

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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JUST WHO OR WHAT IS AN 'ANTI'?

Rusty Stark

We are in a war against liberalism. Liberalism has launched its forces against the truth of God's word and against the blood-bought church of our Lord. No true Christian can afford to be neutral or silent when such a war is raging.

Liberalism is the effort to cast off the obligations God has placed on us. It looks at the law of Christ (Rom. 8:2; I Cor. 9:21) and declares it is not a law, just a love-letter. It looks at the demand that sinners be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) and questions whether they really have to be baptized, and whether or not they really have to be baptized for the purpose of having their sins forgiven. Liberalism allows people to remarry who have no such right from God (Matt. 19:9). Liberalism allows practices in worship — instrumental music, hand-clapping, special singing groups, drama presentations, etc. — none of which are authorized by God (Col. 3:17).

These are serious matters, and the war is taking its toll in lost souls. But in the midst of such a war, we need to remember there are other ways to depart from God's law than just through liberalism. God has given a pattern (Col. 3:17; Rom. 6:17; II Tim. 1:13). That pattern (and all patterns) includes things we must do, things we must not do, and options.

"Liberalism" is the effort to take the "binding" things of the pattern and "unbind" them — to take the

things we must or must not do and put them into the category of options.

Anti-ism, on the other hand, is the effort to bind things God has not bound, to take the options in God's pattern (which is the New Testament) and put them into the category of obligation. Liberalism seeks to loose the law God has bound. Anti-ism seeks to make laws that God has not bound. As one preacher used to say — if you drive off the bridge or back off the bridge, you're still off the bridge.

Why is it called "anti-ism?" Because it is against — it is against the freedom God has allowed. And make no mistake about it — anti-ism is just as sinful as liberalism.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

II Peter 2 deals with false teachers who were largely given to liberalism. One phrase in verse 19 is descriptive of liberalism — "*While they promise them liberty.*" This is the hallmark of liberalism, to give liberty where God has given obligation.

In I Timothy 4, Paul deals with false teachers. In verse 3 he mentions two specific false doctrines that represent a departure from the faith: 1) *forbidding to marry*, and 2) *commanding to abstain from meats*. Marriage (so long as one is free to marry) and the eating of meats are options (I Cor. 7:2; Rom. 14). To forbid these things is to be "anti" or against the things God has allowed. In I Timothy 4:1, Paul says these attempts to

make laws God has not made are "doctrines of devils."

In Matthew 15, Jesus deals with people who were both *liberal* and *anti*. The scribes and Pharisees wanted to condemn the disciples for not washing their hands before they ate. This was not a law of God, it was a law of men. Men had no right to make such laws and Jesus condemns them for teaching the commandments of men (v.9). But he also condemns them for *making the commandment of God of no effect* (v.6). Their sin in this matter was in disregarding or unloosing the law God had bound on them. They were obligated by God's law to honor (take care of) their father and mother. They found what they thought was a loophole, and so freed themselves from the obligation God had put them under. Liberalism and anti-ism both come from a lack of respect for God's pattern and from a misunderstanding of the pattern concept. So, they are not mutually exclusive. One can be both liberal and anti at the same time.

EXAMPLES OF ANTI-ISM

In the last several decades, the church has been plagued, sometimes more severely than others, by those who want to bind things God has not bound. Following is a partial list of some things some brethren are

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Anti...



Editorial...

BAPTISM AND SALVATION #3

Garland M. Robinson

THE RECIPIENT OF BAPTISM

Those who are to be baptized are **alien sinners**. Baptism is for those who have sinned and stand separated from God (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Matt. 9:13; cf. Isa. 59:2). Baptism is the step at which the Lord's blood is applied to wash sins away (Rom. 6:3-6, 17-18; Acts 22:16).

The only ones who have sinned are those who have reached the age wherein they are accountable for their sins. This rules out infants, small children and adults who are mentally incapable of comprehending the significance of sin and the Lord's atoning sacrifice for sin.

Those who are to be baptized are **those who are TAUGHT** (Matt. 28:18-20; John 6:45; Acts 8:35-39).

Those who are to be baptized are **those who BELIEVE** in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the world (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:37; 18:8).

Those who are to be baptized are **those who have REPENTED** of their sins (Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38; 17:30).

Those who are to be baptized are **those who have CONFESSED FAITH in Christ** (Acts 8:37; Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10).

Some try to claim authorization for infant baptism, however, they do so to their own destruction for they stand without any Bible authority. The only ones in the Bible who were ever baptized were those who were responsible for their transgressions. Those who are mentally incompetent cannot believe, repent or confess.

