



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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PROGRESSIVISM IS NOT PROGRESS

You would think that being progressive would be a good thing — a positive thing; because, when you think of being progressive, you think of progress — being positive, going forward — being better and improved.

Bing Dictionary defines progress this way:

- *positive development: development, usually of a gradual kind, toward achieving a goal or reaching a higher standard*
- *advance of human society: the general advance of human society and industry over time toward a state of greater civilization*
- *motion toward something: movement forward or onward*

But in spite of the fact that it sounds similar, progressives, and the ideology and direction of progressivism, is not the same as progress. A striking and dangerous parallel exists between progressivism in the political sense of the word and progressivism in the religious realm. It is this parallel we wish to explore in this article.

POLITICAL PROGRESSIVISM

In the political realm, the term “progressive” has different shades of meaning, but one basic concept of progressivism, one characteristic of those who are called progressives, is that of not wanting to be governed by the Constitution.

In America, progressivism was conceived and took root as our country was modernized. Advances in the scientific world brought about

advances in business and industry. Manufacturing practices changed, electricity brought us “new light,” and changes in transportation took us down new roads at faster and faster speeds.

In light of these many advances, people began to believe and argue that a modern country should not be governed and controlled by a document that was 100+ years old. Progressives believed (and still do today) that the constitution of our country was (and is) out of date and out of touch.

Dennis Brady shows the view of Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924, 28th president, from 1913-1921):

Woodrow Wilson believed the constitution was outdated. He thought the founders had a “Newtonian” view of government that was static, he believed that the current leadership of the nation should be able to legislate without regard to the constraints of the constitution, especially the limits spelled out by the enumerated powers of the federal government listed in the constitution. He was the father of the modern view of the constitution that it is a “living document” (www.bradyreports.com).

Granted, the founders of our country, those who wrote and eventually ratified our constitution, did not see it as a perfect document. They even allowed an amendment process to change the constitution when such was necessary. But this is not what

progressives want. They want the power to translate or even ignore the plain intent of the constitution as they see fit.

Essentially he (Wilson, RS) believed that the constitution means anything the current president and congress think it should mean with no regard to the original intent of the founders (www.bradyreports.com).

Another website (www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2007/07/The-Progressive-Movement-and-the-Transformation-of-American-Politics) brings out this quote from Wilson:

All that progressives ask or desire, is permission — in an era when development, evolution, is a scientific word — to interpret the Constitution according to the Darwinian principle; all they ask is recognition of the fact that a nation is a living thing and not a machine.

By referring to the “Darwinian principle,” Wilson meant that the interpretation of the constitution should “evolve” rather than remain “static” (a fixed or stationary condition).

THE SPIRITUAL PARALLEL

Sadly, political progressivism is strikingly and obviously parallel to what we observe in the spiritual

(Continued on page 4)
Progressivism...



Editorial...

EVIL CONDEMNED (WHEREVER IT'S FOUND, EVEN IN POLITICS)

Garland M. Robinson

***Political figures, and the whole political realm,
are NOT immune to God's judgment.***

It is sad indeed, but many have more allegiance to politics than they do the Lord. They will go to church, sing and pray, give an offering and claim to be a faithful Christian, but their real alliance is to their political agenda and party. Shame, shame on them. Jesus said, "*But seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God, and his righteousness...*" (Matt. 6:33). Unless I misunderstand this verse, Jesus said NOTHING in all the world compares to Him and His kingdom (church). The rest of the world will perish, but his word and kingdom (church) will remain forever (Matt. 16:18; Dan. 2:44).

The claim of those who want the faithful to be quite about what's going in the political realm generally goes something like this:

I cannot find anything in the Bible about Democrats or Republicans, Roe vs. Wade, Abortion, Pro-choice, Pro-death, the U.S. Constitution, Congress, White House, President, Vote, United Nations, America, Federal Government, Candidates, etc. etc. Therefore, we have no right to say anything about them.

