



Seek The Old Paths

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

Vol. 25, No. 2

February 2014

USING SATAN AS THE EXAMPLE

Victor M. Eskew

The Bible is filled with examples. Some of them are to be followed while others are not. Peter affirms that Jesus is an example of suffering who is worthy to be followed. *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps”* (1 Peter 2:21). The Jews, on the other hand, while wandering in the wilderness became an example of what should be avoided. *“But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we **should not** lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come”* (1 Cor. 10:5-11).

Most of us realize that all men and women have their good points and their bad points. We can mimic the good, and we can refrain from the bad. **There is only one completely perfect example. It is Jesus the Christ, the Lord and Savior, the only begotten Son of God** (Heb. 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22). This is why He is

held up as the true standard. On the other hand, **there is one completely evil example that should be avoided.** This is none other than Satan himself.

Satan has absolutely no good points or traits. There is nothing positive that he has done, is doing, or will do that should be copied by mankind. Listen to Jesus’ description of wicked satan. *“...He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”* The evil of Satan is clearly shown in these words of the sinless Son of God. The devil, satan, is mankind’s poisonous archenemy (1 Peter 5:8). He seeks to damage and destroy every human being.

Who would ever think of taking anything satan has ever done and using it as an example to be followed? Yet, this is exactly what some in evil political systems have done. In Saul Alinsky’s book entitled: *Rules for Radicals*, he does this very thing on the dedicatory page. He writes:

“Lest we forget, an over-the-shoulder acknowledgement to the very first radical: from all over legends, mythology, and history (and who is to know where mythology leaves off and history begins — or which is which), the first radical known to man who rebelled against the establishment and did it so effectively that

he at least won his own kingdom — Lucifer.”

Alinsky is a man who despises “the establishment” in democratic governments. He longs to overthrow them by covert, deceptive techniques. One of his heroes is one he calls Lucifer. He’s thinking and speaking of the devil, the old serpent, satan, the deceiver (cf. Rev. 20:2,10).

Satan rebelled against the God of heaven. He is a being who was/is filled with pride (cf. 1 Tim. 3:6). He desired positions of exaltation that were not his (Isa. 14:13-14). Because of his overestimation of self and his deep yearning for power, he rebelled against God. Because of this, he and his allies were cast down from heaven (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). They were not victorious in taking God’s throne. Too, Satan’s ultimate end will be in hell, tormented in a lake of fire and brimstone for ever and ever (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). This is the example that Mr. Alinsky praises. It is one of the examples of rebellion against “the establishment” in which he prides himself. Who can truly fathom such? Surely no Christian believes that satan should be used as a positive role model in rebelling against the “establishment.”

The heart of the rebellion for radicals lies in one word, “power.” This is the only end. Everything else is of no importance. They want to control the economy. They want to control the

(Continued on page 14)
Satan as the Example...



Editorial...

FAITHFUL IN THE LORD #2

Garland M. Robinson

Faithfulness is required in All Things: We must be **faithful to the Lord**. He gave himself a ransom for us, going to the cross, subjecting himself to shame and reproach, willingly dying in our stead. Shall we be any less committed to him who loved us and gave himself for us? Can we expect to hear those grand words, “enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” if we have not been faithful to him in all things (cf. Matt. 25:21,23)? Jesus said, “*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this [is] the first commandment*” (Mark 12:30).

We must **set our mind to seek the Lord and his way**. Rehoboam, the son of Solomon and heir to the throne of Israel, did not do so. “...*He did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD*” (2 Chron. 12:14). However, Ezra did seek the Lord: “*For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do [it], and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments*” (Ezra 7:10). Second Chronicles 30:18-20 says that Hezekiah prayed for the good Lord to pardon everyone “*[that] prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers ... And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.*” John, the forerunner of our Lord, came “*...in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord*” (Luke 1:17). Those obedient to the Gospel, those who have been risen with Christ, are to “*seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*” (Col. 3:1). That requires a mind-set that is turned to the Lord.

We must be **faithful to increase our knowledge of God’s word**. What Paul told Timothy is appropriate to all: “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a work-*

man that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). As newborn babes, we are to desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby (1 Peter 2:2). Peter also informs us to, “*...grow in grace, and [in] the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him [be] glory both now and for ever. Amen*” (2 Peter 3:18).