THE ONE BAPTISM

There are at least five baptisms mentioned in the New Testament: 1) John's baptism (Luke 3:16), 2) the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:16), 3) the baptism of fire (Matt. 3:11), 4) the baptism of suffering (Matt. 20:22-23) and 5) the baptism

in water of the great commission (Acts 8:36-39).

Ephesians 4:5 says there is **ONE** baptism. How then can we reconcile these five baptisms? The answer is to look at the design of each of them.

1) "John's baptism" was an immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins. It was limited in that it would only last until Christ should die on the cross (Mark 1:4; Acts 19:3-5). It was looking forward to the time of Christ.

2) Jesus promised "Holy Spirit baptism" to the apostles (John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 2:1-4), which in turn, guided them into all truth. There's no record of it being received by members of the church in general. It was not for salvation and would serve no purpose for today.

3) Jesus is the administrator of "the baptism of fire" which is to punish the wicked in hell at the end of time (Matt. 3:11-12; Rev. 20:11-15). No one wants this baptism!

4) The "baptism of suffering" is spoken of by our Lord. He talked about suffering for the sins of the world. He would be tried, tested, ridiculed and crucified (Matt. 20:22-23).

5) "Water baptism" (of the Great Commission) was to be administered by the disciples upon all sinners who had repented of their sins and desired to be saved (Acts 2:38). It was commanded to be done as long as the world stands (Mark 16:15-16). The purpose of it is for the salvation of one's soul (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Peter 3:21).

Of these five, which baptism is the "one baptism" of Ephesians 4:5? This "one baptism" is not "John's" baptism for it was superseded by Christ's baptism. It is not "Holy Spirit" baptism for it was not promised to everyone and was only received by a few. It is not "fire baptism" because it is reserved for the wicked after this life is over. It is not the Lord's "baptism of suffering" because that was

limited to Him alone. "Water baptism" is the only one that was to be practiced throughout the end of the world as commanded in the Great Commission. Jesus told his disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Those who believed and repented of their sins were then to be baptized (immersed) in water for the forgiveness of their sins (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 22:16).

By the time the book of Ephesians was written in 63 A.D., only **ONE** baptism was known, **NOT TWO, THREE, FOUR or FIVE!** The "one baptism" is to be administered to every sinner who repents and wants his sins washed away in the blood of Christ (Rev. 1:5; Acts 16:22).

The **ONE BAPTISM** then is **WATER BAPTISM** which was commanded by Jesus to be administered to all who believe in Christ and repent of their sins as stated in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:16). Will you obey today?!

WHAT FOLLOWS BAPTISM?

There are certain things that follow or come as a result of those who have been baptized. After water baptism...

One walks a newness of life (Rom. 6:4). There is a new relationship with Christ. One does not continue living a life of sin (Rom. 6:6-18). One become a new creation (II Cor. 5:17). Old things are put off. *"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another"* (Eph. 4:22-32). *"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds"* (Col. 3:8-9, see also vs. 10-12). We now have a new name (Isa. 62:2; Acts 11:26).

We recognize **we are a member of the body of Christ**. We are born into God's family (John 3:3,5). We have God as our Father (Matt. 6:9) and Christ refers to us as His brethren (Heb. 2:11). We are heirs with Him (Rom. 8:17). We are important as a member of the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:12-31).

We **worship God faithfully**. Those who were baptized in the first century “...continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). Their worship consisted of: **Singing** (Eph. 5:19), **Praying** (Acts 12:5), **Giving** (I Cor. 16:1-2), **Preaching** (Acts 20:7) and the **Lord’s supper** (I Cor. 11:23-26).

Satan will try to draw you away from God (I Peter 5:8; Acts 5:3; II Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:11,16). There is no subject in the Bible that is any clearer than this subject (Gal. 5:4; I Cor. 10:12; Acts 14:22; Mark 4:14-19). Some in the New Testament sinned and placed themselves in great jeopardy (II Tim. 4:10; Rev. 2:5,16, 21-21; 3:3,19; Acts 8:12-13,18-24). You need to determine right now you are not going to forsake the Lord. Do not let Satan draw you away from God. Later, when family reunions, or company comes, or ball games, or vacations, or anything else, you won’t have to decide whether to go or not — that was already decided the day you were baptized (cf. Matt. 6:33).

