



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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WHAT'S IN STORE FOR THE USA?

Jason Patrick Hilburn

I'm thankful our King does not change every four years!

I'm thankful our King can never be defeated by His enemies! I'm thankful our King loves righteousness and hates iniquity! That is why God the Father exalted His Son Jesus to be our Righteous King — the King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

What does God have in store for the USA? I do not know, but I know what He does NOT have in store. Friends, the USA will not last forever. The USA is not the everlasting kingdom foretold in the Old Testament to begin in Jerusalem during the days of the Roman kings (Daniel 2; Isaiah 2; Joel 2; Haggai 2). The USA is not the "holy nation" referred to in 1 Peter 2:9. It's not the kingdom that will be delivered up to God when Jesus returns (1 Cor. 15:22-24). Those descriptions belong solely to the Lord's church/nation/kingdom that He died to establish (Matt. 16:18-19, 28; Acts 20:28). The USA needs to remember what Psalm 9:17 says: "*The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God*" (cf. Prov. 14:34). If the USA chooses the path of rebellion against God, that path leads to destruction.

Also remember that God has often used even wicked leaders to accomplish His will (Exodus 9:16; Daniel 4:17; Habakkuk 1; John 19:11). There are things God does in His providence that are beyond our understanding (Isa. 55:8-9; Rom. 11:33; 13:1-7). Clearly, God's main goal is for people to be in Heaven with Him forever (Rom. 5:8-10; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9). This nation and this world need to be seen

the way God does, with eternity in mind (1 Cor. 2:16; 2 Cor. 4:16-18).

I love the USA, and I am not saying the USA is about to fall, but one day it will come to its end, just like every other earthly nation (2 Peter 3:10-12). Until then, Christians in America need to pray for its leaders and be godly citizens (Rom. 13; 1 Tim. 2:1-5; 1 Peter 2:13-23). We need to make sure we are faithful members of Christ's everlasting kingdom and that our citizenship is in Heaven (Matt. 16:18-19, 28; Col. 1:13; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 12:22-29; Rev. 1:9). Maybe we need to be reminded that Christians are like those of ancient times who were "*strangers and pilgrims on the earth*," desiring "*a better country, that is, a heavenly*" (Heb. 11:13-16; cf. Matt. 6:19-21; Col. 3:1-2).

When I compare Christ's kingdom to the USA, I'm so thankful our King does not change every four years! I'm so thankful our King can never be defeated by His enemies! I'm so thankful that our King loves righteousness and hates all sin! That is why God the Father exalted His Son Jesus to be our Righteous King — the King of all kings (Matt. 28:18; Heb. 1:9; Rev. 17:14). Our King does not use profanity. He is the epitome of humility. He hates the shedding of innocent blood.

He hates racism, adultery, homosexuality, pedophilia, and sins of every kind (Prov. 6:16-19; Luke 10:25-37; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Jude 7). He has never committed even one sin (Heb. 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22).

Our King commands men to love God first and love their neighbors as much as they love themselves (Matt. 22:36-40; Phil. 2:3-5). He commands His followers to pray for their enemies and do good to them (Matt. 5:43-48; Rom. 12:9-21), and if there is one thing our nation is missing, it's LOVE! That is because most people do not understand who the True Ruler is, and that He is love (1 John 4:8-11). One day they will. One day every person who has ever lived will bow down before King Jesus, confessing His glory with their mouths: "*For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God*" (Rom. 14:11; cf. Phil. 2:9-11). On that day it will be too late to be saved from God's wrath. There is no day that compares with the day the Lord God Almighty returns in judgment against this wicked world — the day the righteous Lamb returns in the clouds as the Lion of Judah

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What's In Store...



Editorial...

SYSTEMIC CORRUPTION #1

Garland M. Robinson

People look to themselves and society (political correctness) to define and determine what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong, what is true and what is false. The day is upon us, yea is already here in many quarters, that speaking with authority with a “thus saith the Lord” is being silenced by corrupters.