They won't always admit it out loud, but what they mean is:

when we say something to condemn the evil that exists in any of these areas, we've turned away from God and the Bible and turned aside to politics — we've corrupted the church. Keep politics out of the church!

Their real desire is to place the Bible in a box and use it only when it suits them. They want to relegate it to the realms of the far distant past

or to some remote corner of the world that does not affect them and the society in which they live. They want to pull the Lord out of the box in "secret" and wear "Christianity" on their sleeve only at church time. They don't believe the Bible is God's universal standard of righteousness. Their contention is that it does not apply in all walks of life, especially in politics. Does this sound familiar? Do you know someone like this? The world and the church is full of them!

If error, wickedness, corruption, SIN is found in the *work place*, shall we not stand up for the Lord's Way? If we apply the Bible in that part of our lives, have we gone too far? When sin and error raises its ugly head in the realm of *sports*, shall we remain silent? When false doctrine and error is set forth in *schools*, does God's word not apply there? What about the *home*? When it is corrupt and evil, are we to say nothing about that which will condemn the souls therein? What about in realm of *entertainment* where so many live wicked and depraved lives? Shall we not proclaim what the Bible says about lasciviousness (unbridled lust and passion)? None of the "realms" mentioned here are inherently evil. There is nothing necessarily evil about work, play, learning and recreation. But, sinful practices and elements are often brought into them by people who don't love the truth. Are the sinful things done and promoted in all these realms "off limits?" In what arena of world affairs does the Bible not apply? Oh, in the realm of politics, you say? Where do you read that in the Bible? I guess it's in "First Opinions."

Are we to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature except to those in the field of pol-

itics? Are they protected from saving truth? Politics is not inherently evil any more than the work place, sports, school and entertainment. As a matter of fact, God ordained government (politics) in Romans 13. It serves an appropriate and meaningful purpose as described in this chapter. But, just as in anything, evil can be brought into it and when it is, God's children will condemn and expose it just as we will in any and all areas of life. The righteous will not turn a blind eye to those who do evil, regardless of where it's found. The realm of "politics" and one's political belief has nothing to do with it. The fact that evil is condoned and practiced has everything to do with it — regardless of the party. Error is error no matter where it's found. Politics must not blind one's eyes to the truth. When it does, you're in a sad condition indeed.

It must be comforting to think that the church and Bible is what we do on Sunday and Wednesday, but does not apply to where we GO, what we DO and what we SAY the rest of the time (cf. Col. 3:17). Seems like John the immerser said something about Herod's adulterous marriage. "*For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put [him] in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her*" (Matt. 14:3-12). According to many, John should have stayed out of politics and not mentioned anything to Herod about his adultery. But, John's orders from heaven did not inform him that politics and the political realm is protected from examination and exposure from the all-powerful word of God. On the contrary, it informed him to preach the word "in season and out of season" (cf. 2 Tim. 4:2).

Likewise, Jesus our Lord condemned the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 3:7; 5:20; 21:45; chapter 23) who were not only religious figures of the day, they were political leaders as well (cf. Mark 3:6). Matthew 16:6-12 makes it clear that Jesus was not speaking of their political positions. He was speaking of their doctrinal positions — that which violated God's word. Matthew 22:23 tells us plainly that the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. The Lord offended the Pharisees when he exposed their

hypocrisy (Matt. 15:11-14). However, He did not speak of and/or condemn the Pharisees and Sadducees because they were politicians or because of their political positions, he condemned them because of the error they taught and practiced. Are we not to follow the pattern of the Lord?

Jesus revealed to his apostles they would stand before politicians. He did not command them to remain silent because those in politics were “off limits.” He commanded them to speak the truth, the saving Gospel. *“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you”* (Matt. 10:16-20).

