



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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Elder's
COLUMN

AN ABSTRACT ON THE NIV

Wayne Coats

Some of the smart-set prattle that elders do not have the right to regulate which versions are to be used in the congregation. What proof is given to substantiate such babbling? Not one word!

Comes now information concerning a congregation which is having trouble over the NIV being used by some of the members. If the opposers of the situation would just play shut mouth, the trouble would cease being open and outward but the resentment would continue in the hearts of those who object to the NIV. Should the opposers refuse to state their ideas? Do they have valid reasons for their objections?

I will set forth some reasons why my brethren have no business relying on the NIV perversion. I suspect the mindset of so many will be the same kind of thinking which can be found among those who use mechanical instruments of music in their worship. They like it, and it matters not what others say. How sad!

There are a great number of versions which have been pasted together. With some, **The Cotton Patch** version is acceptable. Why do we have a ready supply of versions? They have been printed in order to sell and make money without regard to the truth. This leads me to state that there is a world of difference in a version and a translation. A version is so often a mere paraphrase wherein the publisher inserts his own theological beliefs whenever he wishes.

There is a smorgasbord of ver-

sions available and the booksellers vie for the sales and dollars which junk versions will bring in. A few of the efforts of false teachers can be seen in, **The Cotton Patch version, The Bible Union version, The New Living Bible, Today's English version, Moffatts version, Phillips version, 20th Century New Testament, Revised Standard version,** and the **New International version.** There are others to be sure, but these are sufficient to show the sordid tastes of gullible people.

Since the new age of liberalism and modernism has found an inner sanctum in “our” universities, a barrage of new versions have been proliferated and an ever increasing number of babblings about the, “mistakes in the King James version.” It is difficult to maintain the proper respect and appreciation for the **King James Version** with a crew of semi-infidels deprecating the book.

Some of the smart-set prattle that elders do not have the right to regulate which versions are to be used in the congregation. What proof is given to substantiate such babbling? Not one word! Are shepherds to guard the flock? What is involved in guarding the flock? Shepherds are to feed the flock and see that the

flock is properly fed.

Anyone who can move around by himself probably knows that practically every cultic and sectarian group has their own publishing house. Many of these groups would be glad to filter their Sunday school materials into congregations of the church if the elders and members will allow such. Are the shepherds responsible for the food which the sheep feast upon?

We grant that some sheep are not always satisfied with the pure, sound, word of God. As parents, we have a fearful responsibility to see that our children have pure and wholesome food. We would not tolerate tainted food to be sold in the market place. Should parents guard their children from such rot? Should shepherds guard the sheep from error? Shepherds are to take care of the flock (1 Tim. 3:5). What does that involve? What do mothers practice in caring for little babies?

The **New International Version** is shot full of errors. One does not need to rely upon my statement, but if one knows how to study the matter and will take the time and trouble to investigate the matter, one

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An Abstract on the NIV...



Editorial...

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SOUND?

Garland M. Robinson

It has been so long since many in the church have heard sound doctrine that when a preacher does come along and preach the whole counsel of God, his words are STRANGE in their ears! It's a shame that many have said, "I haven't heard preaching like that since I was a child." What are you hearing from the pulpit? Brethren, LOVE THE TRUTH. Obedience to the truth is what saves.

Of the 89 times the English word "sound" appears in the Bible, 17 of them refer to the theme of this discussion.

Webster defines "sound" as: "free from injury or disease: robust; free from flaw, defect, or decay; solid, firm, stable; free from error, fallacy, or misapprehension; accurate, precise."

Strong's gives as the definition of the Greek word: "to have sound health, i.e. be well (in body); figuratively to be incorrupt (true in doctrine)."

Thayer says: "to be sound, to be well, to be in good health. Is used of one whose Christian opinions are free from any admixture of error. True and incorrupt doctrine."

Psalms 119:80 says it well, "Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed." Surely, all desire to be sound in the faith.