We're hearing a lot lately about "systemic" this or "systemic" that. What exactly does that mean? "Systemic refers to something that is spread throughout, affecting a group or system, such as a body, economy, market or society as a whole." Webster says, when used as a noun, it is "of, relating to, or common to a system. ... fundamental to a predominant social, economic, or political practice." Dictionary.com says: when used as an adjective, "of or relating to a system, especially when affecting the entirety of a thing: ... **relating to or noting a policy, practice, or set of beliefs that has been established as normative or customary throughout a political, social, or economic system.**"

I'm amazed, and not in a good way, how people look to themselves and society (political correctness) to define and determine what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong, what is true and what is false. Second Peter 2:19 calls those who practice these things, "*servants of corruption.*" However, the living and almighty God in heaven defines good and evil, right and wrong, true and false. "*But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation*" (Jer. 10:10). Men constantly reverse God's true judgment and substitute their own. Isaiah 5:20 says, "*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*"

The holy Scriptures (earth's operation manual) reveal the truth about those who work iniquity and corruption. Proverbs 17:15, "*He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.*" Proverbs 24:24-25, "*He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him: But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.*" Isaiah 10:1, "*Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed.*" Matthew 6:23, "*But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*" Luke 16:15, Jesus "...*said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.*"

The world is full of systemic evils. As a matter of fact, every sin, every violation of God's word, is systemic. The world makes sin their belief and policy. They establish the practice of sin as normal and customary in society; and, they condemn everyone who opposes them.

A very radical movement is alive and well in the United States. It's marching forward with a banner to "cancel" our long established culture. Its origin is founded in **Marxism, Communism, Socialism.** It's not enough for them to have their view heard. They're determined to shut down (i.e. cancel) every dissenting voice. They even pledge to compile a

list of those who have a contrary voice and destroy them! The day is upon us, yea is already here in many quarters, that speaking with authority and a "*thus saith the Lord*" is vigorously being silenced. "Freedom of speech" is dead and gone as far as they are concerned. The ONLY voice they allow is theirs! None the less, the faithful will continue to proclaim the "*oracles of God*" (1 Peter 4:11). We will obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). We will stand in defense of the Gospel (Phil. 1:7,17). We will do what Isaiah was told, "*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins*" (Isa. 58:1). We will strive to be as Paul who said, "*Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*" (Acts 20:26-27). We may go down fighting the good fight of faith, but fight it we will! "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*" (Eph. 6:12).

The generation in which we live is no different than the generations before it — from the first sin of Adam and Eve, extending to the judgment day, the last day of this world's existence. SIN is defined as the transgression, the violation, of God's word/law. "...*Sin is the transgression of the law*" — the never changing law of God (1 John 3:4). By inspiration, John wrote of his day saying, "...*the whole world lieth in wickedness*" (1 John 5:19). Our generation is no different.

What does the Bible say? If we want to learn the truth on any consequential matter, we must turn to the Bible. It never changes with the times or culture. It is **The Absolute Truth.** It's never subject to one's opinion or interpretation (cf. 2 Peter 1:20-21). It is the same today as it was 2,000 years ago or 2,000 years from now — on to infinity.

The holy book of God, the New Testament particularly, condemns every sin. The world does not count these things as sinful (detrimental to one's soul) but it does not change the truth of it.

We begin at this place to examine some of the many **systemic corrup-**

tions in the world. They are ALL diabolic transgressions of what is true and holy. Each and every one will cause you to lose your soul and be cast out into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels (cf. Matt. 25:41; 22:1-14) — unless you repent.

SYSTEMIC RACISM

Racism is defined as: “prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.” It is “the belief that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities, or qualities, especially so as to distinguish them as inferior or superior to one another.” Let me put it in simple terms. If I refuse to vote for someone because of the color of their skin AND/OR, if I vote for someone because of the color of their skin, that’s racism. Racism represses, restrains, curbs, those of a certain race AND/OR, it promotes, champions, elevates, those of a certain race. The wickedness of racism cuts both ways!

God’s word is clear and plain — RACISM is sinful. Those who think they are superior to others do not please God and never will — unless they repent of it in their heart. A change in practice follows repentance. We ought to have the mind-set and attitude like that of a little child.

The apostle Peter announced a great truth at the house of Cornelius when he said, “...*Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him*” (Acts 10:34-35). Romans 2:11, “*For there is no respect of persons with God.*” Romans 10:12, “*For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*” Galatians 2:6, “*God accepteth no man’s person.*” Ephesians 6:9, “*And, ye masters, ...forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*” Colossians 3:25, “*But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.*” James 2:8-9, “*If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons,*

ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.” 1 Peter 1:17, “*And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work....*”

Every person on the planet is of the human race. To not count all men equal is racist. Every person has a soul created in the image of God. That soul will one day stand before the judge of all the earth and give account of their life, no matter how they’ve lived and no matter what their ethnic origin. We all came from the same source — Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:26-28). “*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). The judge of all the earth will do right (Gen. 18:25).