We seek those things that are above (Col. 3:1-3; 2:12). We seek things above because our affections, attachment, and fondness are on things above (Matt. 6:19-21; Luke 12:32-34). The reward is great (Col. 3:4; Phil. 3:17-21; Heb 11:13-16). Have you made a reservation (Heb. 13:14; I Peter 1:4)?

“BAPTIST BAPTISM” AND “BIBLE BAPTISM”

The difference between “Baptist baptism” and “Bible baptism” is all the difference in eternity! Bible baptism is that which is explained in the Bible. Baptist baptism is that which is explained in the Baptist Manual. Baptist baptism is practiced, not according to the Bible, but according to Baptist doctrine and tradition.

Baptist baptism is administered to those who confess that God for Jesus’ sake has already forgiven them of their sins. It is for individuals who want to become a member of the Baptist Church. Baptists say it has nothing to do with salvation. It is simply an “outward sign of an inward grace.”

Bible baptism on the other hand, is always administered to individuals **in order to be saved**. It is the act

by which one leaves the “lost state” and enters the “saved state.” Notice these many verses on the subject given by heaven, not men.

Acts 22:16 — “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins....” It is done in order to have one’s sins washed away!

Mark 16:16 — “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved....” One is baptized in order to be saved. It comes before salvation.

Acts 2:38 — “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins....” It is for the forgiveness of sins. It comes before forgiveness of sins.

I Peter 3:21 — “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us....” Baptism saves. What more must God say?

Romans 6:3-4 — “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death.” Baptism puts one INTO Christ where the saved receive the benefits of his death where salvation is (II Tim. 2:10).

Romans 6:6 — “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.” Sins are destroyed in baptism.

Romans 6:17-18 — “...Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin....” Baptism makes one free from sin.

Baptist baptism makes one a Baptist. Bible baptism makes one a Christian (Acts 2:41), a member of the Lord’s church (Acts 2:47). The Lord will save his church and none other (Eph. 5:23). Obey the Gospel today, **REPENT** (Acts 17:30) and be **BAPTIZED** (Acts 22:16) for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38)!

WHO WILL DENY THAT...

Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, etc., etc., all say... “He that believeth and is **NOT** baptized shall be saved.” But Jesus said... “He that believeth and **IS** baptized shall be saved...” (Mark 16:16). Which do you believe?

The Bible says, “...arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins...” (Acts 22:16). One is baptized in water in order to have his sins washed

away! Why do people try as best they can to “get around” it? Someone, anyone, please answer, why?

Also, “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us...” (I Peter 3:21). How can anyone refuse a plain statement from inspiration? Baptism saves us!

When one is baptized we find “...that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed...” (Rom. 6:6,17-18). Without baptism, there is no forgiveness of sins!

In Acts 2:38, “Repent, and be baptized...for the remission of sins....” Why don’t the denominations believe it?

No, the Bible does not teach that baptism is the **ONLY** condition of salvation but it sure teaches it is **AN ESSENTIAL PART!** Without water baptism one cannot contact Christ’s blood (Rom. 6:3-6,17-18). And, without the blood, there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22; Eph. 1:7). Are you ready to stand in judgment and give an answer why you did not **believe, repent** and be **baptized?** (see Acts 2:38)

CONCLUSION

When one is scripturally baptized, he/she is delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son (Col. 1:13). They then fix their eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:2).

How can anyone belittle the importance of water baptism? It is the turning point from the old man of sin to the new life in Christ.

Why do you wait dear sinner, arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins (Acts 22:16).

Note: the first item in the Mail-Bag on the back page mentions a financial need of Linda Hoff. Her husband Doug is a faithful Gospel preacher. Brethren have always been so good to respond to a need such as this. If you are able to help this good family, please contact them at the address given in the MailBag.

Anti...*(Continued from page 49)*

“against” because they try to turn options into obligations:

1. Anti Bible classes — This teaching declares that dividing into classes divides the assembly and is not authorized by God’s word. This is heresy — setting up a law that small groups of Christians cannot come together and study the Bible (Bible study). Paul taught both publicly and from house to house (Acts 20:20). We learn by example that brethren in the first century met together on the first day of the week to worship (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 14) and from that example we learn we must assemble together for worship also. However, in addition to worshipping together, it is also appropriate that we study the Bible in smaller groups (cf. II Tim. 2:15). Who would declare that it is sinful for brethren to study the Bible together?

2. Anti women teachers — This doctrine says that women cannot teach children or other women. For the answer to this false doctrine see Titus 2:3-4.

