, TN.** "We enjoy your paper and appreciate your stand for the truth" ...**Finley Morgan, Overbrook, OK.** "Thank you. God Bless you and your work" ...**Apache, OK.** "Thanks for making the change of address so I will continue getting your publication" ...**Michael Winborn, Cross City, FL.** "Thank you" ...**Cindy Callett, Martinsburg, WV.** "Enjoy reading the Old Paths. Thanks very much" ...**Herbert Marlin, Thompson Station, TN.** "My husband and I have received *Seek The Old Paths* for many years. We appreciate the stand for Truth so much! Please add these names to your mailing list" ...**Beverly Barnett, Hiram, GA.** "Please remove us from your mailing list. Thank you" ...**Oxford Church of Christ, Oxford, AL.** "Stop sending me your bulletin" ...**Brett White, Anchorage, AK.** "Keep preaching God's truth. Heaven and earth will pass away but my words shall not pass away (Matt. 24:35). I pray souls keep donating to help printing God's Truth and mailing. God's blessing to you" ...**Lorene Wilson, Binger, OK.** "Thanks for the articles on Modern Translations. Especially the one on the NIV. To my knowledge, false teachers helped write the NIV. Who gave man the right to change God's Word? The Devil is at work and the brotherhood is

following along. May God help us to wake up and follow the Bible" ...**Charlie Rector, Dayton, TN.** "Thanks" ...**Paul & Gwenette Spears, Ruston, LA.** "Thanks for printing my article 'Worship God's Way' in the Aug/18 issue of STOP. I also want to comment on Roger Campbell's article 'See You In Hell.' Brother Campbell, I agree with you 100%. Hell is not emphasized in our day and age as much as it should be. Hell was created for three groups. 1) Satan and his angels. 2) Those who never obey the Gospel and 3) Those who once obeyed the Gospel but turned from the truth to error, compromised with the world, and died unrepentant. They never repented and prayed as Paul once instructed Simon the magician, who fell into sin and desired forgiveness and restoration. This flippant attitude towards Hell does not surprise me in the least. Many, even so called Christians, think it is funny to lie, cheat and steal. They gloat over their ill-gotten gains, destroyed the reputations and careers of innocent people and minimize stealing to be a joke or prank. Those in Hell are never sorry for their wrongs. Even in torment unending, they still think they were right to lie, cheat and steal. Three generations among my relatives are born liars. Two generations have broken marriages and the third generation is going that same way. All three were spoiled, never had the rod of correction used on them when needed. The Bible also says 'thou shall beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from Hell.' Parents who neglect to teach their children right from wrong, condoning such ungodly acts, and failing to use the rod when needed, are raising their children for eternal perdition" ...**Leslie Putman, Eldorado, AR.** "Would you please send me *Seek The Old Paths*? I've been passing them around. Pray you can keep up the good work" ...**Billie Harper, Visalia, CA.**

Seek The Old Paths is a monthly publication of the **Leoni Church of Christ** and is under the oversight of its elders. It is FREE, being supported by the contributions of both individuals and congregations. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3, 2 Tim. 4:2, Titus 1:13, Titus 2:1 and 2 Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless it is marked "not for publication." The church building is located at: 6818 McMinnville Hwy, Woodbury, TN 37190.

Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** – seektheoldpaths.com

LEONI CHURCH OF CHRIST
PO BOX 7506
MCMINNVILLE, TN 37111
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Woodbury, TN
Permit No. 17