Twenty different phrases speak of sound doctrine. It is called:

- the law of God (Rom. 7:25),
- the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2),
- the truth of God (Rom. 1:25),
- the truth of Christ (2 Cor. 11:10),
- the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2),
- the faith of Christ (Gal. 2:16),
- the law of liberty (James 1:25),
- the words of truth and soberness (Acts 26:25),
- the truth (Gal. 5:7),
- the word of truth (Eph. 1:13),
- the way of truth (2 Peter 2:2),
- the word of God (1 Thess. 2:13),

- the truth of the gospel (Gal. 2:5,14),
- the word of the gospel (Acts 15:7),
- the gospel of God (Rom. 1:1),
- the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16),
- the gospel of his Son (Rom. 1:9),
- the gospel of peace (Rom. 10:15),
- the gospel (Rom. 10:16),
- Christ's gospel (2 Cor. 2:12).

In 1 Timothy 1:10, a list of sins is found that is contrary to "sound doctrine." Those who do not consent to "wholesome (sound) words" are "destitute of the truth." We are commanded regarding such people, "from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim. 6:3-5).

A man qualified to be an elder is one who holds "...fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). He must know sound doctrine when he hears it and, when he does not hear it, he is able to refute those who are in error. Concerning such false teachers, verse 11 says, "whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

Those who are teaching contrary to the Gospel (the whole New Testament) are to be exposed for what they are. "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13).

Titus was exhorted to speak

"sound doctrine" and to teach men to be "sound in faith" (Titus 2:1-2). He was to be a pattern of good works and in doctrine he was to show "incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:7-8). Oh, how we need men today who will heed these words! Where are they? Far too many give an "uncertain sound" (1 Cor. 14:7-8) which leads men away from the truth, not toward it.

We are to hold fast the form (pattern) of "sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13). "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

The number is growing fewer today who are able to endure sound doctrine or even know what sound doctrine is! It has been so long since they have heard sound doctrine (the "whole counsel of God," Acts 20:27) that "sound words" are "strange" in their ears. There was such a famine of hearing the words of the Lord in Hosea's day that when they did hear it proclaimed they counted His words "strange" (Hosea 8:12). They were destroyed for their lack of knowledge (4:6).

WHAT CONSTITUTES SOUNDNESS

There are a number of things that are required in order for one to be counted as "sound." To "say" that someone is sound does not mean it is so. What then is the criteria by which we can determine if one is sound?

1. To be sound, one must LOVE the Truth.

Those in Zechariah 8:19 were exhorted to "love the truth." All must "buy the truth and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). There are many who do not believe the truth nor love the truth; and, without the love of the truth, one will be content to believe a lie and be damned (2 Thess. 2:10,12)! Only the truth will save (John 8:32). This one point in itself ought to be sufficient to establish if one is sound or not, for if one loves the Truth, how could he not be sound? Who would admit, though, to not loving the

Truth? However, it does not necessarily follow that one would be sound simply because he “says” he loves the truth. The points that follow will establish whether he truly loves the truth or not.

2. To be sound, one must BELIEVE and TEACH the Truth.

When the Truth (the Gospel) is believed, it will be taught in its completeness without fear or favor of any man. There will be no “testing the wind” to see what brethren will accept and what they will not. The message will be the same to all audiences. Truth is consistent. Paul had declared the “whole counsel of God” to those at Ephesus (Acts 20:27).

Even though one may claim to teach the truth, it does not necessarily make it so. His teaching/doctrine must be examined. “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

3. To be sound; one must LIVE the Truth.

One may teach the truth, nothing but the truth, and still not be “sound.” No one is sound who does not live according to the truth.

“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). Luke wrote of all “that Jesus began both to do and teach” (Acts 1:1). Timothy was to be “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12). Jesus warned of the scribes and Pharisees saying, “All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not” (Matt. 23:3).