We must be **faithful to love God’s word**. “*O how love I thy law! it [is] my meditation all the day*” (Psa. 119:97). The man/woman blessed of God is one that has “*...his delight...in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night*” (Psa. 1:2). God spoke to Joshua after the death of Moses saying, “Be strong and of a good courage...that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it [to] the right hand or [to] the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (Josh. 1:6-8).

“*And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought [that which was] good and right and truth before the LORD his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did [it] with all his heart, and prospered*” (2 Chron. 31:20-21).

The Psalmist wrote, “*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*” (Psa. 119:11). “*I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved*” (Psa. 119:47). “*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so*

(Acts 17:11). “*Blessed [are] they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled*” (Matt. 5:6).

We must be **faithful to pray**. First Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to, “*Pray without ceasing.*” Jesus “*...spake a parable...[to this end], that men ought always to pray, and not to faint*” (Luke 18:1). When Peter was in prison, “*...prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him*” (Acts 12:5). Paul wrote to the brethren of the church at Rome saying, “*I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers*” (Rom. 1:8-9). To the brethren at Colosse Paul wrote, “*Continue in prayer; and watch in the same with thanksgiving*” (Col. 4:2). He always desired that brethren pray for him (1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1; Heb. 13:18). If an apostle wanted and needed prayer, don’t we need prayer also? Let us remember that “*the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*” (James 5:16).

We must be **faithful to forgive one another**. “*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses*” (Matt. 6:14-15). “*Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven*” (Matt. 18:21-22). “*And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses*” (Mark 11:25).

We must be **faithful to worship God**. Jesus said, “*God [is] a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [him] in spirit and in truth*” (John 4:24). Worship has always been an essential and significant part of pleasing God. From the beginning with Adam and Eve and extending forever, the worship of God will never cease. How dare say some they don’t have to worship or don’t need to worship. They may think that way now, but there’s coming a time when “*every knee shall bow...and every*

tongue shall confess to God” (Rom. 14:11). In that last great day there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 13:42). But, it will be too late then. They can fall down before God all they want, but all they will hear is “depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41). No wonder we’re warned in Hebrews 10:25 to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. Those who forsake the assemblies of the church today are no better off than those who abandoned them in the first century. Both will be lost!

To keep God’s word in our memory (cf. 1 Cor. 15:2), means we will worship God in the *prescribed way* and at the *prescribed time*. It was mandatory for the Lord’s people, the church of Christ, to meet on the first day of the week to worship God. In these assemblies they:

- Ate the *Lord’s supper* (Acts 20:7; cf. 1 Cor. 11:23-30),
- Received instruction through *preaching/teaching* (Acts 20:7; cf. 1 Cor. 14),
- *Prayed* (Acts 2:42; 12:5; 1 Cor. 14),
- *Gave an offering* according to their ability (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7),
- *Sang psalms, hymns and spiritual songs* without the accompaniment of mechanical instruments of music (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

We must be **faithful to work in the Lord’s vineyard**. Jesus said, “my meat (work) is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (John 4:34). “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (John 5:17). There’s no room for lazy members who are not devoted to the Lord’s work.

The Lord’s work is the work of the church. There are three areas wherein the church is authorized to work:

- *Evangelism* — teaching and preaching the Gospel in every place around the world (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 13:1-5),
- *Edification* — instructing the saints in the word of God (1 Cor. 14:4-5,12,26),
- *Benevolence* — helping the needy, whether saints or people of the world (Acts 6:1-7; Rom. 12:13; 2 Cor. 9:12-13; Gal. 6:10).

The work of the church is not done “in,” “by” or “through” man-made organizations.¹ God receives glory in the church, not through worldly endeavors. “*Unto him [be] glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen*” (Eph. 3:21). Some organizations of men are sinful by the work they do and/or the associations they keep (such works as those done by denominational churches or works which endorse and promote sinful behavior like Planned Parenthood). Some organizations may do good deeds and promote no immoral behavior (such as many civic organizations or benevolent societies), but they are not the church; and, they are not the work of the church. God receives no glory in civic organizations. The work faithful Christians endorse, promote and support are works of the church where God receives the glory and the name of Christ is promoted. The recipients of our labor praise God, not men. While many civic organizations do some good things, shall Christians spend their time and money in their advancement? Would not our time and money be better spent in the work of the church where God’s receives the glory?