God is color blind. As his people, we are color blind also. It is man who makes distinction between races, not God. By what reasoning or logic can one race say to another, ours is superior to yours? There’s no such thing! It’s absurd. What color was Adam and Eve? That’s a silly and irrelevant question. Every human being on the planet came from that one source. God did not make different races to populate the earth. He only made one human pair. Read heaven’s words in Acts 17:24-27, “*God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.*”

When humankind corrupted themselves to such a degree they could not be tolerated any longer (Gen. 6:5), God destroyed the entire earth with a global flood. However, Noah found favor (grace) in the eyes of God (Gen. 6:8). Only one human family was spared. When Noah and his wife, along with his three sons and their wives (eight people all together) stepped off the ark, “*God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful,*

and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 9:1). As it did with Adam and Eve, the population of the earth today came from Noah. What color was he? That’s a moot question — immaterial. What difference does it make? None.

What matters is that every human being has a soul. Systemic racism is man-made. It is evil. The answer to racism is not found in a law made by man. The real answer is to go to the Bible and follow the teaching of the New Testament. As the foundation of society is the home, it’s in the home where refuting racism is going to be found. When right and proper teaching is grounded in the principles of righteousness, society will reflect it and racism will disappear. When righteousness is abandoned, society will be filled with corruption — just as we see it in the world today.

YOU have a choice. What will it be? If you keep looking for the answer in the wrong place, you’ll never find it. The answer is heaven made. It’s in the Bible.

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BABYLON, “THE GLORY OF KINGDOMS,” Is GOING DOWN!

Roger Campbell

About seven hundred years before the birth of the Christ, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Isaiah. Part of Isaiah's message to mankind was about the activities and future of Middle East nations familiar to the Jewish people.

The entire contents of Isaiah 13 pertain to Babylon. The first words of that chapter indicate it was a message “against Babylon” (13:1). Babylon was a city, and at one point, an empire. The city was located on the Euphrates River about 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of modern-day Bagdad, Iraq. Babylon's most well-known monarch was Nebuchadnezzar. He lived about a hundred years after Isaiah's day. According to one source, Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon was the largest city in the world [www.britannica.com]. The historian Herodotus claimed that the walls of the city of Babylon were around 87 feet wide, 300 feet tall, and covered a distance of up to 60 miles.

When it was at the peak of its might, Babylon may have caused people to be in awe, but Jehovah was not impressed. Babylon's powerful rulers may have struck terror in the hearts of men, but no one frightens God.

In speaking about Babylon, the Lord said: *“Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, ... But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there...”* (Isa. 13:17-21).

It is as if the Lord God was proclaiming, “Babylon is going down!” Indeed, it was. There are lessons for us.

1. Babylon was in the hands of the Lord. Is that a good thing or bad thing? Well, that depends. It is a fearful thing for the ungodly to fall into His hands (Heb. 10:31). But it is a comforting thing for His faithful

servants to be in His hands (Heb. 13:5).

The world and all that is contained therein belong to the Lord (Psalm 24:1). Babylon's survival was dependent on God — not its economic policy, Center for Disease Control, or having advanced military weapons. God raises up rulers and nations, and He also brings them down (Daniel 2:20,21; 4:17).

2. Babylon must face “the day of the LORD.” Without doubt, Isaiah was writing about Babylon when he wrote, *“Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. ... Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it”* (Isa. 13:6,9). “The day of the LORD” refers to God's judgment or visitation on a city or country. Bible students must look at the context to see the specific application in each case. Again, we emphasize that the language of Isaiah 13 about “the day of the LORD” is not talking about the end of the world, but the fall of Babylon.

3. Why would God bring down Babylon? Why was the Lord so upset/angry with the nation? Babylon's fall was not an accident. It did not “just happen.” God made it happen (Jer. 50:17, 18, 24, 25). But why? Why would God bring Babylon down? Hear God's answer: “I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done...” (Jer. 51:24). Babylon's sin against the Lord is what caused her downfall. Babylon was proud (Jer. 50:29), trusted in her wisdom (Isa. 47:10), was superstitious, and worshiped idols (Isa. 47:12, 13; 21: 29). Never forget: God sees all that occurs on the earth, and He holds us all accountable for our choices. Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people (Prov. 14:34).