3. Anti multiple cups in the Lord’s supper — This teaching demands that only one cup be used in partaking of the Lord’s supper. (Interestingly enough, my father attended a congregation where they opposed multiple cups, but they actually had two cups, one for each side of the aisle.) This heresy places emphasis on the word “cup” (singular) and fails to recognize that it is actually the contents of the cup that is being referred to. Paul quotes Jesus as saying, *this cup is the New Testament in my blood* (I Cor. 11:25) — an obvious reference to the contents rather than the cup. In the next verse, Paul refers to drinking the cup. This is a physical impossibility unless he is referring to the contents of the cup.

4. Anti located preachers — This teaching says it is a sin for a preacher to work with a congregation that has elders or to work with a congregation for an extended period of time. The obvious error of this is seen in Acts 20 when Paul declared to the Ephesian elders (v.17) that he had taught them publicly and from house to house (v.20), and that he had

worked with them for three years.

5. Anti Bible colleges — This heresy teaches it is solely the work of the church to teach the truth (the scriptures) and that Bible colleges try to take over this work. Of course, Paul taught in a school in Ephesus for two years (Acts 19:9-10). If Paul taught in a school, it surely would have been proper for him to have a school and teach in his own school. And, why would it have been improper for him to invite some other faithful brethren to teach in his school also? However, while it is scriptural for a school to exist, there are at least two other concerns that need to be addressed. The first is whether or not church funds should be used to support a ‘christian’ college. To say that a christian college is scriptural in its existence is not to say that it is scriptural to support that work from the Lord’s treasury. A hot dog stand is scriptural in its existence, but it should not be supported by church funds. A place for young people to receive an education from Christian teachers in a Christian environment is a good concept. But it is no part of the work and mission of the church to give people a liberal arts education. Training preachers is the work of the church, but the liberal arts education of our children is not. The second issue of concern about Christian colleges is that in recent years, Christian colleges and universities have led many into the error of liberalism. They have been and continue to be the source of so much digression and apostasy today. This reminds us that the church can not and must not count on any secular institution to do its job. Such schools are the work of the home, not the church. We should not blindly follow any man or school. The Lord’s church is not dependant upon the schools. We must remember that the Lord died for the church, not the schools! They could all close their doors and the church of our Lord would still be the beautiful bride of Christ. The church certainly is sufficient to do the work God designed it to do.

6. Anti Cooperation — This doctrine teaches that a church cannot take money from its treasury and assist another congregation in doing the Lord’s work. Taken to its logical conclusion, this doctrine asserts that one congregation could not use the

baptistry of another congregation because it was paid for out of the church treasury. Furthermore, one church could not give another church song books or even Bibles! We find congregations cooperated with each other in the New Testament (Rom. 15:26). Paul (by inspiration) wrote to the church in Corinth (as he taught other churches) and instructed Christians to give a weekly contribution into a treasury (I Cor. 16:1-2). A good portion of this money (if not all of it) was taken to the elders of the church in Jerusalem for distribution (Acts 11:30; see also II Cor. 9:12-13). Furthermore, when Paul left Philippi, he traveled to Athens and then to Corinth (Acts 16-18). He later wrote the Philippians that no other church had supported him (communicated — giving and receiving) except the congregation in Philippi (Phil. 4:15). However, he wrote to the Corinthians that while he was with them, he robbed other churches (plural) in taking wages from them, but not from Corinth (II Cor. 11:8). If no one but Philippi communicated with him in giving and receiving, but he was getting wages from other churches, Philippi must have been receiving contributions from other congregations and forwarding them to Paul. This is a clear example of church cooperation.

7. Anti children’s homes. The argument is made that the responsibility to care for orphans (James 1:27) is the individual responsibility of each Christian, and therefore the church cannot be charged with such care. This is clearly wrong, for the same verse enjoins taking care of widows, and the church can be charged for widows (if they are widows indeed — I Tim. 5:9-16). If the church can be charged for the care of widows, then it can be charged for the care of needy children. There are too many different flavors and brands of this anti doctrine to explain or reply to them all here.

8. Anti aid to non-Christians. This doctrine says that the contributions made in the New Testament were for the saints (Christians) only. They conclude from this that it is wrong to take money from the church treasury to help those who are not Christians. But, Galatians 6:10 says, *“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially*

unto them who are of the household of faith.” They argue that Galatians 6:10 commands individuals, not churches, to help all men, and that the contribution is for the saints. This too can easily be proven false. For one, the instructions given in Galatians was for the “churches of Galatia” (Gal. 1:2). And, two, the contribution commanded in I Corinthians 16:1-2 was used for Christians and non-Christians. Paul says in II Corinthians 9:12 that the contributions had supplied the *want of the*

saints and in verse 13 refers to the *distribution unto them* (saints), and unto *all men* (non-saints).