We must be faithful in all things holy, things true, things honest. We must keep in memory the word and work of the Lord. “*Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let [them] slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard [him]”* (Heb. 2:1-3).

ENDNOTE:

¹The home is not a man-made organization. It is a divine institution. A home that meets legal requirements is still a home. Your home meets legal requirements. Taking care of orphans in a home is God’s arrangement. Elders oversee the church, not the home. The home is overseen by parents/guardians. The church can support a home for orphans in doing their work of benevolence. On the other hand, man-made

benevolent societies such as disaster relief organizations, even though run by members of the church, are not the work of the church. Let the church do its work in, by and through the church, not man-made organizations.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Jean Ware.....	\$40
Corazon Santiago	\$20
Carl & Agnes Thomsen	\$15
D. A. Atchley.....	\$100
Anonymous.....	\$20
Grider Town C/C, Opp, AL.....	\$300
Johnnie Tittle	\$100
Josie Williams	\$10
Anonymous	\$200
Jackson St. C/C, Alexandria, LA	\$100
Bradford C/C, Bradford, TN.....	\$100
Tiftonia C/C, Chattanooga, TN.....	\$100
Anonymous	\$200
Jim & Peggy Jones	\$100
Max & Carolyn Coleman	\$200
Berea C/C, Rock Island, TN.....	\$100
Anonymous.....	\$25
Lords Way C/C, Springfield, VT	\$50
Anonymous.....	\$50
Anonymous.....	\$70
Anonymous.....	\$25
Baker C/C, Baker, FL	\$25
R. Ellen Brockway	\$50
Anonymous	\$100
Anonymous	\$250
M. S. Rooker, Jr.	\$600
Anonymous.....	\$50
Clear Creek C/C, Corinth, MS.....	\$50
Del Brantley.....	\$50
Oxford C/C, Oxford, AL.....	\$100
C/C, Allenhurst, GA.....	\$150

Beginning Balance	\$10,797.93
Contributions	\$3,350.00
Debits	
Postage.....	\$1,668.63
Supplies	\$125.86
Ending Balance	\$12,353.44

**SEND US YOUR
CHANGE OF ADDRESS
WHEN YOU MOVE**

WHY I LEFT THE MORMON CHURCH #2

Nathan Franson

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is driven largely by a creed of thirteen “Articles of Faith.” Every Mormon is encouraged to memorize and teach them. We want to examine each one in light of the Bible, God’s eternal truth. Jesus said, **“IF ye continue in my word, THEN are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”** (John 8:31-32).

FIRST ARTICLE OF FAITH

“We believe in God the Eternal Father, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.”

This was one of the principal teachings that were instrumental in causing me to doubt the Mormon faith. On the surface it seems harmless, but once they begin to define their terms, there are obvious differences from what the Bible teaches.

Mormons state that they believe God the Father is eternal, but is that really what they believe?

Joseph Smith once stated, *“God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man... We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and will take away and do away the veil, so that you may see”* (Smith).

Lorenzo Snow, who served as Mormon Prophet from 1898-1901, coined the phrase *“As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become.”*

Orson Pratt, an original member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, *“If we should take a million of worlds like this and number their particles, we should find that there are more Gods than there are particles of matter in those worlds”* (Pratt). This begs the question that if God is not eternal, who is the first God? Isaiah wrote, *“...before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour”* (Isa. 43:10-11). Pratt attempted to explain this by writing, *“One world has a personal God or Father, and the inhabitants thereof*

worship the attributes of that God, another world has another, and they worship His attributes, and besides Him there is not other; and when they worship Him they are at the same time worshipping the same attributes that dwell in all the personal Gods who fill immensity” (Pratt). What he fails to concede is the rest of Isaiah’s words: *“...I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God...Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any”* (Isa. 44:6,8). If God were a man, He would know other gods, yet in His omnipotence and omniscience, He does not acknowledge any other, period.