4. God said He would use the Medes to bring Babylon down. That is exactly what transpired (Isa. 13:17-18). It was the combined efforts

of the Medes and Persians which overthrew Babylon (Dan. 5:28-31). Jehovah God, as the great Sovereign of the universe, would make it happen. The Lord raised up Babylon as His rod of justice against nations in the Middle East, then He later turned around and punished Babylon for her own iniquities (Jer. 25:9-12).

5. Isaiah foretold Babylon's complete destruction. Babylon never would be inhabited, Arabs would not pitch tents there, and there would be no sheepfolds (Isa. 13:20). Wild animals would take it over (13:21,22). Babylon, called “the glory of kingdoms” (13:19), would become void of humans. God said so.

Note this historical perspective. When Isaiah was living and made the prediction of Babylon's destruction, Babylon was not “the big dog” power in the Middle East. Assyria was. Thus, when Isaiah foretold that Babylon would come crashing down, his prophecy meant that: 1) first Babylon must rise to become recognized as a mighty power, then 2) later it would be destroyed/become uninhabited.

God said that Babylon would fall long before it occurred. Isaiah, how do you know all of this?! Such “inside information” had to have come from one Source — God. It was revealed to and through the prophet by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20,21). Fulfilled prophecy proves the Bible is God's word. Only God knows perfectly what the future holds. Think about it.

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God's Holy Word

Are you majoring in things of this world or the things of the world to come? In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we will be standing before the judge of all the earth to give an account of our life. John wrote, “I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; ...and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” What verdict will you hear? What you do in this life matters!

WHAT IS THE ANTICHRIST?

Jon Gary Williams

Every student of the Bible will come across the word antichrist. Even many who are not familiar with the Bible have heard of the word antichrist and tend to wonder about it. This term is very much a part of present day preaching, especially among those who follow the false idea that when Christ returns He will reign on earth for one thousand years. The belief that this antichrist will someday appear to wage war against Christ and devastate the world is commonly held.

There are several false views regarding the identity of the antichrist. Many claim that it is one specific person. Others say it is a mysterious force that will plague the world. Some believe it is anyone who is opposed to Christ. And even others feel it is the “beast” found in the book of Revelation. Though these views are all vastly different and erroneous, they all have one thing in common — they all contend that the antichrist is in the near future.

Background Information

During the first century A.D. various religious movements arose promoting radically false teachings. In time, some of these teachings began to influence congregations of the Lord’s church. One of these groups held the Docetic philosophy which taught that human flesh is inherently sinful. It is from this false teaching that the antichrist concept emerged and which became a disturbing issue within the church.

Those who espoused the antichrist doctrine did not deny the existence of God; they were not atheists. Nor did they deny Jesus, in fact, they would even defend Him. And, they did not reject Christianity, for they claimed to be Christians. John clearly said, “*they went out from us*” (1 John 2:19). So they were not anti-Christian, as they are often made to appear.

Meaning Of The Word Antichrist

The word “antichrist(s)” is mentioned only in the epistles of John. Four times it is found in 1 John (2:18,22; 4:3). A fifth mention is in 2 John 7. Within these passages, John revealed several important facts about

the antichrist which many false teachers have failed to acknowledge.

First, we learn that in John’s day false teachers known by this name were **already present**. Second, we learn there were **many** of them.

In 1 John 4:3 he writes, “*and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*” And in 1 John 2:18 John writes, “*Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come....*”

John is clear in showing his brethren that “*the spirit of the antichrist*” already existed among them, hence, the urgent need to warn them of this ever present danger.

In explaining that there were multiple antichrists, John exposes the false belief that the antichrist is only one specific individual. Over the past one hundred years, various men have been labeled the antichrist, such as Lenin, Stalin, Hitler and even J. F. Kennedy. Such foolishness!

A Look at 2 John 7

“*For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*”

This passage gets to the heart of the matter. John explained that these deceivers denied that Jesus, as God’s son, could reside in a human body. Since they believed that flesh was inherently evil, they could not accept the idea of Deity taking a fleshly form. To them, Jesus only “seemed” to have a body of flesh, appearing rather in some spiritual, illusory form. Such a teaching would obviously lead to controversy.