CONCLUSION

There is a pattern for us as Christians (II Tim. 1:13). We do not want to throw off that pattern in any way. When we examine something, we must be careful not to take away freedom that God has extended, and we must be careful not to preach or practice freedom in that which God

has bound or not extended.

Are anti brethren part of our brotherhood? Some groups still seem to consider themselves so, while others seem to consider themselves a separate brotherhood. One thing is clear, if they are binding where God has not bound, they are false teachers, and if rebuke and admonitions are given and rejected, God’s faithful people will take note of them and avoid them (Rom. 16:17-18).

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REPENTANCE

John Cotham

Throughout the ages God has required that man repent. Before God forgives, man must repent. John the baptizer preached repentance, “...Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:2). Jesus preached repentance, “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). The apostles preached repentance. Paul said, “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent” (Acts 17:30). The apostle Peter taught, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9).

Perhaps we sometimes emphasize baptism to the point of excluding proper teaching concerning repentance. It is necessary to place as much emphasis upon the need to repent as we place upon the need to be baptized for remission of sin, because without either, no man’s sins are remitted.

THE NEED FOR REPENTANCE IS EQUAL TO THE NEED FOR BAPTISM

Peter, in his great sermon on the day of Pentecost, said, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). We have often expressed the co-ordinate conjunction “and” in order to express the importance of baptism to the

remission of sins. And, baptism IS just as necessary as repentance. But how about turning this argument around. Repentance IS just as necessary as baptism. It seems to have been the case (in some situations) that in order to get someone to understand the necessity of baptism, we might have left off the same emphasis upon repentance. This will cause a response that nearly guarantees the quick falling away of the one just converted. Again, the need for repentance is as important (equal to) the need for baptism. Acts 3:38, “Repent and be Baptized.” The co-ordinate conjunction “AND” means each side carries EQUAL weight. Repentance AND baptism. The need for baptism is once, but the need for repentance is continual.

We take note of what the apostle John said, “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:7-9). Continuing faithful to God requires a faithful walk (v.7). However, man is occasioned to stumble in sin (v.8). The blood of Jesus is always available to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (v.9). However, there is/are conditions. One must repent of and confess his sins (v.9). One might quickly argue that the term “repent” is not found in this verse. It is not stated, but it is neces-

sarily understood because confession of sin without repentance of sin accomplishes nothing. Peter told Simon the sorcerer to, “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee” (Acts 8:22).

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Repentance is NOT “sorrow for sin.” Many mistakenly think this is what repentance is about. It is true that there can be no repentance without being sorry for our sins. But, one can be sorry about their sins for a long time and still not repent of those sins. In I Corinthians 7:10 we find that there are two kinds of sorrow: “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.” There is godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. Mankind must take notice that it is only godly sorrow that “works” or brings man to genuine repentance. Just being sorry (worldly sorrow) does not bring about forgiveness of sin, but will cause a man to die in his sins. Repentance is a changing of wills, a changing of attitude, a changing of ways. It requires the leaving off of the sins for which one confesses and asks forgiveness.

Without faithful living, one will not receive the crown of eternal life (Rev. 2:10). Repentance is a necessary part of that faithful walk before God.

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QUESTIONS ABOUT JESUS AND HIS DEITY

Roger D. Campbell

“Jesus,” known as “the Christ,” is named in the text of the Greek New Testament 972 times [Smith’s Greek-English Concordance, p.2424]. Jesus is mentioned in the very first verse of the New Testament (Matt. 1:1), as well as in the New Testament’s very last verse (Rev. 22:21). It is no secret that Jesus, plus the salvation that is available to mankind through Him, are the focal points of the entire message of the Bible.

People today often ask questions about Jesus. Some ask them simply out of curiosity. Others ask about Him with a sincere desire to learn the truth. Yet another category of people asks questions about our Lord in such a way that it is obvious that their questions are intended to cause confusion, reflect on the reliability of what the Bible says, or else cause people to waver in their commitment to accept exactly what the Bible record states about our Savior.