Mormonism also falls short in identifying the nature of the Father and the Son. Smith wrote, *“The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us”* (Doctrines & Covenants 130:22). Likewise, this is how they were described in Smith’s “first vision.” However, the Bible describes the Father and Son differently. Jesus said, *“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”* (John 4:24). After his resurrection, Jesus explained to His disciples that a spirit does not have flesh and bones (Luke 24:37-39).

Furthermore, Mormonism teaches that Jesus was not always with God the Father, but was created and then became a part of the Godhead, obtaining a heavenly body. He was the only person on earth to be born of a mortal mother and immortal father. But John clarifies, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...”* (John 1:1,14). The Word (Jesus) was God and with God for all time and then became flesh, showing that He was not always in physical form. Not only that, but He is the Creator, having created all things (John 1:2-3). Paul also identifies Jesus as the Creator: *“For by Him were all things created,*

that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible...And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17).

The first line of the Mormon sacramental prayer reads, *“Oh God the eternal Father...”* How can God be finite and infinite at the same time? If one cannot distinctly understand the nature of the Godhead, how can anything else be viable?

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THE SECOND ARTICLE OF FAITH

The second listed belief in the Mormon Articles of Faith written by Joseph Smith states, *“We believe that men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam’s transgression.”*

On the surface, this may seem like an appropriate principle. However, further study will reveal that it is rather ironic based on how the Mormon Church views dealing with sin and particularly their teaching of a proxy salvation.

They impart the idea of what is commonly referred to as **baptism for the dead**. It is the belief that one may be baptized on behalf of another who passed away and did not have the opportunity to be baptized while living in this world. According to their doctrine, some never heard of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Others lived without fully understanding the importance of the ordinance of baptism. Some were baptized, but by someone without the proper authority to administer it. Mormonism teaches that one must be ordained to be eligible to baptize another.

The description on the main web page of the Mormon Church reads,

Jesus Christ taught that baptism is essential to the salvation of all who have lived on earth (see John 3:5).

Many people, however, have died without being baptized. Others were baptized without proper authority. Because God is merciful, He has prepared a way for all people to receive the blessings of baptism. By performing proxy baptisms in behalf of those who have died, Church members offer these blessings to deceased ancestors. Individuals can then choose to accept or reject what has been done in their behalf (www.lds.org).

As a young man in the LDS faith, it was an honor and privilege to participate in this ritual. Every Mormon temple contains a baptismal pool surrounded by twelve statues of oxen representing the twelve tribes of Israel. This is where the procedure takes place. Years ago, the person getting immersed would meet an older male who was “ordained” in the pool. A computer monitor was placed next to it with a list of numerous names. They would audibly state that they baptize the young man on behalf of a name on the screen “in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost for the remission of their sins” and immediately submerge them. As soon as they brought us up they straightway went on to the next name. It happened quickly and gave the participant just enough time to catch their breath for the next name. The whole routine was somewhat repetitive, as we would be immersed forty times or so for forty people who were supposedly deceased.

Mormons are careful to inform that when baptism for the dead is performed, those deceased are not being baptized into the Mormon Church against their will. Each person who has left this life still has the right to choose on the other side. Their salvation is still contingent on whether or not they accept and follow Christ while residing in the “spirit world.”

According to Mormon teaching, the New Testament validates baptism for the dead and was restored with the establishment of the *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*. They claim the Apostle Paul was doing it when he said, “Else what shall they do which are baptized for

the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead” (1 Cor. 15:29)? What needs to be considered is the context of the passage. If one carefully examines the entire chapter, Paul is describing the resurrection process. Notice the middle questions in verse 29: If the dead rise not at all, why be baptized? If there is no resurrection, what is the point of being baptized?

First, it must be understood who needs to be baptized, and why. Baptism is for the condemned (Mark 16:16; Rom. 6:23). It is personal for each individual. The one who sins is the one who must be baptized in order to take care of it. If the wages of sin is death, something must be done consciously on an individual’s part to take care of that sin. Baptism is that commandment (Act 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21). The Bible teaches man is responsible for his own sins (Ezek. 18:20). Therefore if man is “punished for his own sins” according to the Mormon article of faith, then how could anyone else be able to atone for them? Paul writes, “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation* [emphasis, NF] with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12). The inspired writer pens, “...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). Death seals a person’s fate.