There are many things in this world that are not inherently evil (in and of themselves). For example; the economy, natural resources, foreign affairs, taxes, global warming, immigration, etc. are things that are legislated by politicians (the government). They are not particularly in the realm of spiritual matters; therefore, it’s not appropriate for preachers to give their opinions about them from the pulpit. It’s not the work of the church to either support or condemn purely political positions that do not relate to spiritual truth. In such matters, we can have differences of opinion and still be in fellowship as brethren. But, even in these areas, abuses can occur that affect Biblical principle; which, as a child of God, we should not and must not support. (It is not the object of this article to explore such abuses.)

Anything and everything in the political arena (or any other area of life) that involves spiritual matters, that affect the salvation of one’s soul, are things that must be spoken about. The truth must be set forth regarding them. It matters not what political party one espouses, God’s word is applicable to all. How dare

anyone rise up and say error cannot be exposed and the truth set forth because of someone’s affiliation in politics. God’s word is applicable, even in the political realm.

The church has no authority to venture into the realm of politics (things that do not affect the soul — things that are neither right nor wrong in and of themselves). But, the church **MUST** proceed full steam ahead into those areas that are spiritual in nature (things that affect the soul).

Simply claiming that abortion (killing infants) and homosexuality (sodomy, same sex marriage, etc.) are “social issues” does not remove them from the jurisdiction of God. Saying they are political matters does not make them right. The world has long since tried to circumvent God’s law by seeking to destroy it. Jehoiakim (the king of Judah) took the Scripture God revealed to Jeremiah and burned it in the fire (Jer. 36). He did not like what God said, so he disposed of it. Shall we accuse Jeremiah of leaving the Word of God and getting into politics? He was not dealing with politics, he was speaking of the corruption and wickedness of the whole nation. He was doing what God commanded him to do (Jer. 36:1-2,27-28,32). Shall we not do the same? Yes, of course we should and must. The Word of God is to be preached from the housetops!

Political figures, and the whole political realm, are NOT immune to God’s judgment. Their teaching and practice is subject to the Bible. The evil they do, the wickedness they promote and the immoral behavior they endorse, must be exposed. That is what preaching is all about! Paul wrote, *“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove [them]”* (Eph. 5:11).

What the Bible says regarding moral, ethical and doctrinal matters is not political, these things are matters of right and wrong, truth and error, heaven and hell. The world of “political correctness” can call ungodliness and immorality “social issues” all they want, but there’s a Lord in heaven who will judge them in the last day (John 12:48).

Those ashamed of the Lord when it comes to the political arena ought to repent before it’s too late.

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Progressivism...

(Continued from page 1)

realm. The United States was established under the rules and restrictions of the constitution. The church was established under the authority and restrictions of the Gospel. Political progressives no longer wish to be governed by the constitution. Spiritual progressives no longer wish to be governed (ruled) by God's word. And, make no mistake about it, **progressivism in the spiritual realm is not progress; it is apostasy.**

In fact, the whole of the restoration movement revolved around the point of being governed only by the New Testament — going back to the Bible. Churches (that called themselves Christian) had departed from the Bible and no longer looked to it as their authority. Restorationists called men back to being governed by God's word and God's word alone.

The crucial question is this: Are we going to be ruled by the Bible or by man-made doctrines? The perilous and blasphemous answer that rings from many pulpits is, "No!" We will not be governed by the Bible with its strict rule of conduct. Far too many are "progressives." They reject the "old" because they feel we need something "new." They feel the Bible is out of date and don't want to be ruled or restricted by it. They are ready and willing to go beyond the Bible because they feel it must be fluid, changing with time and circumstances.

Few are bold enough to say what they mean and openly declare that God's word is out of touch. Instead, they call for a new way of interpreting it — a new hermeneutic which allows it to mean whatever they want it to mean. Or, they claim we can never truly understand the intent of the original authors because we have a different cultural perspective — so why try? Or, they deny that the Bible addresses all of the spiritual needs of modern man, therefore we need to go beyond it. Their thinking is that a 2,000 year old document cannot possibly meet the needs of modern man.

Some brazenly claim that the church, patterned after the New Testament, is out of date — not meeting the needs of modern man. They claim

this is because of how we have interpreted and applied the Bible.

