

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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HOW CAN WE KNOW?

Archie L. Duty

If God gives us directions to follow in the accomplishment of His will on any matter, we are to execute that action exactly as He directs without adding to or subtracting from the action.

As individuals and as the church (body of Christ), we are daily made aware of the many choices that must be made in choosing the way we will travel. What will be our guide? How can we know if the way we are traveling will lead us ultimately to that eternal home with our loving Father and the redeemed of all the ages?

Jesus himself identified the two ways every one must choose between and where each of them leads. *"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"* (Matt. 7:13-14). It would seem to naturally follow that a person would desire to enter in at the strait and narrow way leading to life everlasting. If so, the question still remains, what will be our guide? Our own ingenuity? Are we clever enough to guide our own footsteps? Before we answer, "Yes, I can do that." Let us note that familiar Scripture spoken by the writer of Proverbs, *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Prov. 14:12).

The narrow way must be walked with much care and watchfulness

because it is constricted by many difficulties and troubles of life. If we therefore have the tendency to go our own way, the narrow way may well be missed. Remember Moses, the man chosen by God to lead His people out of bondage? As long as Moses followed God's instructions, all went well, at least until the day came when Moses substituted his own way in place of the way commanded by God. They were in Kadesh and there was no water for the congregation. The children of Israel, even the whole congregation gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. Moses and Aaron went unto the door of the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them. The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, *"Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink"* (Numbers 20:7,8). What was the reaction of Moses? And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, *"Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?"* And Moses lifted up his hand,

and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also (Numbers 20:10,11). Moses took credit for bringing forth water instead of giving honor to God and smote the rock rather than speaking to it as God had instructed. As a result God rendered this verdict: *"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them"* (Numbers 20:12).

It is plain to see. There is only one way. It is a narrow way, to be sure, but it is God's way. We cannot substitute our own way — no matter how good and practical our way may seem to be. When God gives us the way to go, any other way is excluded. Another simple example is the command given to Noah. *"Make thee an ark of gopher wood, rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch"* (Gen. 6:14). What was the reaction of Noah? Noah went the way commanded by God. *"Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him,*

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How Can We Know?...



Guest Editorial

RAISING FUNDS FOR THE LORD'S WORK

Roger D. Campbell

Some that identify themselves as churches of Christ are now following the course of the denominations and have their own car washes and fund-raising meals to help finance the work of the church.

“Do you do any fund raisers with your youth group?” That is the exact question that a young woman recently asked me over the telephone. She had called the church building in an effort to promote a product, or products, that her group was selling. We frequently receive such phone calls, as well as advertisements in the mail, which indicate that there are lots of companies or organizations out there that are trying to be “helpful.” They want to assist “churches” in raising money for their projects. Everything from selling T-shirts, pizza, and Bibles, is promoted as a way for religious groups to raise money.

It is an undeniable fact that the work of the Lord Jesus requires money. Money is needed to pay for Bibles, buy grape juice for the Lord’s supper, support the preaching of the Gospel, and a multitude of other matters. We would be silly to think that the church can get by just fine without any incoming funds. God knows that the church needs money in order to carry out its activities. That is why He included first day of the week contributions as a part of the worship of His saints (I Cor. 16:2).

Sometimes it is necessary to make a special effort to raise funds for a special cause. We often call it “fund-raising.” For instance, those Christians that go overseas to teach the Gospel usually have to raise support for their work. Some members of the church are able to finance their own evangelistic activities, but this is the exception and not the rule. The Bible teaches that those who “preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (I

Cor. 9:14). That simply means that faithful Gospel preachers are worthy of support. In 1982, in an effort to raise funds for our projected work in Taiwan, Republic of China, I visited or spoke at 53 congregations in less than six months. One thing never entered our mind when it came to raising funds for our work: not once did we consider asking a congregation to put on a bake sale, car wash, donkey basketball game, or any other such project in order to raise funds to help support us.