It must also not be overlooked that man is held accountable for himself. Each person must *hear* for himself (Rom. 10:17). Each person must *believe/obey* for himself (John 8:24). Each person must *repent* of his own sins (Act 2:38). Each person must *confess* Christ himself (Matt. 10:32-33). None of these can be done on behalf of another. Neither can anyone be *baptized* for someone else.

Jesus made it clear in His account of the rich man and Lazarus that their destination was final. The Savior states, “And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf *fixed*: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence” (Luke 16:26). There was not so much as even a hint that someone still living could come to the rescue of the rich man. No living person can make preparations for those who are dead in order to escape

eternal torment.

Jesus affirms, “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left” (Matt. 25:31-33).

The Lord proclaims, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; *they that have done good*, unto the resurrection of life; and *they that have done evil*, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28-29).

Paul confirms, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that *every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*” (2 Cor. 5:10).

Therefore, to have Mormonism teach that man is punished for his own sins, yet believe in a proxy redemption, is a contradiction in principle. One cannot have a foot in both camps. It is important for all to realize that the decisions made in this life will determine where the next one is served.

921 W Vine St.
Kissimmee, FL 34741

DANGERS CONFRONTING THE LORD’S CHURCH

Several years ago brother N. B. Hardeman, one of the great spiritual giants of his generation, was asked what dangers he saw confronting the church of his day. His reply was as follows: 1) A lack of Bible knowledge and a light regard with what it says. 2) A tendency to make the church a social club of entertainments. 3) A disposition to compromise the truth and to discourage sound preaching. 4) A love for the praise of men more than the praise of God, lest they should be put out of someone’s social circle.

Consider these things carefully and note how the growth of them is causing tremendous problems and harm in the church today. So many care little about the old Jerusalem Gospel. Jude 3 commands us to “earnestly contend for the faith.”

WALTER PIGG, GOSPEL PREACHER, EDITOR, FRIEND 1925 – 2014

Walter W. Pigg Jr., 88, of Murray, Kentucky died Sunday, January 26, 2014 at the Murray Calloway County Hospital. He was born on September 19, 1925 in Wayne County, Tennessee. He was a member of the Green Plain Church of Christ. For more than 60 years he preached at various congregations and also did mission work in India, Taiwan, Ukraine and the Philippines. Brother Pigg is survived by his wife of 67 years, Naomi Wilson Pigg of Murray; four children, Larry Pigg and wife Carol of Milan, Tenn., Susan Adams and husband Alan of Manchester, Tenn., James Pigg and wife Jan of Murray and Cathy Pigg of Murray. He had nine grandchildren, 27 great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. He was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Lessie Keaton Pigg; three brothers, Jalmer, Eugene and Ray and two sisters, Pauline and Gaynelle. Funeral services were held on Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2014 at Heritage Family Funeral Home in Murray. Alan Adams officiated. Interment was in Collinwood, Tenn.

I have known brother Pigg for 30 years or more. We have crossed paths

many times. He was an example of one who would never quit. He spread the Gospel till his dying breath. He was editor, printer and doer of all things concerning the *Banner of Truth*, a Gospel journal through which he preached the Word, in season and out of season. He was faithful to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine (cf. 2 Tim. 4:2); not very popular, but it never has been. He would not listen to the 'siren song' of the naysayers who parroted the words of evil doers in Isaiah's day (30:10-11): *"Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits. Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."* God's instructions to Isaiah were: *"Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: That this [is] a rebellious people, lying children, children [that] will not hear the law of the LORD"* (Isa. 30:8-9). Brother Pigg called a spade a spade and sounded forth the words of truth and soberness.

He was certainly one who did the work of an evangelist. His words went throughout the whole world. And, they will continue to be heard through the printed page. All the back issues of *Banner of Truth* are not available at its web site (banneroftruthonline.com), but maybe we can help get them there one day. He directed the *Banner of Truth* lectureship for many years — up until his health would not allow him to do any more. So much sound and faithful preaching and teaching has been done through his efforts.