One’s life must be in compliance with the Truth, i.e., the Doctrine of the Lord, the Gospel. All of God’s Word is doctrine, regardless of the subject matter. The doctrine (gospel/teaching/truth) of the Lord must be obeyed in morality (1 Peter 1:15), worship (John 4:24), fellowship (2 John 9-11) — ALL that God commands.

4. To be sound, one must DEFEND the Truth.

Defending the truth is certainly involved in “living the truth” as point three describes. However, in light of the fact that so few are obedient to

this command, it needs special attention as a separate point.

Heaven’s directive is that every child of God “...earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Gospel preachers are to “preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2). “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11). “No” fellowship does not mean “some” or a “little” fellowship!

No one is sound that does not defend the faith — the Gospel. Paul was always ready to defend the Gospel (Phil. 1:7,17). He told the brethren at Rome to “mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Rom. 16:17-18).

To bid God speed to those in error makes one a partaker of their evil deeds. “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11).

To fellowship those in error instead of reproofing them does not make one “sound.” Such an individual may say he loves the truth and teaches the truth, but his practice proves he does not! Such a person is not living nor defending the truth! If he were, he would rebuke those in error.

CONCLUSION

What does it mean to be “sound?” One is sound when he: 1) Loves the truth, 2) Teaches the truth, 3) Lives the truth, 4) Defends the truth. When any of these are absent, a brother is not sound, no matter how much he says he is or how many others say he is! The proof (evidence) is in, not only what he teaches, but also in what he practices. Actions speak louder than words!

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NOTE: I’m working on a project to include all back issues of STOP on seektheoldpaths.com web site. If you have any of the issues I’m missing, would you mind sending them to me? They are: Dec/1989, March/90, April/90, Dec/90, Jan/Feb/91, March/92, Jan/93, March/93, April/93.

— Editor

An Abstract on the NIV...

(Continued from page 41)

can see for self. "Aye, there's the rub!"

The new NIV perversion appeared in 1973. A committee of men from several denominations produced the NIV. If you will read the preface you might be shocked to learn that so-called translators declared, "Words are occasionally used or phrases supplied for clarification."

For many years, our brethren have debated sectarians and the debates have been published. Each opponent in the debate has had the liberty of checking the manuscript before publication. Can you imagine brother Foy E. Wallace Jr. allowing the notorious J. Frank Norris to use words and phrases for clarification as a result of their debate?

What kind of changes would a crew of denominational men make in their efforts? Do the same men make changes in their words and phrases as they preach? My brethren have to be extremely ignorant and careless as they clutch their darling NIV to their breast. Will they use the Book of Mormon? Jailbird *Joe Smith* made a lot of changes in his theology. *Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy* made a lot of changes in her "Science and Health with Keys to the Scripture." Every cultic person on earth does the same.

We need to realize the difference in a paraphrase and a credible translation. Any person can prattle a paraphrase and some people will be gullible enough to buy it and follow its errors.

For the benefit of the concerned reader, we will post a few of the egregious blunders of the NIV. A brief statement from the Old Testament will show the blunder of the NIV crew. They render **Psalms 51:1** as follows, "I have been a sinner from birth." Not by any stretch of a deranged mind does the passage sustain the Calvinistic notion of Total Depravity by inheritance. Not only are words and phrases changed, but entire sentences are perverted.

The elder who came into the church building cradling his NIV in his arm would most likely object to the preacher using the NIV to preach a sermon on Inherited Total Depravity.

It could be that the fellow is so dumb that he wouldn't know the difference in truth and error.

The Calvinists have long defended the false teaching on Total Depravity and they like to quote **Psalms 51:1**. Apparently they have no conscience about taking a position which results in the Bible flatly contradicting itself.

David did not say he was born a sinner. He said he was conceived in sin by his mother. It is no light thing to twist and pervert the scriptures. With intelligent people, there is a difference in conception and birth. Whatever David is declaring, it relates to conception and has not one word about his birth.