In the New Testament, we read about the first-century church raising funds for its work. How did it do so? Once, the prophets of God predicted that there was going to be a famine. How did the church in Antioch of Syria respond? *“Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea”* (Acts 11:29).

We also read that Paul later went among the Gentile churches in order to collect *“a certain contribution for the poor among the saints”* that were in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26, ASV). How did he raise those funds? Hear the Bible’s answer: *“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay be him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come”* (I Cor. 16:1-2). The work of the first century church was funded by contributions from its members. There is no New Testament example of churches having special fund-raisers like bake sales, car washes, etc. There is no New Testament command to do such, there is

no implication that such was/may be done, and there is no direct statement about such fund-raising projects. That simply means that there is no authority in the Bible for the Lord’s church to use such means to raise funds for His work.

I grew up in a denomination. The country group of which I was a member had different types of annual fund-raisers. The “adult class” had an annual “chicken supper.” The public was invited to come and eat. Those that ate had to pay for their meal and the collected funds were used for the activities of the denomination. It was, indeed, a money-making project. And, our youth group (called “MYF” for “Methodist Youth Fellowship”) had its annual combination chili supper, bake sale and auction. All of these means brought in healthy amounts of money.

There was a time when there was a visible distinction between churches of Christ and denominational bodies. One of the clear-cut differences was that while denominations often employed bake sales, car washes, and other types of special activities to raise funds, the churches of Christ refused to use such man-imagined methods, pointing out that such activities are without scriptural authority. Sadly, things are different now. Yes, the denominations still have their fund-raising sales, etc. What has changed? Some that identify themselves as churches of Christ are now following the course of the denominations and have their own car washes and fund-raising meals to help finance the work of the church.

When I left the denominational world nearly three decades ago, I never thought I would see the day when its man-made teaching and practices would infiltrate the Lord’s church. To me, it is a great tragedy that the influence of denominations is being seen more and more in the church of our Lord. The Lord has a prescribed way of raising funds for His work. It is via the free-will contributions that His children are commanded to make on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1-2). That is the Bible way. Let us stick with it and stay away from all unauthorized fund-raising activities.

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so did he” (Gen. 6:22). As a faithful follower of God, Noah would not use any other wood in the place of gopher wood. He may have wanted to, but he loved God so much he would not question His command in any way. It makes you wonder why anyone would question God’s way in any regard. Surely God who created the heavens and the earth knows what is best. When He tells us the way to go, will we be like Moses and assert our own will or Noah and humbly and lovingly follow God?

Can anyone assume that the wall of Jericho would have fallen down flat had not Joshua and his men of war followed the instructions of the Lord exactly (Joshua 6)? Would they be justified in going around the city once? And instead of doing this for six days as commanded by the Lord, decide to do it only for five days? After all, they might have reasoned, “We need a day of rest before we go around seven times on the seventh day.” We can easily resolve the error in such reasoning. The wall fell down because they followed the way the Lord had ordained without exception.

Many are the accounts given in the word of God concerning the actions ordained by God. The final requirement was this: *“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book”* (Rev. 22:18-19).

From these accounts, we can draw this conclusion. If God gives us directions to follow in the accomplishment of His will on any matter, we are to execute that action exactly as He directs without adding to or subtracting from the action. In other words, when God gives us a specific way to accomplish His will, any other specific way (ordained by man) would be excluded and would cause a person to leave the narrow pathway described above. This is

sometimes referred to as the “Law of Exclusion.”

James made it clear that a person cannot walk both pathways at the same time. He said, *“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways”* (James 1:8). Later in the same chapter, he identified the only path to follow: *“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed”* (James 1:25).

Our hearts are saddened when we see the many departures from New Testament doctrine taken by some who would try to draw people away from the narrow way. Just after Jesus spoke concerning the narrow and broad ways, He made the following pronouncement: *“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves”* (Matt. 7:15).