The New Testament clearly teaches that Jesus is God, meaning that He possesses the characteristics of the Godhead. Jesus’ deity is set forth in a number of passages, including the fact that Jesus accepted what Thomas said about Him. Thomas proclaimed, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). Hebrews 1:8 records that the Father called Jesus “God.” Satan, however, has always tried to cause men, women, and children to doubt the reality that Jesus really was Emmanuel, meaning “God with us” (Matt. 1:23). In this article I want to consider three questions that are sometimes asked about the Son of God and His deity.

How could Jesus be God in the flesh? How could a divine Being become a human? A: The Bible says that “the Word was God” (John 1:1). To whom or what does “the Word” have reference? John 1:14 says, “*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*” This verse identifies “the Word” as being “the only begotten of the Father,” who is Jesus (John 3:16). Thus, the

three statements in John 1:1 about “the Word” (that He was in the beginning, that He was with God, and that He was God) are in reference to the Christ. Since the Word was God, coupled with the fact that “the Word was made flesh,” then it must be the case that God was made flesh.

The Bible says, “God was manifest in the flesh...believed on in the world, received up into glory” (I Tim. 3:16). This points to the incarnation of Jesus. The Bible also says of Jesus, “*And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*” (Phil. 2:8). Despite such plain declarations, some in the first century denied that the Messiah came in the flesh. The Holy Spirit calls such deniers “antichrists” (II John 7; I John 4:3). Such denials, though, cannot change what really took place. As we noted earlier, when Jesus lived in the flesh, He was “God with us” (Matt. 1:23). Thus, though He was in a human body, He was still God.

We are amazed that Jesus could be both “the Son of man” and “the Son of God,” yet the Bible says that He was both. We are amazed that Jesus could have an earthly mother and a heavenly Father, but that is what the Bible teaches. We are amazed that the Christ could have a human body, yet still be God. However, because of our confidence in the message of the Bible, we accept it all by faith. If someone says, “There is no way that the true God could ever be in a human body,” then that person either (1) has not read the Bible, or, (2) does not accept what the Bible says. In this matter, one must lay aside his/her own pre-conceived notions and accept God’s truth (John 17:17).

God is eternal, without beginning and without end. Jesus died. If Jesus is God, then that means that God died. How could God die? A: God the Father did not, and could not, die. But the same is not true for God the Son. Why? Jesus did die: “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (I Cor. 15:3).

Jesus willingly became a man. In doing so, He temporarily made Himself a little lower than the angels (Heb. 2:9). In what sense was He “lower” than angels? Simply by virtue of the fact that He came to live in this world of sin and in the end be put to death. Angels do not endure such. Why did Jesus temporarily take on a position that was lower than the created beings known as angels? In order to suffer death for all humanity (Heb. 2:9).

Because Jesus “was made in the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:7), then it was necessary for Him to go through physical death like all other men do (Heb. 9:27). Looking at it another way, because Jesus came to be the Savior of fleshly people, then He Himself took on the form of flesh and blood (Heb. 2:14,17). When Jesus died, He did not cease to exist. The part of Him that died was His physical body, which was in the grave for three days. However, His spirit continued to live, even when His body was in the tomb (Acts 2:24-27).

If Jesus is God, then why did He say that the Father is greater than He is? A: John 14:28 says, “I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.” In I Corinthians 11:3 it is also written, “...the head of Christ is God.”

As we already noted, Jesus, in coming to the earth and living as a man and in the form of a servant (Phil. 2:7), was willing temporarily to be “*made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death*” (Heb. 2:9).

By coming to earth, Jesus willingly took on a lower position than the Father in that God the Father never personally came to live in the flesh. However, while in the flesh, Jesus was still the “I AM” (John 8:58)! When talking about His divine nature, Jesus said, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). When speaking about His human nature/existence, Jesus said that the Father was greater (John 14:28). The President of the United States of America might temporarily be in a higher position of authority than you and I

are, yet he is still a human being. His temporary change in authority does not cause him to stop being a man — his “humanhood” remains. In the same way, Jesus’ coming to earth did not cause Him to stop being Deity or to lose His “Godhood.”

Commenting on what is said about Jesus in John 14:28, the late Guy N. Woods wrote:

While here, and in the flesh, he was in a subordinate position to the Father; this would no longer be so when He had returned to His former glory (Phil. 2:5-11). It is important to recognize that all statements in the sacred writings such as His Father was greater than He, He came not to do His own will, but the will of His Father, He proceeded from the Father and not the Father from Him, His Father knew some things He did not, etc., are all to be understood as referring to His incarnate state in which He voluntarily accepted a position of subordination; and not to His eternal state. His nature is the same as the nature of the Father and He is of the same essence [A Commentary on the Gospel According to John (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate, 1981), pp. 318,319].