Those who contend for the faith (cf. Jude 3) and call men's hearts and lives back to the old Jerusalem Gospel are derogatorily called "Bible thumpers." They literally cannot imagine anyone who would cling to that old dilapidated document called the Bible. We who love the truth are thought of as ancient relics of the past who are out of touch with the "felt needs" of modern man. They love telling us that we are trying to answer questions that no one is asking. The faithful know better than that. The trouble is not with us quoting scripture and calling upon all men to repent and obey it (Acts 17:30), the problem lies with people asking the wrong questions. The Bible is right and always has the right answer to whatever men face (cf. 1 Peter 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). This world will never out-grow the Bible!

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVISM IS NOT NEW

There were those in Old Testament times who did not want to be ruled by the law of God.

In **Jeremiah 6**, we see those who rejected the "old paths" and refused to live by it. *"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein"* (Jer. 6:16). These were spiritual progressives. They did not want God's "old paths." They rejected the old and sought a new, unapproved, unauthorized way.

We are not told the specifics regarding what God had instructed regarding sacrifices in the early days of human history (Gen. 4:3-5). But what we do know is that **Abel** offered his sacrifice "by faith", obeying what God had told them to do, and **Cain** did not offer his sacrifice "by faith" (Heb. 11:4). Since faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17), Abel obeyed God's word regarding sacrifice and Cain did not. It was not progress for Cain to depart from the revealed will of God; and, it is not progress for men today to go beyond that which is written (2 John 9-11). It does not matter how sincere we may be, "to obey [is] better than sacrifice,

[and] to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22).

Nadab and Abihu offered a strange fire that God had not authorized (Lev. 10:1-2). They were destroyed by God for refusing to obey the restrictions of his commands. They were not satisfied with the "old", they wanted something "new". They were progressives of ancient times, but they were condemned!

By the standards of modern progressives, **King Saul** was treated unfairly by God (1 Sam. 15). He was commanded to kill the Amalekites, all of them, even their livestock. It seems as if he had a new hermeneutic, a new way of interpreting God's commands. He kept Agag, the king of Amalek, alive along with livestock for a sacrifice to God. In his estimation (interpretation), he had obeyed God. First Samuel 15:13 says, *"And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord."* When Samuel challenged and rebuked Saul for not obeying the commandment of God, Saul replied that he had obeyed. But, in 1 Samuel 15:20 we read, *"And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites."* Regardless of his claim, he had disobeyed God and it was not progress, it was rebellion (1 Sam. 15:23).

THE NEW TESTAMENT ANTICIPATES AND CONDEMNS PROGRESSIVISM

The Gospel of the New Covenant was intended for all generations to come. In fact, departing from it in favor of something new (progressivism) is clearly condemned in scripture.

Galatians 1:6-9, *"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that*

ye have received, let him be accursed.”

2 John 9, “Whosoever transgresseth, and **abideth not in the doctrine of Christ**, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.” The word translated “transgresseth” is the idea of going onward and beyond. Thayer defines it this way: *to proceed, go forward: in a bad sense, to go further than is right or proper.* Sounds like progressives espousing progressivism! Evil indeed.

Jude 3, “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that **ye should earnestly contend for the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints.”

1 Timothy 4:1, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times **some shall depart from the faith**, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” Progressives wish to depart from the faith, and they do so in league with seducing spirits and demons. It is not progress to leave the word of God to follow Satan.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVES TODAY

This article is more than an intellectual exercise. Those crying out for something new in the church today are progressives. They are “carried away” (consumed) with progressivism. They may not call themselves that, and they may not appreciate being called that, but they are progressives just the same. Progressivism is not progress in the right way — not in God’s Way! It’s digression and apostasy.

Let’s consider some of the ways progressives have rejected the Bible in favor of that which is new.

1) They reject the Bible as being adequate. Many want to be ruled by the dictates of modern philosophy or psychology. “Thus saith the Lord” has been replaced by “thus sayeth Fried or Skinner or Rogers.”