A Look at John 1:1,14

“*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word as God.... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us....*”

No doubt, John had the problem of the antichrist in mind when writing these words. First, he established the fact that the Word (Christ) was Deity (v.1). Then, he specifically pointed out that the Word “*became flesh*” (v.14). The truth John recorded here is too

clear to misunderstand; Jesus possessed a human body.

John Goes One Step Further

John explained that if this doctrine was true, it would follow that the Father should be denied as well. “*...He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father....*” (1 John 2:22, 23).

Jesus and the Father held a special Father-Son relationship, being uniquely joined together. They were “one” (John 10:30). Hence, to deny the Father’s Son would also require a denial of the Father Himself. So the antichrists were trapped in a logical contradiction. On one hand, they believed that God was the “Father” of Jesus; yet, on other hand, they denied that Jesus, if possessing a human body, could really be His “Son.”

This Doctrine Was Also a Denial Of Jesus’ Resurrection

In 1 John 2:28 John wrote, “*And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*” Here, John assured his readers that Christ would come again.

However, He could not come again if He had not first ascended to the Father. Yet, He could not have ascended to the Father if He had not been raised from the dead. And, He could not have been raised from the dead without a body to be raised. Obviously, Jesus must have inhabited a human body. Hence, the teaching of the antichrists ultimately denied the great truth of Christ’s resurrection.

The evil influence of this false doctrine was such that the Holy Spirit found it necessary to make exposing it a part of the inspired record. Notice the apostle’s strong admonition for his readers to steadfastly guard themselves against this teaching (2 John 7-11).

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LOVE THE TRUTH, NOT THE WORLD!

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CASUALNESS

Denver Thomas

Complacency and apathy are readily evident in many congregations. Live and let live characterize ever so many members. It is just not theirs to stand up for anything whether it is either good or bad.

Webster's New World Dictionary defines casual as: "happening or governed by chance; not planned; random; careless or cursory in methods; informal occasions or relaxed atmosphere; designed for informal occasions or use."

The Lord's church of today exhibits some or all of these definitions in its routine worship activities. Time and space allows for some, but not all that may be noted.

To begin with, many members are ever so casual in their **attendance for scheduled services**. It has been noted that attendance at the normal three services (Sunday Morning Worship, Sunday Evening Worship and mid-week Bible study) varies considerably from one service to the next service. Romans 12:4-5 says, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." There is a part for each and every member. This Scripture clearly states that it takes all the members working together to fulfill the role of the body. It is little wonder that the church has become weaker and less influential in local community affairs.

The next area where the church today is very casual is in the way so many members **arrive at the last minute**. Instead of taking their seat and preparing for worship, they want to stand and talk until the announcer takes his place and calls for attention. It's as if they come to socialize rather than worship God.

The next area where the church of today is very casual is in the way some members **dress for the services** they choose to attend. To be overlooked are those who are coming directly from their work activity and do not have time nor opportunity to change clothes before the worship service commences. Some dress as if they are going to a party, a ball game, shopping or some other event. Some dress as if

they are going to the beach or swimming pool. New Testament Scriptures relate more to women than to men regarding attire. First Timothy 2:9-10 says, "*In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*"

A fourth area of casualness is observed in those members who choose to bring those **hand-held devices to service** and sit and manipulate them during service, especially when the Lord's Supper is being served. I have observed "texting" being done while communion was being served. First Corinthians 11:26-30 tells us, "*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*" One might ask, how does an electronic hand-held device aid in one's self-examination while eating the bread and drinking the cup?

A fifth area where casualness is often observed is when preachers and teachers **tread lightly (or skip over entirely) on topics that would address directly some condition(s) or situation(s) within the congregation that runs counter to sound doctrine**. Divorce for non-scriptural reasons and remarriage is an ever-growing problem in many congregations today and yet such is not being faced and dealt with as the Scriptures so direct. Church discipline is one of those areas that the brotherhood has put on the back burner, so to speak. The risk of offending someone and

lowering attendance numbers plays a role in the decision process, without a doubt.

A sixth area where casualness is readily evident has to do with the **lack of dedication evidenced in the service of the Lord**. Complacency and apathy are readily evident in many congregations. Live and let live characterize ever so many members. It is just not theirs to stand up for anything whether it is either good or bad. Lack of zeal is a pressing concern with ever so many. Piety and holiness are lacking in some and is often observed in their behavior.