Let us never be ashamed of the truth that the Bible reveals about Jesus. Let us never waver in our commitment to Him, and let us never run away from questions that people from time to time ask about Him. Jesus came into this world as the Savior of sinners. He will one day come again to be the Judge of every person. May each of us be prepared for that great day.

The way to prepare for the day of judgment is to become a Christian — hear the Gospel, believe its message, repent of all sins, confess faith in Jesus, and be baptized for the remission of sins. Following baptism, a person must be steadfast in his/her service to the Master (I Cor. 15:58).

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COLLEGE PRESIDENTS — THEN AND NOW

Jerry C. Brewer

Under the heading of, “College Presidents State Their Views On Speculative Teaching,” in the Oct. 11, 1934 issue of The Gospel Advocate, E. H. Ijams, president of David Lipscomb College wrote, “In view of existing conditions and the spread of hurtful doctrines in certain quarters, I ask that David Lipscomb College officially reaffirm its loyalty to every Bible principle of moral Character and Christian doctrine. As a safeguard for the future, I suggest that it be the policy of the board to close the doors of the institution against anyone who would teach or encourage the spread of unscriptural doctrines or hurtful speculations originating in the opinions of men rather than in the revelation of God’s word.”

In the same article, James F. Cox, president of Abilene Christian College wrote, “No atheist, sectarian, hobby rider, nor any one who is not a loyal, constructive supporter of pure New Testament Christianity, will ever be on its faculty so long as I am president. ... We believe, too, that Christian colleges should let the brethren know how their faculties are relative to denominationalism.”

As the saying goes, “That was then, this is now.” Seven decades have come and gone since those men expressed their devotion to New Testament Christianity on behalf of their schools. Where are their schools now?

It’s patently obvious that **Royce Money** who now heads Abilene Christian would never subscribe to brother Cox’s statement. In fact, Money bent over backwards to fellowship the Christian Church denomination as he co-delivered the opening address at ACU’s annual lectureship with Don Jeanes, president of the Christian Church’s Milligan College.

And, **L. Randolph Lowry III**, Lipscomb University’s president would certainly not subscribe to brother Ijams’ “closed door” to anyone who would teach...the spread of unscriptural doctrines. If he did, John Mark Hicks who is “Minister of Adult Education” at Rubel Shelly’s denomination, Woodmont Hills in Nashville would not be on DLU’s faculty. Hicks was one of the speakers at the Tulsa

Workshop in March of this year with Max Lucado, Oak Hills Church, San Antonio, Texas, Mark Henderson of Oklahoma City’s “Quail Springs Family of God,” and Victor Knowles, editor of the Christian Church magazine, One Body.