Let me point out some of the more prevailing departures currently popular among churches referring to themselves as “Churches of Christ.” First, there is the matter of the addition of **instrumental music** to the worship service. Nowhere are instruments of music authorized in New Testament Scripture. All Scriptures referring to making music always refers to singing: *“What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will **sing** with the spirit, and I will **sing** with the understanding also”* (I Cor. 14:15). *“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* (Eph. 5:19). *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** with grace in your hearts to the Lord”* (Col. 3:16). *“Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I **sing** praise unto thee”* (Heb. 2:12).

Since God has given the way we are to “make music,” any other way (devised by man) would necessarily be excluded and would be an addition to the word of God and therefore prohibited.

Another prevailing example of a departure from God’s way is the matter of **the role of women during worship services**. Some congrega-

tions, referring to themselves as churches of Christ, are allowing women to lead in prayers, wait on the Lord’s table, and assume other leading roles. Again, we turn to the word of God for guidance: *“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law”* (I Cor. 14:34). *“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence”* (I Tim. 2:11-12). Since God has denied leading roles to women and has given them to men, women are excluded from participating in these roles.

We could go on with other examples but we should all be encouraged to examine all our actions in the light of the inspired word of God. The answers are there for all to read and apply to our lives so we can enter in at the strait gate and travel the narrow way, which leadeth unto life.

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IS THERE A PATTERN?

Steven Haguewood

There are those who would suggest there is no pattern in God's word. These men claim the word of God is more like a collection of "Love Letters" with some sort of "centrifugal force" emanating from one central point. They say the books of the Bible are given no more weight than a letter written by a mother to a child at camp. There is some good advice that the child would do well to follow, but very little if any of it is meant for correction or absolute adherence. It was only written to make the child feel good and help him on his way.

It was love that spurred the penning of the Gospel. In that sense they are "Love Letters." But beyond simple good advice, they have a correcting and hard aspect that lets the wanderer know exactly where he stands (outside of Christ and his salvation). It is a mistake to believe that only one section of the Gospel has true meaning. To place one section of Scripture above another is to diminish the importance of what God communicated to man. The idea that one part is the absolute center and forms a sort of centrifugal force from it does not fit the teaching of God's word. God's word is prescriptive in nature, is perfect, and presents a definite pattern for the life of the Christian.

The cross of Christ is essential in order for everything else to matter. Without Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, nothing else would have meaning. But since His blood was shed for us, everything else does have meaning. The reason for its meaning does not diminish the meaning.

Paul says in I Corinthians 2:2 that he came claiming to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. Paul, the man who gave the majority of teaching that some claim is the farthest from the "inner-shell" of Christianity, says that he proclaimed to the Corinthians nothing else but Jesus Christ crucified. His teaching was, in essence, the Gospel of Christ, the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). In fact, we learn also from Paul that "ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is

profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17). Some say that this is reference only to the Old Testament, but Peter claims that what Paul wrote was Scripture (II Peter 3:15-16). Paul plainly states that ALL scripture is inspired by God and necessary to the equipping of the saints for every good work. If all Scripture is inspired and Peter calls Paul's writing Scripture, then it follows that Paul's work is inspired. If his work is inspired Scripture, then it is essential for the equipping of the saints unto every good work. To say that only some of it is essential is to violate the statements made by Paul and Peter concerning the role and identity of Scripture, thereby denying their inspiration and nullifying the Bible. Paul's writings are necessary to the Christian, all of them. They are the Gospel, God's power to save the world.

One issue that might be swept under the rug, because it's not central to the cross, is *marriage, divorce, and remarriage*. Jesus teaches on the issue, but not in connection with the cross (Matt. 5 & 19). This would be considered an "outer shell" doctrine (with some) with little substantial force as we leave the gravity of the cross. But the man who is laboring over his decision, contemplating his future with his wife, finds no comfort in knowing that he is in an "outer shell." He wants to know what to do. Does he have more than "good advice" to guide him?