There have been different view points presented with respect to the passage under review but we know that whatever the Psalmist declared, he did not contradict the words of the Holy Spirit. Can we not accept that principle?

Another inspired prophet wrote, *"The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him"* (Ezek. 18:20).

To the church at Rome Paul wrote, *"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God"* (Rom. 14:12). *"Furthermore we have had fathers of the flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live"* (Heb. 12:9)? Surely God is not the Father of totally depraved spirits. I have an old debate book wherein the Baptist debater is quoted as saying, "There will be infants in hell, not a span long." This shows how far-out false teachers will go.

A big inconsistency is seen in reading **Matthew 5:17** and comparing it with **Ephesians 2:15**. The account of Matthew has Jesus saying, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets, I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." The Ephesians account reads, "For he himself is our peace, who had made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its command-

ments and regulations." Why the contradiction?

In **Matthew 24:21** Jesus said, "For then there shall be great tribulation." The NIV uses the expression, "great distress." In **Revelation 7:14**, the same word is used and the committee used the expression, "the great tribulation." Again we ask, why the difference? Does a Bible word mean one thing at the front of the New Testament, but the same original word can be changed at the end of the New Testament? Such is not translating at all.

Jesus taught in **John 3:16** that the believer "should not perish, but have everlasting life." The NIV reads, "shall not perish." There is a difference in "should not" and "shall not."

In **John 5:28** Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." The NIV scholars changed the word hour and rendered it "a time is coming." Thayer renders the word "hour" as "a point in time." I do not care for the versions being changed and paraphrased and offered for my use. Give me a translation.

A decided Calvinistic viewpoint is set forth in **Romans 1:17** when the NIV declared, "For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last." Righteousness is not by faith from first to last. In spite of the coloring of the text, obedience is a necessary part of righteous living.

One of the frequent babblings among the liberals is to speak of one's "sinful nature." If they need support for such rot, they can turn to the NIV. In **Galatians 3:14** the NIV reads, "You, my brother were called to be free, but do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature." In **Romans 7:18**, we read, "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature." In the eighth chapter of Romans, the revisers did a complete job in spreading their Calvinism by the use of "sinful nature."

Calvinism is seen again when the NIV crew writes, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). Paul is dis-

cussing the “natural man” in the text and context. He does not teach Calvinism.

In **First Corinthians 13:10** Paul wrote, “But when *that* which is perfect is come, then *that* which is in part shall be done away.” A gross perversion is seen in the NIV which reads, “But when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.” Paul used the neuter gender in *that*, which applied to the perfect law of liberty (the New Testament). False teachers would have the text referring to the coming of Christ, at which time we will be all one. That is not in the text.

Perhaps my brethren who cling to the NIV will be consoled when they read, “And you also were included in Christ, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation” (Eph. 1:13). Are we really “in Christ” when we hear the word? The hearer believes and is marked with a seal. Who can believe it? Is this a word or phrase which needed a change for clarification?

For long decades we have turned to our Bibles and read, “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19). The NIV committee changed that text as follows: “Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.” Some of the elders want their NIV, but they don’t want to “make music” — yet. It’s a pretty sorry book which purports to be the Bible and yet the brethren reject some of its parts and delight in other parts.

There has been a number of pseudo-scholars who have delighted in talking about the, “*Mistakes in the King James Translation.*” Those old translators were conservative in their views and did not seek to insert modernism into their efforts. They worked for two years and nine months in order to produce the translation. There were forty-seven scholars who lived to finish the work. As I read the preface in my old, tattered, and worn KJV, I am impressed with the care and meticulous concern which King James bound on the translators.

I have heard some remarks that the old King James translation has too many difficult words. The NIV has many words too difficult for some

people. Do we not have enough intelligence to study a dictionary? I keep one in reach, beside my chair all the time. I suspect we are like the people who use the mechanical instruments in worship. They like them and will use them. So with the NIV, it matters not how much Calvinism and Pentecostalism have been inserted for

“clarification,” some brethren do not know and they do not care.