2) Modern progressives think the church should be shaped by the “felt needs” of modern Americans. They preach sermons full of modern buzzwords and the newest fads, yet sadly lacking in God’s word. They expose their weakness, cowardice, and liberal direction by what they won’t

preach — the whole counsel of God. They are the opposite end of the spectrum from Paul who held back “nothing that was profitable” and declared “all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:20,27). This progressivism is not progress.

3) Many seem to accept a strictly pragmatic, utilitarian viewpoint in preaching and practice. This means they will do whatever brings in the numbers. The cry is, “We have to be current. Forget Matthew 7:13-14! Let’s be with the many, not with the few.” One wonders why progressives, appealing to the masses and following the fads of the multitudes, cannot feel the heat of the destruction that awaits them at the end of the road.

In the moral realm, progressives are also revealing themselves.

1) Some have abandoned preaching about **marriage, divorce, and remarriage**. After all, in our society, marriage does not mean what it once did. In modern society, living together without being married is commonplace. Marriage vows are not as binding as mortgage contracts. Vast numbers of people have been divorced and remarried without knowing anything about God’s law on the matter. How can Matthew 19:9 possibly address all of these modern issues? And so, many shift their doctrinal position, or they simply leave out what God has to say about the matter.

2) Those who will not preach against **homosexuality** for fear of being out of touch are acting in a progressive manner. The same with those who will not oppose same-sex marriages.

3) Those who vote for **abortionists** clearly do not think we should be governed by God’s word. God’s word clearly expects us to uphold the sanctity of innocent human life. If we do not do so, in our votes and in our sermons, we are refusing to be governed by God’s word.

THE CHURCH HAS A PERFECT, UNCHANGING CONSTITUTION

As long as we have for our foundation the Rock of Ages, and as long as we use for our constitution the timeless Bible, we will never be out of touch or out of date.

1) Jesus claimed a timelessness for his words: “*Heaven and earth*

shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt. 24:35).

2) It is only through the ageless, incorruptible Gospel that men in our modern age can be born again: “*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever*” (1 Peter 1:23).

3) “*But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you*” (1 Peter 1:25). God’s word meets all of our needs regardless of how modern our world becomes.

4) “*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, throughly furnished unto all good works*” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

5) “*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue*” (2 Peter 1:3).

It really does not matter how or why men reject God’s word. Nothing new can replace the perfect pattern. There is no new need, no new cultural phenomenon, no popular fad, and nothing about modern society that God did not anticipate in his holy, inspired word.

Those who reject God’s word in favor of some newer more modern standard are spiritual progressives. And, spiritual progressivism is not progress. It is digression wrapped up in bright paper with a pretty bow. It is a rotten egg with icing on top. It is not progress, it is heresy. It is a departure from the truth that sets us free (John 8:31-32).

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A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS IN ANY GENERATION

Roger D. Campbell

Deuteronomy 4:1-9 — It was the 40th year and 11th month of the journeys of the Israelites since their departure from Egypt (Deut. 1:3). On the eastern side of the Jordan River, not long before the Israelites crossed over into the land of promise, Moses spoke to them. He reminded them of: 1) what God had done for His people in the past, 2) how the Israelites had treated God in the wilderness, and 3) what their duties to Him would be once they were living in Canaan.

We recognize that Christians are not the fleshly nation of Israel. We did not live in the days of Moses, and furthermore, we do not live under the Law of Moses. Yet, from Moses' message to the Israelites of His era, there are a number of helpful lessons that we can glean.

For our purposes, we are focusing our attention on a few concepts that are recorded in Deuteronomy 4:1-9. These principles are a formula for success in any generation. Do you want to enjoy success in the spiritual realm? Do you want your family to experience the same? If so, then the instructions that are recorded in the early verses of Deuteronomy 4 have the potential to help you and your loved ones have such success. Let's take a look.