Jesus teaches that the only reason for divorce is fornication (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). Paul goes on in I Corinthians 7 to give more instructions concerning the lives that husbands and wives must have together. In Ephesians 5 he gives the appropriate roles for each person in the family in order for the family to please God. The man has direct guidance from God in how to conduct himself within his family and when considering attempts to dissolve that family. He is not free without the

breaking of the sanctity of the union by one party. Then only one is free, the one who did not commit fornication. To act outside of this teaching is sin. Not because man says it, but because God said it in his holy word.

The use of *instrumental music* is dismissed as not core. But then the example of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-2) goes for nothing.

The example of the *Lord's supper* being observed on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) means nothing since it is not central to the cross.

Baptism has less meaning because it is an act instituted by the apostles after the crucifixion.

These issues, and many more, take less force with "them" because "they" claim they are not a part of the Gospel. Yet each directly affects our relationship with God. The teaching of God cannot be pushed aside or changed by anyone and still be God's teaching (Gal. 1:6-10).

The fact is, *there is a pattern in the New Testament*. The overall theme of the Bible is the salvation of man through Jesus Christ. There were many things that happened in the Old Testament that were essential for the completion of God's plan. Man needed to fall away, which we did in the Garden of Eden. Man needed to realize the need for salvation which is the overall teaching of the prophets. Man needed to realize that he could not come to that salvation on his own which is the specific teaching of Isaiah. So God, in the Old Testament, shows that man cannot make it without help.

While we were yet sinners, God sent His only begotten son to die for us and save us. God needed to give His word to tell man how to reach that salvation. That is what the New Testament is, God's word telling man how to reach salvation. Each beautiful word was breathed by God and given through the pen of inspired writers. It sets a "mold" into which we must place our lives. In other words, it gives the pattern for the Christian life.

It is interesting that this discussion has come up in modern times. It

was Clement of Alexandria (153-217) who wrote a series of books titled *Hypotyposes* which is derived from the Greek word *hupotuposis* which means an example or pattern. He was able to see the pattern established in the New Testament by inspired writers just 50 to 100 years before him. In the early years of Christianity, Clement saw the pattern set forth in the New Testament.

Those who say there is no pattern or prescriptive nature to the Scriptures do not deny that one must believe in Christ in order to inherit eternal life. Yet this is a contradiction to the assertion that the Bible is not prescriptive or patternistic. When one claims no prescriptive nature and then says that one must comply with a single point, that one has discredited his own belief. When one prescriptive point is taken to be more important than another, then Paul's statement about "all scripture" being inspired has been questioned and Peter's statement that those who distort any Scripture does so to his own destruction, is denied. Therefore, Christians must be wary of placing weight on one passage over another. To allow one to be counted less important is to allow its distortion. To stand by, consenting to distortion by another, is to participate with that distortion (II John 10-11) and thereby bring on your own destruction (Rev. 18:4).

How does one see patterns in the Bible? The Bible makes this claim for itself. Romans 6:17, *"But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed."* The word "form" used here is the Greek word *tupos* which Vine's defines as "a representation or pattern of anything." It is a "pattern of teaching." The "form" which was delivered to the Romans was a pattern for them to follow. A prescription for their lives to which they must comply. *Hypotuposis* is seen in II Timothy 1:13 when Timothy is told to *"Hold fast the form (pattern) of sound words."*

Just as Moses was to follow the pattern (*hupodeigma*) when erecting the tabernacle (Heb. 8:5), we must also follow the pattern in the New Testament church. The pattern is given to us in God's holy word for our learning and salvation. We hold to

the pattern of sound doctrine, follow the pattern of sound words, and build our lives according to the pattern of the New Testament blueprint. Then we offer an acceptable sacrifice to God and find answers to all our prob-

lems and questions in life. In true Christianity, nothing is distant from the cross, regardless of the topic.

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CATFISH DINNERS, YARD SALES, BINGO, ETC.