What benefit is the NIV, KJV or any other book to persons who reject the wisdom of those brethren who — “*take care of the church of the Lord*” (1 Tim. 3:5).

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HOW JESUS USED THE WORD OF GOD TO OVERCOME SATAN

Roger D. Campbell

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness by the devil is recorded in Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12,13 and Luke 4:1-13. The Bible says that Jesus “*was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*” (Heb. 4:15). Let us note Jesus’ attitude towards the word of God, and how He used that word to overcome Satan’s temptations in the wilderness.

1. Jesus accepted the authority of God’s word. When Satan tempted Jesus, His immediate reaction was to say, “*It is written*” (Matt. 4:4). This shows that He totally accepted the authority of the Scriptures. The Bible is our authority because it came from God: “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God*” (2 Tim. 3:16). God’s word is the truth (John 17:17).

2. Jesus taught that everything God says is important. He quoted Deuteronomy 8:3, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*” (Matt. 4:4). By which words of Jehovah should man live? By every word that applies to him! We must pay attention to all of God’s will, for only one who does His will can please Him (Matt. 7:21).

3. Jesus used God’s word as his weapon against satan. When Jesus was tempted by the evil one, He did not try to use psychology, deceit, or some worldly method. Instead, He quoted God’s word, saying, “*It is written*” (Matt. 4:4,7,10). Who can doubt that using God’s word is a wise thing for us to do as well? The word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17). The word of God is “*living and powerful*” (Heb. 4:12, NKJV), so let us use and quote it when the devil tempts us.

4. Jesus used God’s word when he was alone. Yes, Jesus daily taught God’s word in the temple (Mark 14:49). But, He also used God’s word to overcome Satan when He was tempted alone in the wilderness. Sometimes when we are alone, the devil’s temptation seems very strong. Let us use the word of God against Satan wherever we are, even when we are alone.

5. Jesus continued to use God’s word. Each time Satan tempted Him, He answered, “*It is written*” (Matt. 4:4,7,10). He began using the word, and continued to use it. Many get into trouble when they begin using the word of God, but then forget about it or turn to the teachings of men. We must keep on studying, obeying and teaching the word of God. Only God’s word can save us (James 1:21).

6. Jesus easily used the word of God. On each occasion, Jesus’ reaction to temptation was to quote from the Old Testament (the word of God). He could do that only because He knew well what the Scriptures said. As His followers, we must study so that we can also know the Bible well and “*be ready always to give an answer to every man*” (1 Peter 3:15). David wrote, “*Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee*” (Psalm 119:11). We also must fill our minds with God’s word, so that when the devil comes to tempt us, we will be ready to answer with the Scriptures!

[The main points of this article came from material prepared by the late Franklin Camp.]

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BRETHREN, WE BETTER USE BIBLE!

Ronnie Whittemore

A preacher may be an eloquent speaker with a vast vocabulary and a massive frame of reference or he may have a limited education in secular matters, but as long as he has an ample education in the Bible, so that he can properly tell men what to do to be saved and what to do to stay saved, then a man at either level is fully qualified to do the Master's bidding which is — “Preach the word...” (2 Tim. 4:2).

A frequent cry and practice that exists among God's people today is the absence of scripture in so-called Gospel sermons. In a day of intellectualism and the concept of “free thought,” many brethren argue that the quoting of scripture and the citing of Biblical references in sermons only hinder the “presentation” of the preacher. Many brethren contest that the “Gospel invitation” at the conclusion of a sermon “kills the speech” and damages its thrust. Could it be that we have forgotten the purpose of Gospel preaching (1 Cor. 1:18-25)? It makes one wonder what some preachers are preaching if **Bible passages** thwart the speaker's message.