Hearken — In this section, Moses' message for Israel began with these words, "*Now therefore hearken [listen, NKJV], O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live...*" (4:1). It does not matter who it is or what a person's circumstances are in life, here is the fundamental key to genuine success: hearken/listen to what the God of heaven has to say! A failure to do so is a 100% guarantee of spiritual disaster.

Leave — Leave God's Word Alone. Moses further charged God's people, "*Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you*" (4:2). That is clear

enough, is it not? Leave God's word alone — do not tamper with it or alter it in any fashion. The God of all wisdom knows just what man needs and He gives us perfect instructions. For humans to take it upon themselves to "improve" on what God has said by reducing or increasing His message is the height of foolish arrogance!

Cleave — After reminding Israel of the disobedience of some that had led to their destruction from God, Moses told them, "*But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are alive every one of you this day*" (4:4). What is the key to life? Cleaving unto the Lord! When Barnabas arrived in Antioch of Syria to work with the brethren there, he "*exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord*" (Acts 11:23). I know that many of us are striving to learn God's word better, and I know that we are trying to remain active in His work, but have we developed our heart to the point that we are really cleaving to Him? All the study and activity in the world goes for naught unless we are really cleaving to the One who makes it all possible! Note also that the one who truly cleaves to God is the one that cleaves to and follows the Bible. There is no such thing as cleaving to the Creator while not obeying what He says to do.

Be Wise — As Moses spoke about God's statutes, he went on to tell the Israelites, "*Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations...*" (4:6). God's word has the potential to make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15). And, how do people show true wisdom? By doing what the Lord says! The fear/reverence of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10). Did not Jesus say that a person who hears His words and then goes and does them is like a wise man that built his house on the rock? He sure did (Matt. 7:24,25). When it comes to wisdom, never forget this truth: 1) Wise people get their main education from God's word, and 2) Wise people carry out in

their lives what they learned from that word. It is now fair to ask this personal question: Are you (and I) acting wisely or foolishly?

Diligently Keep Yourself — "*Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life...*" (4:9). At least twice more in this chapter we read that God exhorted His people to take heed unto themselves. "*Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves. ... Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God...*" (4:15,23). When God tells His people to "take heed," you know what that means, don't you? It means to take heed!

The Israelites had seen and heard great things from Jehovah. God did not want them to forget them or their significance. In fact, He said that He wanted the memory of those deeds and laws to be in their heart "all the days of thy life" (4:9). Brethren, with so much going on in our lives, it can be a real challenge to keep the great teachings and blessings of God stored up in our hearts. There is only one way for us to keep our focus on God and His Cause, and that is to be diligent as we take heed to ourselves.

Teach — This, too, is "a big one," and it is just as important as the previous five principles we have observed. When it came to the ways of God, what else did He want the Israelites to do with them? Not just remember them, but teach them: "*...teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons*" (4:9). Parents instructing their children from God's word and grandparents teaching their grandchildren God's truth. What a precious thought! Supreme love for one's offspring is not shown by material gifts, but by showing them the way of the Lord. That "showing" or "teaching" takes two forms: 1) Informing them what the Bible says and 2) Being a godly example for them. Parents and grandparents, are we really putting in a serious effort to get these matters right, or are we letting our off-

spring down by neglecting our duty to them?

You may not share my sentiments, but I love the message of Deuteronomy 4:1-9. I really am convinced that it gives us the formula for

success in God's sight in any generation. Again, what were those words of the Bible text on which we concentrated in this study? Harken, leave, cleave, be wise, diligently keep yourself, and teach. These half-dozen

principles provide a wonderful potential for a whole lot of learning for those who meditate upon and apply this truth. How about it?

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THINGS THAT ARE PRECIOUS TO THE CHRISTIAN

Marvin L. Weir

This article will focus only on six things that are precious to the child of God.