Jim Lewis

***It will not do to simply shrug one's shoulders
or laugh it off or just ignore the fact that catfish
dinners and yard sale fund raisers by churches of
Christ have no authority.***

It has become the practice to fund, at least in part, various works of the local congregation by having catfish dinners and yard sales. These practices are openly advertised in some church bulletins and participation is encouraged. The feedback we have received when inquiring about such activity is that several thousands of dollars are raised at such dinners. We assume the yard sales are also productive of financial profit. The stated objectives of providing camp opportunities and mission work opportunities are noble, so what is the big deal? Why don't all the churches start raising money for church activities by having catfish dinners and yard sales?

The obvious answer as to why all churches do not have catfish dinners and yard sale fund-raisers is that such practices are unscriptural. There is no Bible authority for the Lord's church to go into business to raise money to support the work of the church. It may be objected that such practices are not a business. However, one of several definitions of "business" is "the buying and selling of commodities and services" [Webster's New World College Dictionary]. The old adage is "If it walks like a duck, talks like a duck, etc., then it's a duck." Colossians 3:17 is just as true and binding today as it was in the first century A.D. Here the Lord instructs His church with these words: *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."* Catfish dinners and yard sales cannot be done scripturally "in the name of the Lord Jesus" because the Lord Jesus has not authorized such practices.

What about bingo? This is a proven way of attracting crowds and raising money. Car washes have been popular with denominations. There is absolutely no way the preacher, elder, or church member can consistently approve, support, or encourage church of Christ catfish dinners and yard sale fund-raisers, and at the same time raise any objection to car washes or bingo or other imaginative endeavors designed for the same purpose. They stand or fall together.

These are serious matters in that such practices constitute departures from the faith. They are not matters of opinion or matters of expediency. It will not do to simply shrug one's shoulders or laugh it off or just ignore the fact that catfish dinners and yard sale fund raisers by churches of Christ have no authority. If they did have Bible authority, then it would have been presented long ago. Brethren who are engaging in such fund-raisers need to prayerfully consider if the money raised is worth leading the local congregation into sinful practices.

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ADULTERY AND "THE WAY"

Cade K. Somers

Many who teach multiple scriptural reasons for divorce and remarriage inconsistently continue to teach there is only "one way" to God.

The Greek word *eime* is often translated "except, but," or "save" — all words of exclusion.

The word is seen in Matthew 12:39 in Jesus' reply to certain of the scribes and Pharisees who were seeking for a sign of Jesus' divine origin. He said to them, "...there shall no sign be given to it, but (*eime*) the sign of the prophet Jonah." In other words, the only sign to which Jesus pointed them was that of Jonah's plight in the belly of the fish. He excluded the possibility of any other signs by using the word *eime*.

Likewise, at Jesus' unwelcome reception to His homeland of Nazareth He said, "A prophet is not without honor, save (*eime*) in his own country, and in his own house" (Matt. 13:57). Again, the emphasis placed by Jesus was upon the one exception to the rule.

With a Strong's concordance and a Greek lexicon with Strong's numbering, we can look up other passages in which the Greek word *eime* is found. Word studies are extremely valuable to properly understanding the word of God. Exceptions are important to know so that we might not overstep our boundaries and add to or take away from the word of God (cf. Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:18,19).

No Christian should disagree with Jesus being the way to the Father. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but (*eime*) by me." The use of *eime* indicates that no being but Christ has the ability to lead man to the Father. Such is supported in the Scriptures. For example, Jesus said "I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved..." (John 10:9). The Hebrew writer exhorted, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil,

that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10:19,20). Therefore, *Muhammad* is not the way, nor is he one of many ways to the Father. Neither is *Buddha*, or even *Mary*. Knowing Jesus, and only Jesus, is the way to knowing the Father (John 14:7).