We should be reminded that Gospel sermons, though public addresses, should not be expected to fit the molds and patterns of secular speeches, professional presentations and civil lectures. A preacher may be an eloquent speaker with a vast vocabulary and a massive frame of reference or he may have a limited education in secular matters, but as long as he has an ample education in the Bible, so that he can properly tell men **what to do to be saved and what to do to stay saved**, then a man at either level is fully qualified to do the Master's bidding which is — “Preach the word...” (2 Tim. 4:2). The book of Jeremiah emphasizes that Jeremiah spoke for the Lord. He was God's mouthpiece. Regardless of his being a clay vessel, the true source of all that he spoke was God. Therefore, this great book of Old Testament prophecy is filled with statements, such as, “Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying...” (1:4) or “thus saith the Lord...” (4:3) or “Hear the word of the Lord...” (31:10) or “Behold, I will command, saith the

Lord...” (34:22).

I have been privileged to have a part in conducting worship services and preaching to various prisoners while incarcerated. Many prisoners have come and gone. Some came merely from curiosity. Others came because they considered one religion as good as another. Some of the men may have attended the services because it was better than their alternatives. A few attended and were converted because they believed and obeyed the Gospel. Each visit brought to light the subject of this lesson, the use of a “thus saith the Lord” for everything that is taught and practiced.

Nearly every month there were new prisoners who attended and took an interest in the lessons and subjects discussed. Sometimes we would spend the study portion of the worship in preaching a prepared sermon, but on occasions, we answered Bible questions. Once, two men with sincerity and honesty (in my judgment) had been discussing with one of the Christian inmates about the work and influence of the Holy Spirit and the possibility of miracles existing today. Since these men asked these questions prior to the service and were given only brief answers, it was decided the sermon of the hour would be spent on these subjects. As the questions were answered and the subjects considered, many Bible references were given to prove the various points. Some of these passages were read; others were quoted; some were simply cited. But these men were turning through the pages of the Bible and “**searching the scriptures.**” On such occasions, a preacher's mind has to go back to that notable tribute paid to the Bereans by inspiration (Acts 17:11).

But brethren, especially those brethren who advocate the exclusion of scriptural references in sermons, **HERE'S THE RUB!** Following the lesson that night, these men stated they received much profit from the lessons and were obviously pleased at the answers given. **WHY?** It was not because they were overwhelmed by the presentation of the speaker; it was not because they heard what they wanted to hear (in fact, they heard just the opposite); **IT WAS BECAUSE THEY HEARD THE TRUTH SUPPORTED BY BIBLE REFERENCES!** They explained that they had asked similar questions to men of various religions that had visited the prison, but they only received their opinions void of a “thus saith the Lord.” They were delighted in the things that were taught because they were given references whereby they could read them for themselves. The bottom line is: They did not have to take this preacher's word for it; they were able to read **WHAT GOD SAID ABOUT IT.**

One can only guess as to what good may have been done by that one night of “Bible preaching.” But I've wondered, what if one of our brethren who advances this foolish notion that scripture quotations, readings and citations only bog down a sermon, had been doing the preaching? Perhaps these inmates would have walked away and placed preachers “from the church of Christ” in the same category as the Pentecostal preacher whom they had questioned about his “holy water” and he cited no Bible passage, just his word. For him, they had no respect. For the Bible, they do.

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LESSONS LEARNED FROM KING HEROD

Marvin L. Weir

People must be warned today. It is a sin to refuse to repent, but it is also a sin to refuse to warn (cf. Ezek. 33:1-9)! The apostle Paul was pure from the blood of all men for one reason; he did not refrain from declaring unto them the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Folks may not accept the truth, but such does not lessen our obligation to make them aware of the truth.

Jesus spoke no greater truth than when He said, “*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God*” (John 3:19-21). The Master again warned, “*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before [it hated] you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you*” (John 15:18-19). The choice between good and evil is ever before us; we must choose righteousness.

Let us learn from the warning given to King Herod.