Like we all should do, he did what he could. Many great and precious moments fill my mind with fondness in memory of this grand old soldier of the cross who has now gone on to his reward. He is a great example for us all, always striving to do more and more and do it to the best of his ability. Most assuredly, it has been worth it all!

All the faithful in Christ Jesus have that blessed hope of being with him, and the redeemed of all the ages, in heaven some day.

— Garland M. Robinson

Satan as the Example...

(Continued from page 9)

environment. They want to control the home. They want to control the minute aspects of the lives of all individuals. They will promise the world as long as that promise brings another person under their power. "The power" always knows best. The people are supposed to trust this and submit to all the decisions of "the power." At first, their promises seem to be beneficial to the masses. Eventually, "the power" destroys the masses.

Some may be of the opinion that ministers of the Gospel should never delve into the power structure of the government under which we live. They have been deceived by the lie that says there is supposed to be a

complete separation between church and state. This is not the case at all. The Bible has much to say about both the establishment of government and the purpose of government. Bible greats like Joseph, Moses, Daniel, John the Baptist, Paul, and Jesus confronted the leaders of their day. They pointed out their moral failures. They challenged them with their righteous messages. They warned them of the coming judgment by the Governor of the nations and the entire universe (Psa. 22:28).

Dear reader, governments and those who lead them are in power because God allows them to be there. To Pilate, Jesus said, *"Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above..."* (John 19:11). Our political officials are supposed to be ministers

of God for good (Rom. 13:4). They are to protect that which is good and execute wrath against evil doers (Rom. 13:3-4). If they desire for the nation in which they rule to be exalted, they will lead the nation in righteousness (Prov. 14:34). They need to remember that God's watchful eye is upon them (Prov. 5:21). Surely, no leader wants to be weighed in the balances of God and found wanting (cf. Dan. 5:27).

As children of God, we need to learn, understand, and appreciate the fact that God has legislated (in his word) about the actions of government and its leaders. First and foremost, leaders need to acknowledge the God of heaven. A brief study of Nebuchadnezzar's reign will reveal this. Too, they need to implement the principles of righteousness within the nation. These principles are

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GIVING AN ANSWER

Joe W. Nichols

Most of us have likely heard one or more of the following statements: “I don’t believe in arguing the Bible;” “the truth doesn’t need defending;” “debating is unchristian.” The devil probably couldn’t be more pleased with such statements — they contradict God and the Bible! Contrary to such thinking, Christians are obligated to think logically, to reason soundly, and to use reasoning and logic in defending the faith (Jude 3).

Paul states, “*prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil*” (1 Thess. 5:21-22, ASV). To prove is to “try” (Phil. 1:10), “examine” (Gal. 6:4), and “put to test” (1 Cor. 11:28). The conclusion being that Christians are to prove, try and test what is heard regardless who the speaker might be. The Bereans (Acts 17) were of this disposition, “examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.” For this reason, “they were more noble than those at Thessalonica” (Acts 17:11).

Those who mix truth and error are continuously before us and we must ever be on guard. Subsequently, we must not only be studious, but questioning and testing what is said.

As Jesus warned, “*Take heed what ye hear*” (Mark 4:24). Our testing equipment today in examining what we hear is the Bible. It is our measuring rod, our “yardstick” to determine correctness.

Peter exhorts, “*Sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer...*” (1 Peter 3:15). The Greek word translated “give answer” is a legal term used in court wherein the attorney talks his client off a charge levied against him [Wuest’s Word Studies, First Peter, p.89]. Since the Bible has no verbal defense except its believers, persons of faith must be its defenders. Therefore, Peter enjoins upon Christians the obligation to defend the faith in a verbal way — “give answer.” The only restriction given is that it must be done with an attitude of “meekness” and “fear,” in trusting God and His word rather than self.

God called Israel to reason (Isa. 1:18). Elijah debated the false prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:21). Religion needs to be constantly tested and tried as to its quality. In the cases of God and Israel, Elijah and the false prophets of Baal, the genuineness of the false prophets religion was tested

and shown to be vain and wanting.