Many are teaching there are exceptions to the exceptions to the rules given by the Father and the Son. Specifically, they teach there are more scriptural reasons for divorce than explicitly given in the New Testament. The subject of marriage, divorce and remarriage is addressed several times in the New Testament, and each instance reinforces the same statement of Jesus in Matthew 19:9. He said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except (*eime*) it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." The rule is that whoever divorces, or puts away, his or her spouse and marries another, commits adultery (Luke 16:18). The exception to that rule, stated by Jesus, is in the case wherein one's spouse has been proven to have committed fornication, thus becoming an adulterer or adulteress (Matt. 19:9). Many today are teaching if a husband or wife is unloving, unkind or uninterested, the action of divorce and remarriage is lawful. "In sickness and in health" and "till death do us part" have become only obligatory vows when a marriage is pleasant, enjoyable and void of difficult experiences. To all this Jesus says, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mark 10:9).

Modernists ignore Jesus' sharp rebuke of the Samaritan woman in John 4. The omniscient Jesus knew she was currently with a man who was not her husband, so He requested she bring her husband (Matt. 4:16,17). He had the woman

acknowledge her predicament without first revealing to her His true identity. He then used her words to further the conviction of her sins, saying, "...thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly" (vs.18,19). By Jesus' reaction, it is clear her present lifestyle was not acceptable.

Another woman is often overlooked (John 8). Scribes and Pharisees approached Jesus with a woman whom they caught "in the very act" of adultery (v.4), but their failure to bring also the man with whom the sin was committed made evident their intentions. They had no concern with justice; instead, their purpose was to tempt Jesus (v.6). The Roman government had removed the Jewish leaders' right to put to death such lawbreakers (cf. Exodus 20:14; Deut. 22:22). If Jesus would have given her the death sentence, He would have resisted Roman authority — something from which these despicable Pharisees would have received pleasure. He let her go. But, His words to her cannot be disregarded. "Go and sin no more" (John 8:11). Immediate punishment or condemnation was not imminent. However, to face judgment in a righteous state before God, she was required to repent and get out of her adulterous relationship.

What about John the Baptist's admonishment of Herod for His adulterous marriage? Either people accept the one exception for divorce being fornication or they choose to add to or take away from the word of God. John said of Herod's situation, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (Mark 6:18). Herod had married Herodias (his brother Philip's wife), according to the inspired John, unlawfully. This distinctly clarifies whether there is specific law regarding marriage, divorce

and remarriage. The harbinger of Christ said there is.

What do adultery and “the way to the Father” (John 14:6) have to do with one another? Many who teach multiple scriptural reasons for divorce and remarriage inconsistently continue to teach there is only “one way” to God. Adultery and “the Way” are relevant subjects, in that, in both discussions Jesus used the Greek word *eime*. There is but one excep-

tion to “no man cometh unto the Father but by me” (John 14:6). Jesus said He is that one exception, using the words, “but (*eime*) by me.” Equally so, there is but one exception to “whosoever putteth away his wife...and shall marry another, committeth adultery.” Fornication is that one exception.

Rules of logic indicate that one who teaches there are multiple scriptural reasons allowing divorce and

remarriage, must necessarily remain lenient elsewhere, saying there are more ways to the Father than just through Jesus.

Do not place precedence in the words of man. As for me, I will continue to “obey God rather than man” (Acts 5:29).

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BILLY GRAHAM’S LAST SERMON

Leland L. Reed

While talking to a couple of my cousins at our family reunion the other day, one of them remarked that Billy Graham had preached his last sermon after 60 years of campaigning. My reply was that it was about time he quit preaching since all he preached was false doctrine. My cousins were taken back with that remark. But let us consider Billy Graham’s teaching compared to what God’s word teaches.

I have heard Billy Graham preach and was impressed with his message until he came to the part about what one must do to be saved. I have never heard him say one must be baptized or heard from anyone else that he ever preached such.

What does the Bible, God’s Holy word, have to say about baptism? The words of Jesus himself as recorded in Mark 16:15-16 read: “*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*” That statement is very clear, how can one misunderstand these simple words? — HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED.