Herod was warned of his sin!

John was bold to speak the truth to Herod in saying, “*...It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife*” (Mark 6:18). An adulterous marriage (used in an accommodative sense) will never be sanctioned by God! This was a day that Herod could have chosen to correct sinful matters and repent of his sin, but he chose to ignore the warning.

People must be warned today. It is a sin to refuse to repent, but it is also a sin to refuse to warn (cf. Ezek. 33:1-9)! The apostle Paul was pure from the blood of all men for one reason; he did not refrain from declaring unto them the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Folks may not accept the truth, but such does not lessen our obligation to make them aware of the truth.

Fear alone will not suffice!

“*For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy...*” (Mark 6:20), but still could not bring himself to forsake his wicked ways (cf. Isa. 55:7). Fear can certainly serve as motivation to do right, but “fear only” will not save one. The correct approach to the Word of God is this... “*But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth [therein], he being not a forgetful hearer; but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*” (James 1:22-25, emph. MLW). There are countless thousands today who still fear an eternal hell, but such fear does not guarantee complete obedience to God's word.

Herod was enslaved by another's opinion. “*...Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her*” (Mark 6:17). It is as one has truthfully said, “The voice of lust gets the victory over the voice of conscience and of God.”

People are enslaved today by what others say about the Bible or about God. It is still the case that many love the praise of men more than the praise of God (John 12:43). Opinions of men do not matter; it is God's Word that will judge us (John 12:48).

Herod was ensnared by the dance. Herod could have refused to see the dance of his wife's daughter, but he chose to see and the dance

“pleased” him (Mark 6:22). It never fails that when one refuses God's warning, he finds it easy to indulge in sinful pleasure.

It was surely the “grace” and “dexterity” of the dancer that pleased Herod! We have warned parents for years about training their children in these so-called “social graces.” It was nothing short of fleshly lust that motivated Herod to make his infamous promise.

A promise made only because of excitement is never good! It just may be that Herod had “goose pimples” all over and his heart may have gone “pitter-patter” more than once! He said, “*Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give [it] thee, unto the half of my kingdom*” (Mark 6:23). As one has observed, “Sin first interests, then excites, [and] then captivates.” The god of pleasure and the goddess of passion continue to captivate the hearts of many. As the song says, “Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin.”

Herod experiences the barbs of sin! The request was made for the head of John the Baptist (Mark 4:24) and Herod “*was exceeding sorry; [yet] for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her*” (Mark 6:26). When one sells himself to sin, he becomes the slave of another. The short-lived pleasures of sin now ripen into “bone chilling” demands that one would rather not hear. Too late! The pied piper must be paid his due.

May we be willing to learn from this sad occasion in the life of King Herod. Let us resolve that our allegiance belongs only to God, and Him only will we worship and serve!