God's love is precious to the Christian! Without God's love, there would be no hope for fallen mankind. All accountable people sin (Rom. 3:10,23), and *"the wages of sin is death"* (Rom. 6:23). When one sins he is separated from God (Isa. 59:1-2). One cannot simply pardon himself from the sin he has committed. Without the love of God providing a plan for reconciliation and redemption, sinners would have no hope. To the Ephesian brethren Paul said, *"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ"* (Eph. 2:12-13).

The passage often referred to as the golden text of the Bible says, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16). Think about that little word "so." God "so" loved that He purposed, planned, and provided a way by which sinful man can be forgiven of his sins and reconciled to God. Man would be hopelessly lost were it not for the love of God!

God's Word is precious to the Christian! Spiritually speaking, man is not capable of directing his steps; *"the way of man is not in himself"* (Jer. 10:23). A trustworthy guide is needed, and one's emotions, feelings, and opinions do not measure up to the challenge. The Psalmist knew the answer and was right in saying, *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path"* (Psa.

119:105). The Word of God is *"right"* (Psa. 33:4), *"pure"* (Psa. 119:140), *"true"* (Psa. 119:160), and *"settled in heaven"* (Psa. 119:89).

God's complete will for mankind is revealed only through His inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17). *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God"* (1 Cor. 1:18). Paul reminds one that *"...faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Rom. 10:17). For one to be saved he must *"hold fast"* to God's Word (1 Cor. 15:2). Only the *"word of his grace"* can build us up and give us *"the inheritance among all them that are sanctified"* (Acts 20:32). The *"seed"* to be sown before a lost and dying world is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). God's Word *"liveth and abideth forever"* (1 Pet. 1:23,25) and will judge all mankind in that Day (John 12:48). Put your trust in *"the sword of the Spirit"* (Eph. 6:17).

Heaven is precious to the Christian! There are only two roads one can travel through this life — one leads to eternal life and the other to eternal ruin (Matt. 7:13-14). Hell is to be avoided at all costs (Matt. 10:34-38). It has been *"prepared for the devil and his angels"* (Matt. 25:41) and for those who *"know not God"* and *"obey not the gospel"* (2 Thess. 1:8).

What a joy it will be for the faithful to get to Heaven as God will *"...wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away"* (Rev. 21:4). All of those *"written in the Lamb's book of life"* shall be in heaven but those who *"worketh abomination or maketh a lie"* shall

never enter this precious place (Rev. 21:27).

Grace and mercy are precious to the Christian! The apostle Paul says it best, *"...for by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast"* (Eph. 2:8-9). Salvation is God's wonderful gift, but salvation is not unconditional. God's wonderful grace covers only those who love Him and submit to His will. As Jesus said, *"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him"* (John 14:23). One cannot continue in a life of sin and expect God's grace to abound (Rom. 6:1).

Salvation is precious to the Christian! Paul describes it like this: *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished [my] course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing"* (2 Tim. 4:7-8).

Fellowship is precious to the Christian! How wonderful it is to associate with those of *"like precious faith"* (2 Pet. 1:1)! We dare not, however, fellowship those walking in darkness (Eph. 5:11). To aid, support in any way, participate with, or encourage those who are enemies of the cross is wrong.

Let us be thankful for the fellowship that is ours in Christ Jesus. How wonderful it is to be in the company of those who love God!

Never forget the many things precious to the Christian!

