



Seek The Old Paths

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

Vol. 23, No. 9

September 2012

THE PRESERVATION OF THE FAITH #2

Leroy Brownlow (deceased)

To preserve the faith, we must indoctrinate our people.

This is mandatory. I firmly believe that no young lady or young gentleman should be allowed to go through our high school Bible classes without a strong course in doctrine. I believe that every boy or girl that comes out of our high school Bible classes should know why he or she is a member of the church of Christ and should be able to give scriptural reasons for it. Now, this will save the church from apostasy and get it back to growing again.

Unless digression is rebuked today, it will be a lot bigger and stronger and louder tomorrow. And, therefore, we need to recognize this today, as those who stand in the defense of the Gospel of Christ. I trust that we shall not allow blind partisanship to lead us into the ditch. There is no place for blind partisanship in the life of a child of God.

What can we do about false teachers and their doctrine? Someone said, “Well, Brownlow, love them!” I do love them. I love them enough to preach the truth. And, if that isn’t love, then, this poor heart of mine needs a plumber. What can we do about it?

First of all, **I suggest that we renew our faith in the Gospel system and in the power of God’s word to restore the church — the restoration.** Let us not be brainwashed and duped into believing that ‘broad way theology’ is the way of success. It never has been and never will be.

In *Time Magazine*, May 22, 1989, we have some very relevant

thoughts. It states that, since 1965 until 1989 — 24 years — that the recently formed **United Church of Christ** has lost 20 percent of its members, and the **Presbyterian Church** has gone down 25 percent, and the **Episcopal Church** has lost 28 percent, and the **United Methodist Church** has decreased 18 percent, and the **Disciples of Christ** (Christian Church) has lost 43 percent of its members from 1965 to 1989. Now, don’t blame it on the times, because, during the same time, the **Roman Catholic Church** increased 16 percent, and they teach “one church” and that they are it. They teach the essentiality of baptism, so much that, if a baby dies without being sprinkled, that it will be lost. They teach the value and the importance of doctrine, so much that adults cannot become members without a course in doctrine — a course in a catechism. And, they grew 16 percent, while the broad, liberal, conformable churches went down, down, down.

Brethren, we shouldn’t have to

have the roof to fall in on us to let us know that standing for something does not kill us. Some of us remember that when the **Christian Church** (the Disciples) had their bandwagon rolling down the broad road, zigzagging from one side to the other, loaded with happy, jubilant passengers, and as they rolled along, they yelled and shouted, “Hop on; hop on; hop on! We’re going places!” They just forgot to tell us where they were going. And, so, they began to run out of fuel, and that bandwagon got slower and slower and slower, and, finally, it came to a halt, and, then, it began to roll backwards. A once happy and jubilant people, now with a forlorn look, greatly distressed, began jumping off and running in every direction.

Brethren, liberalism does not have enough conviction to sustain itself. Sooner or later, it will come to a halt. We have to really, really believe something in order for us to

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Preservation of the Faith...



Editorial...

SINS OF THE LAND

Garland M. Robinson

“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!”

Our nation is in great moral decay and getting worse day by day. Political correctness has desensitized and numbed the conscience of multiplied millions. Immorality is no longer considered immoral, it’s simply passed off as being a “social issue.” In the minds of those who subscribe to this idea, this makes it neither right nor wrong and therefore cannot be condemned. Especially is this so with the depraved sins of **sodomy** (homosexuality, lesbianism and so-called same sex marriage) and **abortion** (the horrifying slaughter of innocent babies). As heinous and despicable as these two atrocities are, they have become the norm and those who oppose them are often passed off as hate-mongers.

The day is drawing closer, and already exists in some places, that opposing sodomy is a hate-crime and those who do so are considered dangerous and a threat to society. The **Department of Homeland Security** sent out a bulletin (explained as an assessment) in 2009 to law enforcement agencies across the U.S. saying they should be on alert for right-wing extremist organizations. Such groups should be monitored more closely. They say that individuals in such groups are vulnerable to being recruited as terrorists. What groups do they consider to be right-wing extremists? In today’s climate of perversion, we should not be surprised that they would say it is those who oppose homosexuality and same sex marriage. Those who oppose abortion and contend for the unborn’s “right to life.” Those who believe the United States’ borders should be secured (they call it immigration). Those who believe in gun rights protected by the 2nd Amendment. Those who are returning veterans of the military (Iraq &

Afghanistan particularly, seeing they know how to use weapons and might teach others how to use them). Those who are concerned about the religion of Islam. Those who are conservative, traditional, and still believe in the Constitution. Basically, if you contend for God, home and family; if you believe there is an absolute standard of right and wrong, righteousness and evil, sin and error; then you are considered a right-wing extremist or at least closely connected with them. Members of these groups are all on the hit-list to be watched more closely. Do you feel someone breathing down your neck?