One’s “Christianity” stands in its right to exist as the religion from God when it can be substantiated in faith and practice in light of Scripture. Children and servants of God are: 1) to not believe every speaker (1 John 4:1); 2) not to succumb to a perverted Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9); 3) beware of those who go onward and abide not in the Gospel of Christ (2 John 9); 4) mark them that cause divisions and offences (stumbling) contrary to the doctrine (Rom. 16:17); 5) contend [go to battle] for the faith (Jude 3); 6) reason the Scriptures as Paul did at Athens and Ephesus (Acts 17:17; 19:8); 7) expound more accurately to others the way of God as did Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:26); and like Paul, 8) be “set for the defense of the Gospel” (Phil. 1:17).

Valid and sound argument is not wrangling or contentious dispute, but is the method of giving proof and evidence. By reasoning truth, we confirm Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God; the New Testament plan of salvation and worship; church polity, etc. We are confident in what we believe and practice because we have Scripture to witness to our intellectual hearts in the matter. Consequently, such confidence allows us to teach and preach with all boldness (Acts 4:29).

PO Box 91
Bastrop, LA 71221

found in God’s Word (Rom. 1:17; Titus 2:11-12).

As citizens of the nation in which we live, we must hold its leaders to the principles of righteousness found in God’s Word, the Holy Bible (Prov. 14:34). Any government that rejects God and His Word and aligns itself with the archenemy Satan will eventually be cast into hell (Psa. 9:17). Such rulers need to be replaced as soon as possible with leaders who will uphold righteous principles. Faithful Christians help this to come about, not by force, but by teaching, preaching, praying and voting.

Let us remember Proverbs 14:34, “*Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin [is] a reproach to any people.*”

13695 Covington Creek Dr.
Jacksonville, FL 32224

THE DEVICES OF SATAN

Is Satan real? According to some recent surveys, the majority of people do not believe in Satan. The devil has done a good job in selling people on the idea that he does not exist. Look through the selection of Bibles in a book store and you will find one that bears the name of Satan. In many cities you will find a church that wears the name of Satan. The Bible tells us clearly that Satan exists (Gen. 3:15; John 8:44; Rom. 16:20).

Satan is very good at deceiving. We must be aware of his devices. Listen to this warning, “*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light*” (2 Cor. 11:13,14). One would expect the world to deceive, but Paul is warning about those who are religious people. Jesus warned of the same (Matt. 7:15).

Satan is deceiving man by telling him he has plenty of time to obey God (2 Cor. 6:2). Many are being deceived by false teachers. Paul said they must be stopped (Titus 1:10-11). The church at Ephesus was commanded to have no fellowship with darkness; but instead, to reprove it (Eph. 5:11). Some teach that “grace alone” is enough to be saved. Others say “faith only” saves. Still others tell us Jesus will come back to earth to reign in Jerusalem for a thousand years. These teachings are not found in the New Testament, they are doctrines of men.

Earl B. Claud, 106 Bradley Hill Dr., Dover, TN 37058



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

"I really enjoy reading *Seek The Old Paths*. I'm sending you a little check. I still believe every little bit helps. Keep up the good work. We hope and pray we can change someone's life" ...**Ruby Cole, Cookeville, TN**. "Here is our contribution toward STOP. Keep up the Lord's work"

...**Anonymous, NV**. "Just finished reading the article by Paul Murphy 'Why I Changed Churches' in the Sept/13 issue of STOP. How can anyone misunderstand the truth as plain as it is in that article? Here is a small contribution to help in publishing STOP"