A seventh area where casualness is readily evident has to do with **seeking the lost, seeing to the needs (both physical and spiritual) of others, and earnestly contending for the faith**. These areas are being overlooked in the work conducted in many congregations. For some sixty years now, Gospel preachers have opted to become located ministers or ministers in residence to edify the church as they are known to admit. Therefore, sowing the seed of the kingdom is being neglected and church growth is suffering badly as a result.

God has not left it within the power of the human element to pick and choose what will be carried out and what will be ignored. James warned "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*" (James 2:10).

Jesus told us in John 12:44-50 what to expect on that last great day. "*Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him*

in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

I am often made to wonder how many today who wear the name Christian realize the importance of Scriptures such as the above (John 12:44-50) or Matthew 7:21 which says “*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*”

The human element may, and often does, change, but God’s Holy Word does not change nor will it ever!

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What's In Store?...

(Continued from page 89)

(Matt. 24:35-39; 1 Thess. 4:13; 5:3, 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 5:5).

Nothing is more important than getting ready for that day. All men are amenable to King Christ’s law, whether they realize it or not. We will all be judged by His Words (Matt. 28:18-20; John 12:48; 1 Cor. 9:21; 2 Cor. 5:10; James 1:22-25). Seek His kingdom now, before it’s too late (Matt. 6:33)! A penitent believer in Christ must be born of water and of the Spirit to enter that kingdom, remaining faithful after water baptism (John 3:5; 6:63; Acts 2:36-41; 10:6, 35, 47, 48; 22:16; Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22-31; 1 Peter 3:20-21; 2 Peter 2:20-22; 1 John 1:6; 2:6).

Regardless of who the president is, if persecutions come, or even if the USA falls, citizens of Christ’s eternal kingdom can have a peace that passes understanding, trusting God with nothing to fear (Prov. 3:5-6; Rom. 8:31; Phil. 4:4-13; 2 Tim. 1:7). That said, our main mission is to spread God’s Word in this world. It will always be controversial (Matt. 28:18-20; John 8:40; Gal. 4:16; 2 Tim. 3:12).

No matter what happens, serve the King, pledge allegiance to Him, and stand up and proclaim His Word without fear!

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OUR CHOICE OF ASSOCIATES MAKES US WHO WE ARE

Victor M. Eskew

The Bible warns us about our choice of associates or friends. “*He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed*” (Prov. 13:20). “*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners*” (1 Cor. 15:33).

The reason for the warning is because we become like those with whom we choose to associate.

- We walk like them.
- We talk like them.
- We dress like them.
- We behave like them.
- We like what they like.
- We dislike what they dislike.
- Their attitudes become our attitudes.
- Their views become our views.
- Their habits become our habits.
- Their friends become our friends.
- Their enemies become our enemies.

If our associates are...

- Spiritual, we become spiritual.
- Worldly, we become worldly.
- Negative, we become negative.
- Positive, we become positive.
- Liberal, we become liberal.
- Conservative, we become conservative.
- Honest, we become honest.
- Dishonest, we become dishonest.
- Kind, we become kind.
- Evil, we become evil.

Have you ever seen someone change:

- After getting a new friend?
- When he/she starts dating?
- When he/she gets into a clique?
- After changing churches?
- After getting a new job?

We have all seen it happen. We wonder: “What has happened to him/her?” Our associates, our friends, are powerful forces in our lives. Thus, we need to carefully examine those with whom we associate. Our merely liking them is not the best reason to stay with them.

Do my friends...

- Make me a better person?
- Cause me to treat others better?
- Make me more Christ-like?
- Help me to refrain from sinful things?
- Cause me to be positive?
- Challenge me to grow in Christ?
- Encourage me to put spiritual things first?
- Let me be me?

The Bible does not discourage friendships and associations. It merely exhorts us to make good decisions about who these individuals are. “*He that walketh with wise men shall be wise...*”