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

“Shortly after moving to Flat Rock, MI sister Linda Hoff was diagnosed with stage 3 ovarian cancer. Her husband, Doug Hoff, is the full time preacher for the Flat Rock Church of Christ. The Hoffes were looking into obtaining health insurance when an eight inch tumor was discovered. Consequently, the Hoffes are personally responsible for the bills for all the tests, surgery, hospitalization and chemotherapy. As of June 5 they have incurred bills totaling approximately \$50,000. Numerous Christians and congregations have already generously contributed to help with their medical bills. The Flat Rock Church of Christ took up a special contribution on the fifth Sunday of April. This totaled approximately \$8,000. The Gateway Church of Christ (Southgate, MI) gave about \$3,500. Using the funds donated so far, plus personal savings, the Hoffes have paid off all the bills for the tests (ultrasound, CAT scans, X-rays, blood work, pathology, lab fees, etc.), the multitude of doctors’ fees (surgeons, radiologists, anesthesiologists, etc.) and the hospital. The bill for the first chemotherapy treatment was over \$27,000 of the total. The hospital was willing to write off all but \$3,000 of this amount. This still needs to be paid. If you can help them financially it would be greatly appreciated. Funds may be sent to **Flat Rock Church of Christ; P.O. Box 12, Flat Rock, MI 48134**. The elders will send written acknowledgments for all contributions. The church’s telephone number is (734) 782-2886.” [EDITOR’S NOTE: I personally know brother and sister Hoff. He is a fine Gospel preacher and worthy of your support. He is sound in the faith and a faithful soldier of the cross. If you can assist them in paying their medical bills, it would be greatly appreciated.] “I look forward to receiving Seek The Old Paths each month. It is a real blessing to read. Keep this good work in your budget as you plan the ways in which you can serve the Lord. May God bless the congregation there and my prayers go with you” **...Ronald J. Shandor, Death Valley, CA**. “Please inform your readers that when they are corresponding with inmates, do not under any circumstances use your personal home address or phone number. We need to realize these people are in this place for a reason, and we need to be very careful when dealing with them. They are lost sinners and need the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, but do not give any personal information out. May God bless you and your work” **...Ancel Norris, Birmingham, AL**. [NOTE: of course most inmates are not Christians, but some of them are. Still, caution in all circumstances would certainly be in order.] “Greetings from the church that meets in Allenhurst, GA. We are pleased to announce that brother Richard Mansell, from Kentucky, has accepted the position of minister. We look forward to his working with the congregation here to spread the borders of God’s kingdom in this place. Thank you so much for publishing our search for a faithful servant of God to work with us here. May God continue to bless the good work you are doing with the publishing of STOP” **...Bob Miller, for the church at Allenhurst, GA**. “We found out about STOP when we worshiped at Bohman Street church of Christ where Marvin Weir is the preacher. I am now preaching at Honey Grove church of Christ and told our members about it and many would like to receive it on a continual basis. Thank you very much for this sound paper and making it available to us” **...Randy Ballard, Honey Grove, TX**. “I ran across a copy of your publication while visiting another congregation recently. I appreciate the stand you take and would like to receive the publication. If you take articles for publication, I do write occasionally and would like to submit some to you. I have been preaching almost 60 years, most of my work in Oklahoma and Texas, but I did spend 10 years in Georgia, where I preached part of that time for the Avondale church in Decatur. I also spent some time supporting myself and working with some of the smaller churches just outside the Atlanta area. Looking forward to receiving additional issues of the paper. God bless and keep up the good work” **...Jim Lundy, Tulsa, OK**. “Dear Brethren, I take this moment to thank you for beginning and continuing to provide the website with your radio station that continues 24/7. I live in south Mississippi and to my knowledge, there are no radio stations in my area that preach truth. All stations within my radio receiving capabilities are denominationally run. It is a great blessing to receive your radio programs via internet. Good congregational singing and gospel preaching any time of the day is great!! Having an evening schedule at my job, I and am able to be home most mornings, and that is when I listen to the web site. I worship with the Leakesville congregation and have for some time listened to a program on a local radio station, Sunday

mornings before I leave for worship. The radio program is on a local station here sponsored by the Lucedale congregation. They have a half-hour spot and present a lesson from the international gospel hour. I was delighted to find that Brother Winfred Clayborn, which presents those lessons, is regularly a speaker on your radio website. Keep up the good work!” **...Dorcas McLeod, Leakesville, MS**. “Just got this month’s paper and it is great as usual. It is sad so many have fallen away. Thanks for listing them so we can attempt to reach them. By their fruits we shall know them” **...Melvin Harper, San Saba, TX**. “Excellent article on ACU, my alma mater. Paul would not have allowed SOULFORCE on the campus of the school of Tyrannus. And Samuel would not have allowed any male cult prostitutes to speak at his school of the prophets. In a few years they will be speaking at ACU’s “Bible” Lectureship with Royce Money and Jack Reese apologizing for past “bigotry”. Eph. 5:11, God bless” **...Roelf L. Ruffner (class of ‘76)**. “Please do not send anymore Seek The Old Paths to us. Thank You! Stop the Mailing” **...Dewey Wilkinson, Shamrock, TX**. “Keep up the good work. Thanks” **...Jerry Morgan, Bixby, OK**. “I have just finished reading the June issue of STOP and enjoy it so much. Also, we want you to know we miss you and your good work in our area” **...Mack & Helen Johnson, Glen, MS**. “My prayer is that God will give you strength to continue to print the truth that’s found in God’s word” **...Lorene Wilson, Binger, OK**. “I really enjoy studying all of the volumes of STOP” **...Neal Alexander, Columbus, GA**. “I have enjoyed receiving STOP for a number of years” **...Mildred Ledkins, Lawrenceville, GA**. “Keep up the good work” **...Joe Britt, Baxter, TN**. “Please add our name to your mailing list. A friend shared one of their issues with us and we really appreciate the good articles” **...Bill Pruitt, Newport, OR**. “I would truly be pleased to receive the paper. Thank you much” **...Leonard Belcher, Bessemer, AL**. “What a great publication. Thank you for all your efforts to reach the lost” **...Ruth Graves, Odessa, TX**.

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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