...**Thomas Newberry, Odessa, MO**. "I want to thank you for all of your hard work" ...**Philip Davis, Tullahoma, TN**. "I love the STOP publication. Tell it like it is brother. Only by standing strong on the truth will the church endure and prosper in these evil times. Thank you" ...**Douglas Kirk, Mitchells, VA**. "Thank you so much for sending me *Seek The Old Paths*" ...**Victor Gonzales, Austin, TX**. "I'm requesting you send a couple of back issues plus monthly issues to this address. Thank you in advance. I truly enjoy reading the articles. God bless all of you there" ...**Beatrice Chaffin, Southgate, MI**. "I appreciate very much if you can send me two articles that were published some time ago. Thank you" ...**Willie Mae Hickson, Haperville, GA**. "I am sending you a small check to help with the expenses for STOP. It is such a good publication. We enjoy reading it very much. Please add all the enclosed names to your mailing list. Thank you" ...**E. L. Webb, Hopkinsville, KY**. "Thank you for sending me *Seek The Old Paths*. Enjoy the articles very much" ...**C. L. Williams, Sapulpa, OK**. "God bless you. I am thankful to God for STOP. It is inspiring and very informative. May you continue to publish it" ...**Marian Tillman, Fresno, CA**. "Thank you for loving the Gospel and standing up and not watering the TRUTH" ...**Terry Wall, San Augustine, TX**. "We are starting a new church of Christ in Kemp, Texas, the East Gate C/C" ...**Kemp, TX**. "Thank you for what you are doing for this nation in publishing *Seek The Old Paths*. Not only does the world need the messages you are publishing, but the church in general needs them also. I had the honor of meeting you where you held a meeting some time ago" ...**Name withheld by request, Lynchburg, TN**. "Brother Robinson, may the blessings of God be given to you for the good work you do with STOP. Please start sending this monthly publication to the following individual" ...**Name withheld by request, Elmore City, OK**. "To the editor, I was attending the lectureship at St. Peters Church of Christ in St. Peters, Missouri where I live. I attend Mid West Church of Christ in Ferguson, MO. They had several copies of *Seek The Old Paths* from 2011 & 2012. I read them and found them to be informative, encouraging and scriptural. I would like to be placed on your mailing list please. Thank you" ...**Anita Phillips, St. Peters, MO**. "Hope and pray all is well as can be with both you and your family. We certainly do appreciate all the work that all of you put into the publication of *Seek The Old Paths*. God bless you" ...**Allen Rupert, Sr., Jonesborough, TN**. "Stewart Gillespie has passed away" ...**Lubbock, TX**. "Dear loving brother, Greetings to you in Christ. I am brother Joseph from India, an independent congregation. I have seen your wonderful website and I have read about your teachings. Therefore I am very much interested to join with your congregation. Please pray for me. Thanks a lot in Christ. I look forward to see your reply. Yours loving servant in Christ" ...**brother Joseph, India**. "Enjoyed your Oct/13 publication very much. My wife and I both read it and would love to subscribe to it. Thanks and God bless!" ...**Keith Gramelspacher, Oscoda, MI**. "Please remove me from your mailing list for the *Seek The Old Paths* publication. I appreciate receiving it over the years. Thanks!" ...**Ray Barger, Waverly, TN**. "Please change the address name on the *Seek The Old Paths* publication from Noel Whitlock, our former min-

ister, to Ferman Carpenter, our current minister. Thanks" ...**Round Rock, TX**. "I am on your mailing list and greatly appreciate your articles. I received the Feb/2013 issue in which was included 'Questions About The English Standard Version #1.' Has there been an article #2, and if so, when? Thanks, ...**Norm Wells**. [NOTE: This three part series ran in Feb/Mar/April 2013 and is online in both HTML and PDF at www.seektheoldpaths.com/stop2013.htm.] "Greetings in the name of our Lord! Please send me the materials to the following address if possible. We have been doing the Lord's ministry since 2003 and have established more than 11 congregations in the local area as well as in Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh border" ...**Joseph Khati, Bagdogra Church of Christ, Bhuttabari, South Bagdogra, Darjeeling, West Bengal, India**. "There seems to be a trend movement of putting mechanical instruments in our worship. The same argument over and over, 'He didn't say not too.' Here's a comparison of scriptures you can use in combating the false teaching that goes on in the denominations, but sadly included in the Lord's church as well! In Ephesians 5:19, '*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*' Now turn to Amos 5:23, '*Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.*' Just in case someone does not think, the Lord knew what he was talking about" ...**Del Brantley, Salem, KY**. "Will try to help a little more to get the word out as it is needed so badly. Oh how much it is needed. So sad. Keep up the good work" ...**Gallipolis, OH**. "Remove from mailing list!" ...**Fred Rasco, Walling, TN**.

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

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