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

“Dear ones at Leoni Church of Christ, In reference to the STOP publication, please change my address. I’ve moved and I don’t like to miss STOP so if you can, please send me any current issues. The last I received was July 2012. Moving and making so many changes, takes its toll on an __ year old. Thank you so very much” ...**Geneva Stark, Wilburton, OK.** “It is our request that you would kindly note our address change. Please say a prayer for us to find a strong congregation that teaches and works in a godly way as you strive to do. May God continue to bless you in your good work of teaching the truth in love” ...**Scott & LeeBeth DeGraeve, Madison, AL.** “I am a member of the Baker Church of Christ and am a fairly new convert of +/- two years. I have come to know a friend who is currently incarcerated at the Okaloosa County Jail who seems to be sincere about wanting to know more about the truth. To be able to receive mail such as these booklets, it has to be sent directly from the publisher. They teach a man-made doctrine in there and do not allow the church to teach any classes in there. Please keep him in your prayers and thank you for the wonderful work you do” ...**Louis BdeLange, Baker, FL.** “I would like to receive *Seek The Old Paths*. Thank you for the work you do and my God bless you” ...**Keith Nuse, Mobile, AL.** “*Seek The Old Paths* is great. Use this money in any way that will help you. Thanks for all that you do. Make me anonymous” ...**McMinnville, TN.** “We at the Cubb Creek Church of Christ appreciate the STOP very much. Please keep up the good work in teaching the Truth and taking the stand as you do. Please find enclosed a check to help in this great work” ...**Cubb Creek Church of Christ, Gainesboro, TN.** “I recently was given a copy of your paper which I enjoyed very much. I am enclosing a small contribution. Would you please add me to your mailing list? Also, would you please add my brother to your mailing list? Thank you very much and may God bless you in your endeavor to further spread the Gospel” ...**Dorothy McNeely, Cocoa, FL.** “Would you please place these names to receive *Seek The Old Paths*? Thank you” ...**Doug English, Union, SC.** “Enclosed is a check to be used for *Seek The Old Paths*. If possible, could you please send a bundle to us? Thanks for teaching the truth and getting it out to so many people” ...**Keith Cagle, Eastside Church of Christ, Locust Grove, OK.** “We appreciate all you do to help keep our Lord’s church strong and sound” ...**Tom Hughes, Gallatin, TN.** “May God bless you and give you strength to keep printing the Faith of God’s word” ...**Lorene Wilson, Binger, OK.** “Why is it that man thinks, when darkness falls or when one travels abroad and no one knows him, that he is able to do what he pleases and think that God does not know? Because of these actions by Israel, they lost their homeland and were taken into captivity. Notice what God says to Ezekiel. *‘And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth’* (Ezek. 18:11-12). It does not matter where we go in life or what we do, God is there and sees everything! He tells us this in his holy Word. Ecclesiastes 12:14, *‘For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether [it be] good, or whether [it be] evil.’* David understood this also. *‘If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth*

as the day: the darkness and the light [are] both alike [to thee]’ (Psa. 139:11-12). As the saying goes, ‘you can run but you can’t hide,’ is true today and will continue as long as God is watching. He will continue to watch over us!” ...**Del Brantley, Salem, KY.** “We appreciate your publication in our small congregation” ...**Sylvia Church of Christ, Sylvia, KS.** “Please send me *Seek The Old Paths*” ...**Nita Mathis, Pontotoc, MS.** “I have read several of the STOP paper. I love to read them. A friend and brother in Christ, Jerry Barber, told me to subscribe and ask for the articles by Leroy Brownlow. I would appreciate it. God bless you” ...**Dean Delaney, Linden, TN.** “I am moving but would like to continue to receive the Old Paths. Thank you” ...**Jerry & Patty Hill, Vienna, WV.** “Recently, I was blessed to see your newsletter on *‘Hand Clapping In The Church’* and would love to be put on your list. Enclosed is a check. May God bless you” ...**Ms. Marian Tillman, Fresno, CA.** “Currently, I am in Hays State Prison. An inmate in my dorm let me read his STOP publication booklet. I found it to be of good nurture of God’s Word in Truth. Therefore, I am asking STOP to add me and others to your mailing list. This will help me stay encouraged and fused with the Truth of God’s Word. Thank you for your help in getting a light for the Kingdom of God” ...**Jeffrey L. Wyatt, Trion, GA.** “Thank you for the great work you’re doing with the *Seek The Old Paths* paper. I really enjoy reading it. Please accept this check in memory of brother Furman Shields. I’m sure the family would like to receive the paper. God bless the work you do in the church” ...**Tom Womack, McMinnville, TN.**

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