The freedom of speech, protected by the 1st Amendment, is under attack. Current policies and practices allow and protect those who push their agenda of same sex marriage and gay and lesbian “rights”, but seeks to stop the mouths of those who contest and challenge it. To oppose such would make you a right-wing extremist. To speak out against this perversion of God and family is considered a “hate-crime.” Why is it that some can say anything they want to promote immoral behavior (their right to do so being protected under the Constitution), but others cannot say anything to oppose such behavior? Isn’t our right to oppose such practices protected as well? While freedom of speech does not protect someone yelling “fire” in a crowded auditorium, it does protect one’s right to oppose and expose immorality and wickedness.

God said through Isaiah, “*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!*” (Isa. 5:20). Does this not sound like the times in which we now live? Though Isaiah is speaking of events in his own time, the principle applies in our

generation of corrupt men and women who have abandoned all sense of right and wrong according to God’s standard (cf. Rom. 15:4). Notice these passages that tell us what God thinks about it: “*He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both [are] abomination to the LORD*” (Prov. 17:15). “*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*” (Prov. 24:24-25).

Who would have ever believed that in such a short period of our lifetime, perversions of humanity would gain acceptance with the masses? Will the morally upright allow the morally degenerate to have their way? NO, they cannot — WE must not. The creator of heaven and earth tells us to contend for purity and righteousness. If we don’t stand up and proclaim righteousness throughout the land, no one else is going to. However, the war in which we are engaged is a war of “words.” It is not a war of physical violence. It is not one of anarchy and mayhem (“the wilful and unlawful crippling or mutilation of another person, violent and needless disturbance”).

We are in a battle for the hearts and souls of men. We are at war with wickedness wherever it may appear. However, we are not to take to the streets, and as thugs, cause havoc and anarchy. There is no law, either man-made or God-made, that protects those who would commit criminal acts of inflicting bodily harm. “*(For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*” (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

The righteous of the earth are at war! As soldiers of the cross, we are engaged in a fierce battle. We are well equipped in the Lord’s army to do the job we’ve been given to do. Ephesians 6:10-17 words it this way. “*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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]. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Notice that in one hand we hold the **word of the Spirit**, the powerful Word of God. And, in the other hand we hold the **shield of faith** "wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (cf. Eph. 6:16-17; cf. Neh. 4:17). With these two, we hold the most powerful weapons the world has ever known.

Jails and prisons remove the depraved and debased from society so they can no longer work their evil deeds upon the public, but such institutions cannot change a person's mind. The powerful Word of God, on the other hand, reaches the very seat of mankind's problem. It affects the very mind and thinking of individuals. When one changes their thinking (their mind), their actions automatically change. Proverbs 23:7 tells us that a man is what he thinks in his heart. He will do as his heart dictates. If his heart is evil, he will do evil. If his heart is good, he will do good.

The word of God and teaching it in every place is the tool we use to win the hearts of the way-ward. It is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:17-21; Eph. 6:11-17). The unadulterated word of God must be preached from the rooftops and no government on earth can prevent its spread. It works good in the lives of people, not evil. It brings peace and tranquility. It offers no threat of bodily harm to anyone. But instead, it brings an inner peace that is beyond understanding (cf. Phil. 4:7). Will you let the eternal Word of God change your life for good?

Preservation of the Faith...

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grow. So, I say, "Look out; look out, brethren! Look out, lest we ourselves drift into a broad, liberal, me too, we're just like you, theology." If we do, after a short-lived appeal, the day will come when empty buildings will haunt us and stand as monuments to those who got duped.

Second, to **preserve the faith, we must indoctrinate our people**. This is mandatory. Paul said to Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same, commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). Here it is right here in the Bible. Therefore, any church that does not abide by this, is sinning against God because God has given this command. Therefore, we should have indoctrination in our pulpits and in our classrooms, along with other teachings; of course, have a well-balanced program, and that does include indoctrination. Therefore, I firmly believe that no young lady or young gentleman should be allowed to go through our high school Bible classes without a strong course in doctrine. I believe that every boy or girl that comes out of our high school Bible classes should know why he or she is a member of the church of Christ and should be able to give scriptural reasons for it. This will save the church from apostasy and get it back to growing again.

Third, to **preserve the faith, preachers must preach the whole counsel of God, not just a part of it**. Paul said, "I shun not to declare unto you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). A man can preach a lifetime and never, never preach any error, and at the same time, never preach the whole counsel of God, by just staying off critical issues. And, all that time, the church can slip into apostasy all because he won't speak out on issues.

Now, God expects us to be the watchman on the wall. He has appointed us to be the watchman on the wall — watchmen that never hold their peace, that keep not silent day or night (Isa. 62:6). When danger threatens the church, for a person to remain silent is treason. I believe you

can see that's treason. And, why can't we call things by the real names rather than hide behind euphemisms? God expects us to be watchmen on the wall, and God's idea of a watchman is not that of a wooden Indian standing in front of a drugstore in a country town that sees no evil, hears no evil, and speaks of no evil. What kind of a watchman is that?

We have always had to deal with double-eyed circus theology. A double-eyed theologian can see on both sides of the street at the same time without ever turning his head. And, then, he goes into his circus act. He climbs on stilts so tall that it lets him walk on both sides of the street at the same time. A name for it is no conviction — cheap politics. If a man doesn't intend to preach the whole counsel of God, then, don't preach at all! Get a job selling Avon or insurance. That's an honest way to make a living. It isn't honest to take money under false pretense; to take money, pretending to preach the whole counsel of God, and all that time, to work secretly to destroy the church or else to do nothing to keep it from slipping. That's dishonest.