Where is the alternative to baptism for salvation? In I Peter 3:21 we read: “*The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*” Again, where is the misunderstanding of this verse?

We know that those who are caught up in the “works of the flesh” shall not enter heaven. “*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God*” (Gal. 5:19). See also Eph. 5:3-8.

How, except baptism, is the alien sinner going to remove this stain of sin? The Bible answers this question in very plain terms. Saul (later named Paul), as stated in his own word’s, was the chief of sinners (I Tim. 1:15). Let us see what Ananias told Paul in Acts 22:16: “*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*” How was Paul to be cleansed of his sins? Look again at Mark 16:15,16; I Peter 3:21,22 and Acts 22:16.

Billy Graham preached only half truths because he never preached one must be baptized to be saved. In preaching that one need only pray for Christ to come into his heart is not preaching God’s unadulterated word. This makes him a false teacher and he has (over these six decades) led thousands, maybe millions, of people to their eternal destruction. However, all the blame cannot be laid at his feet because we each have the responsibility to obey Christ as He

has instructed, not as some mere man has suggested will save us.

One thing we need to understand, a half truth is still a lie. If we teach only part of God’s truth, we are teaching a false doctrine. Paul declares in Acts 20:26: “*Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*” Billy Graham cannot make that statement in all honesty because he has not declared the whole counsel of God. He has not told his followers they must follow all of God’s plan for salvation. Revelation 22:18-19 tells us we are not to “add to” or “take away” from God’s word. Omitting baptism from the plan of salvation violates this command.

I contend that it is good that Billy Graham has retired and is no longer leading ignorant people to destruction. Romans 10:3 says, “*For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*” Does this verse fit Billy Graham? After sixty years of supposedly preaching God’s word, you would think he had run across Mark 16:15,16, Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16 and I Peter 3:21,22. What did he do with them? It appears from his preaching that he ignored them. So we conclude it is good that Billy Graham has retired.

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

"I really enjoy getting *STOP* every month. It's really a good paper. Keep up the good work" **...Gladys Scott, Petal, MS.** "We love the booklet *Seek The Old Paths*. Thanks so much" **...Dimple Sills, Dover, TN.** "Please continue to send me *STOP*" **...Bisbee, AZ.** "I truly appreciate your firm stance for the truth. The *STOP* website is one of the finest