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

15:1 we read, 'Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, [yet] my mind [could] not [be] toward this people: cast [them] out of my sight, and let them go forth.' I'm sure you have heard the phrase sometime before, 'You don't want to get on so and so's bad side.' Simply meaning to anger him/her would be trouble. Yet in the very verse just quoted, how many live their lives (even as Christians) and try to live on the wrong side of God? If you will continue to read the chapter, you will find that because of a king's action, as well as the people, God had enough and they were going to suffer the consequences of their lives. We too, will suffer/enjoy the consequences of our lives. Jesus said in Revelation 2:10, 'Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life.' Jeremiah stated that not even Moses or Samuel was able to change God's mind! I don't want God angry at me, do you? I Peter 1:22, 'Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, [see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently.' Lord, not my will but thine be done" ...**Del Brantley, Salem, KY**. "Here is our check to help with your expenses. Keep up the good work. God bless you" ...**Name withheld by request, NV**. "I would like a bundle of 10 copies of the Feb/11 paper of the *Seek The Old Paths*. Thank you. I enjoy the papers. It really is full of good lessons" ...**Thelma Clark, Mobile, AL**. "Please add me to your STOP mailing list. I was recently introduced to it and found it to be most informative and grounded in truth. May God continue to bless your efforts in spreading the Gospel" ...**Rajah Greer, Cuero, TX**. "Dear Sir, At this time I don't have time to read STOP and I am asking you to discontinue it at this time. I've enjoyed it a lot over the years and if I want it again I will contact you. Thanks again for all the ones I've received" ...**Martha Johnson, Albany, GA**. "Frank Anderson has passed away" ...**Long Beach, MS**. "A friend of mine has asked me to have her name put on your mailing list of *Seek The Old Paths*. Thank you so much. You are putting out a very good paper which is very sound" ...**Colleen Anderson, Flint, MI**. "Elsie Delk has passed away" ...**Crossville, TN**. "James D. Cox has passed away" ...**Flower Mound, TX**. "Would you please add me to your mailing list for STOP? I enjoy and am very thankful for the truths that are published in this paper. Thank you for all you do" ...**Carol Shadell, Greenbrier, AR**. "Please remove from your mailing list. Curtis Hall is deceased. Thank you" ...**Nashville, TN**. "Dear brother Robinson; We've been receiving STOP for years and so enjoy all the good articles concerning the churches of Christ in surrounding areas. Please add this name to your mailing list. They will enjoy. Thank you so much. We look forward to the next issue. God bless your efforts in keeping our Lord's church pure. Because He lives..." **Name withheld by request, AL**. "I'm so glad to read that you are still putting out the STOP for it has so much good for us all. Boy do we need this April issue on Modesty. One thing, it makes me sad and half sick for summer to come to see how people, even some Christians, per se, dress and act and go to. No teaching much on and don't want it either! Too hot? Yes, but I'm afraid later it will be much hotter and longer, so we better obey God in all our ways if we want to go to heaven and miss that awful hot place with no end. Please send a dozen of the April issue. I'd really like to have

"We sent a donation and asked to be sent the paper, *Seek The Old Paths*. As of now, we have not received a copy. Could you please put us on your mailing list? We have received it before, but for some reason, it quit coming. Thanks" ...**Ray Mann, Franklin, KY**. "In Jeremiah

many to give away. When I get more money, I'll send a check to help. Print if you like, but no name. God knows" ...**Name withheld by request, OH**. "To whom it may concern: Please remove my name from your mail list. Thank you" ...**Nanette White, Hawthorne, CA**. "I pray that upon receipt of this offering, may God bless all of you to be well. I have enclosed an offering to help you in your work for the Lord. Please remember me in your prayers" ...**Leadale Simpson, Rockford, IL**. "I would like for you to add the following names to your mailing list for *Seek The Old Paths*" ...**Howard Jones, Dexter, MO**. "Enclosed is our check to help with the Lord's work. God bless you" ...**NV**. "Greetings, my beloved brethren and fellow labourers in the glorious Gospel of Jesus our Lord and Savior, the risen and living Christ. Would you please add a name to your mailing list? The Lord has blessed me to minister to this man on numerous occasions. God continues to use me to minister to him and now invites you to assist with *Seek The Old Paths*" ...**Kenneth Womack, Angola, LA**. "I have been reading the old 2007 copies of *Seek The Old Paths* which I borrowed from a friend. I enjoy reading them and would like to get on your mailing list. Thank you" ...**Bonnie Barnett, Eufaula, OK**. "Thank you for sending 10 copies of STOP which I ordered for the Lincoln Avenue Church of Christ. I am sending a small donation to help with the expense of sending to me. Put the following name on your monthly mailing list. Thank you once again" ...**Wayne Crum, Caledonia, OH**. "For help with the postage of STOP. Keep up the good work" ...**L. C. Bigham, Wayne, OK**. "Moving close to you. Please send *Seek The Old Paths* to our new address" ...**Robert Alley, Oak Grove, MO**.

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