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

"Seek The Old Paths is a very good replacement for **Banner of Truth**" ...**James Jackson**, White Bluff, TN. "Thank you" ...**Adrian, MI**. "Thank you for your paper. I enjoy it" ...**Dorothy Strattis**, Sevierville, TN. "Great and timely issue, Oct/2020" ...**Freddie Clayton**, Dunlap, TN. "Thanks for your service" ...**Jim Palmer**, Lakeland, TN. "Please remove me from your mailing list" ...**George Remias**, Norcross, GA. "I would like to stop receiving **Seek the Old Paths**. I have subscribed to your publication for 16 years and appreciate your generous distribution of it to me for these many years" ...**Broderick Greer**, Ft. Worth, TX. "You do a great job with this paper. I know it helps a lot for people to learn more about God and His church" ...**John Smith**, Goldsboro, NC. "We have been receiving **Seek The Old Paths** for some time and would like to contribute to the work. We find your publication to be true to the Bible and would recommend it to anyone. May God bless your good work" ...**Douglas & Priscilla Pace**, Hendersonville, TN. "Oscar Rushing has passed away" ...**Bogue Chitto**, MS. "Please remove me from your mailing list! Your publication reflects worldly political views trying to use Biblical scriptures to justify your political stance. God's word should not be used for a political platform. Thank you!" ...**Stillwater**, OK. [EDITOR'S NOTE: There is no realm in this world that is off limits to God's Word. The Political arena is no exception. A Christian's vote either supports righteous principles or it does not. Which one of the two is correct? That's an easy choice. The Lord is King and his Word is Supreme. By it, we will be judged.] "Since the death of Lloyd Gale in January 2020, I have been preaching regularly for the Powell Grove Church of Christ in Lebanon, TN, where I receive free copies of STOP. I especially appreciated the October 2020 issue on America" ...**Steve Gibson**, Nashville, TN. "I have been a long time reader of **Seek The Old Paths** and enjoyed the articles you have written. But I did not appreciate the article 'Which Way America' (Oct/20). It was not a good article! I am a member of the church of Christ and have always kept my opinion on politics to myself, for everyone has a right to vote for the person of their choice. I do not appreciate a religious platform trying to influence the public on how to vote. Even our Lord Jesus Christ did not try to persuade the people when he said render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and render to God what is God's. So, I would appreciate that you would remove my name from your mailing list. Thank you" ...**Glade Spring**, VA. [EDITOR'S NOTE: The Scriptures demand we present what the Bible says. Every Christian's job is to expose what is being taught, promoted, practiced, and stood for when it does not match God's Word (Eph. 5:11). How is that not biblical? What goes on in the world, in every realm, is subject to the law of Christ. How can we claim that some things regarding people, teaching, and practice, are not subject to the holy Father's eternal word? On judgment day, will God overlook what we support, endorse, and stand for? The Bible doesn't teach that He will overlook it.] "The October 2020 issue was very cogent given the political and social zeitgeist in contemporary America. I pray all who read it, heed its message. Godspeed to you" ...**Howard Blevins**, Lafayette, LA. "I got the latest issue of **Seek the Old Paths** in the mail today. More hysteria that this coming national election will make or break the Republic. You would think that the current Republican Party (which is a only a shadow of its former self) and a conservative Supreme Court are the only things holding back the hordes of collectivist anarchy and cultic Satanism. I have a number of friends who are registered Democrats and it's difficult to see them anywhere

close to a Che Guevara. I wish my grandmother could have lived to see evangelicals hoping and praying that a female Roman Catholic would become a Supreme Court justice. She wouldn't have believed how far we have truly traveled, while many among us still don't recognize the journey that's taken place. Shalom" ...**Rick Crawford**. "I want to thank you so much for your publication **Seek The Old Paths**. It is a true blessing to me and I am sure to many other Christians. Thank you so much for standing hard for the truth and tackling many subjects 'head on' that need to be addressed in this very liberal world. This publication is truly a shiny diamond in such a black and sinful world. Keep up the strong stance you take and thank you so much. I also want to thank all your readers that read and study STOP and a special thanks to all who donate to help you out. Thank you all so much!!! I would love it if I could have you send this paper to a few of my brothers and sisters. I know they would love to read it. Thanks" ...**Jonathan Tate**, Hodgen, OK. "I was very sad of what was put in the October/20 paper. Please take me off the mailing list" ...**Andrea Horton**, Sparta, TN. "A friend shared your paper, **Seek The Old Paths**, with me of your October/2020 publication. I would like to be on your mailing list to get this sent to me, but also wanting to help your godly efforts in keeping the paper FREE. Enclosed is my effort in helping. Thank you all for your own efforts in Christian truth for keeping it going" ...**A sister in Christ**, Clinton, AR. "Thank you brethren for your fine publication. Enjoy reading every issue and appreciate your soundness in the faith" ...**Broadway C/C**, Rockford, IL. "I enjoy every copy I get. Read them all" ...**Edith Norton**, Cookeville, TN.

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