grounded in a desire for God's truth. May God continue to bless your work. In Christian love" **...Tracey Lindsey.** "I currently receive and appreciate the *STOP*. Thanks" **...Hardie Logan.** "Thank you for *STOP*. God bless!" **...Gene Copeland, Oak Hills, CA.** "Thank you for your interest in getting the word of God out to a lost and dying world" **...Michael Lovelady.** "Hope all is going well. Keep up the good work" **...Jimmy Clark, Grand Prairie, TX.** "I was introduced to *STOP* a few years ago. What a joy it is to read it cover to cover the day it comes! Not only that, but to reread much of it again later. I hope you know the truth of God is being revealed to many by your good work. Please continue the excellent work of God" **...Marie Buckingham, Gray, TN.** "Thank you so much for sending me *Seek The Old Paths*. I have enjoyed reading it. But please remove me from your mailing list as I am getting to where I just don't have the time required to read it. I read my Bible every day and that is about all the reading I do" **...Wilma Thomas, Athens, AL.** "Denying Truth Will Bring One Into Perdition. In I Thesalonians 5:20, we read a short, but powerful statement: *"despise not prophesyings."* But what is meant by this stern admonition? I would say an out and out denial of the truth of the Bible. For example, read Jesus's parable of the wedding guest in Matthew 22:1-14. The guests represent those not clothed in Christ's righteousness. They tried to enter into God's kingdom on their own merits, rather than obedience to the Gospel. Like the wedding guests, many try to be saved by prescribed prayers, one time altar calls, meeting with a group and memorizing man-made creeds. But the Bible teaches only one way, and that is repentance of sins, confessing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, putting Him on in baptism, and living a separated life. Another way to despise prophesyings is living a life away from salvation. One can do this by compromising morals to gain the favor of the world. Being raised a Baptist, I have heard salvation was like getting "fire insurance from Hell." Nothing could be more sacrilegious. Those who hold to this think responding to an altar call and living any old way will get them into the Kingdom. After all, it's OK to lie, steal, gossip or slander, if it will get us socially accepted, for we don't want to be thought of as oddballs. Some old family friends, left church, never reentered and their thinking has changed from what is used to be. Especially since the wife started back to college and listened to all those godless pseudo intellectuals who have been the ruin of family, education, and even the church. They lead society in their contempt for godly discipline, resulting in more domestic abuse, violent crimes, drug abuse, and rude people in service positions — not to mention more divorces and overall unjust discrimination. I realize this may be about as narrow minded as one can get. But as true New Testament Christians, we must stand for what is right at all costs" **...Leslie Putman, 3102 Mount Holly Rd., Eldorado, AK 71730.** "Thank you for 25 copies of the June issue" **...Bill Hargis, Hebron, IN.** "Greetings in Jesus, Brother Garland! Convey a loud AMEN to our Brother Lawrence Williamson for the much needed teaching — WITHDRAWAL OF FELLOWSHIP in June/2000. For too long, the CHURCH OF CHRIST, in both the United States and Canada have refused to high light the subject of WITHDRAWAL OF FELLOWSHIP as taught in the New Testament.

Back in the early '70s, this writer worked with an assembly of believers wherein the elders were concerned with unruly members. On a given Lord's Day, they announced names of members that had digressed and that fellowship would be withdrawn from same. Results of this action upon the church spread through the city in following days. The local citizenry talked about this action taken by the CHURCH OF CHRIST. These unfaithful members had hurt feelings; expressed hatred toward the church; proceeded to the denomination that is called the Christian Church — a religious group (especially in years gone by) that has a belief similar to the CHURCH OF CHRIST. Some faithful(?) brethren did not approve of the elders disfellowshipping the unruly and in some cases went to the aforementioned denomination or sought another fellowship. The above story has taken place in other communi-

ties and in this writer's mind, these are the reasons why the church does not follow the New Testament in withdrawal of fellowship. Brethren, we must save the souls that have rebelled against JESUS. Note well, Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins (James 5:19,20 NKJ). One of our songs teaches: "Seeking the lost, yes, kindly entreating, Wanderers on the mountain astray; Come unto Me, His message repeating, Words of the Master speaking today." (W. A. Ogden) My Lord and Master pleaded, "Love one another." **...L. Douglas & Thelma LaCourse, Sarnia, Ontario, Canada.** My husband and I moved to Augusta, GA, not realizing we were moving into a hot-bed of false teaching and weak congregations. We have been forced to worship at a small congregation without elders because our only other options are a large congregation whose elders support Jubilee and our claim-to-fame false teacher Joe Beam. We are so discouraged with the situation here we are seeking employment out of this area and into a community not plagued with such indifference as we have found here. Our eyes have really been opened by your newsletter and I want to commend you for all the fine work you, your congregation and eldership are doing in the name of truth! I have been looking for information specifically about Winterfest. I am trying to point a friend in the direction so that they can read articles about Winterfest to come to the conclusion that there is false teaching and denominational worship occurring at this function" **...Augusta, GA.** "My husband and I receive your publication and consider it to be outstanding. We know you and your congregation are Christians who strive to do exactly what God wants and who strive to teach exactly what God wants us to do no matter how it steps on others' toes or hurts others' feelings. We think that is remarkable" **...Lexington, TN.** "Thank you very much for sending me invaluable tracts from the East End church of Christ. May God continue to bless you for the good work you are doing" **...Alfred Edwin, Zimbabwe, Africa.**

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

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