Fourth, to **preserve the faith, elders must guard the flock**. To the elders reading this, I'm going to give you some words from the heart of God to your heart that will help us to preserve the faith. Paul said to the elders, "Take heed unto the flock," and then he immediately gave them a good reason for it. He said, "For I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves come in, not sparing the flock." They'll come in — wolves — wolves in sheep's clothing.

When I was a boy I had a pet wolf. We caught him when he was a pup. But I knew he was a wolf, so I handled him cautiously. But there is one thing that you can say in favor of that wolf, old Lobo, he never wore sheep's clothing. That's one of the things the Bible warns against — that there will come in, those wearing sheep's clothing!

I say to elders, that God intends for you to convince the gainsayers. He says to every elder, "Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). How? By using sound doctrine

— not by using freewheeling, easy-going, everything is right theology. He said “use sound doctrine to convince the gainsayers.”

Now, **elders, God expects you to stop the mouths of the gainsayers.** That’s what he says. That is a command that God has given to elders — stop the mouths of the gainsayers. Now, two verses below, he says, “*Whose mouths must be stopped.*” Notice that, “whose mouths must, m-u-s-t, must, must, must! Not if you want to. Not if it seems to be the political thing, no! He said “must,” m-u-s-t. “*Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake.*”

I appeal to elders. I appeal to our elders everywhere throughout the world. Stop the mouths of the gainsayers. Do not allow the cult of loose and full lips to take over; but, contrariwise, stop their mouths. But you can’t stop their mouths by standing them up to preach or to teach. That doesn’t stop their mouths. That opens their mouths! That is in direct contradiction to what God has said. God says, “Stop their mouths,” not open their mouths.

In the fifth place, **to preserve the church and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the preservation of the faith, we need the support and the cooperation of all of our Christian schools throughout the world.** Christian schools are powerful organs. They are so powerful that I firmly believe that Christian schools, almost single-handedly, and alone, could, in a few years, save the church from the threat of denominationalism. You say, “How?” By emphasizing the old paths; emphasizing the distinctive Gospel; emphasizing the distinctive church of our Lord, because a Christian school has a tremendous amount of influence.

I appeal to our Christian schools everywhere: send back to us young ladies and young gentlemen who have been indoctrinated; who know the Gospel; who know the faith; who love the Gospel; who love the faith; who are the defenders of the faith; who are the defenders of the Gospel; who know the difference between Christianity and denominationalism. You do this, and we shall ever, ever, ever, be grateful to you.

Sixth, to preserve the faith, let

us be wary of negotiations with those in error. Remember this: Truth is not negotiable. Paul said, “*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one*” (Gal. 6:1). Paul didn’t say merge with him. Paul said restore him. There is a vast difference between restoring people who are in error and in merging with people that are in error. A merger could swallow us up. A merger could consume us. A hunter was in the forest, and he took his rifle, and he took aim at a bear, and the bear said, “Hold up! Hold up! Wait a moment! Wait a moment! Let’s negotiate. Let’s see if we can work this matter out. What do you want?” And the hunter said, “I want a fur coat.” And the bear said, “I want a full stomach.” And they worked it out. The bear got a full stomach and the hunter got a fur coat. Fellow Christians, a merger with those in error could give us a fur coat!

Seventh, to preserve the faith, start doing something now, now, now, n-o-w, now. Don’t wait until we have lost nearly everything. Digression moves so fast. Paul said, “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel, which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ*” (Gal. 1:7,8). Paul said, “so soon, so soon, so soon removed.” We have seen it happen so fast in some congregations. Digression goes so fast that it goes a hundred miles an hour in neutral. But there is no neutrality in the kingdom of God, in the battle between truth and error, right and wrong. Now, my friends, it’s not a question of our going into battle; God has already made that decision for us. The very day that we were raised up from the waters of baptism, that very day, we were enrolled in the army of the Lord and pointed toward warfare. We have

fought a thousand battles and the struggle goes on and on. The battle today is not just for today, but for a vast future. Therefore, I appeal to the heroic nature of our brotherhood. Put on the whole armor of God and take the sword of the Spirit. God has given us a weapon. I trust that we know how to use it and stand, stand, stand and advance, advance, advance.

Therefore, I appeal to all of our people everywhere. I appeal to our *young people*. You are the spark and the future of the church. I appeal to our *teachers*. You mold the thinking of others. I appeal to our *elders*. You lead, direct, and protect the flock. I appeal to the *pew sitters*. In the last analysis, you are the backbone of the church. I appeal to those who operate our *schools*. We are what we are taught. I appeal to our *preachers*. Eventually, as the pulpit goes, so goes the church. I appeal to *those who once walked the narrow road and now walk a broad and forbidden path*. I appeal to you: Come back! Come back! Come back! We love you! We love you! We love you!

My friends, if we stop the forces that would pervert the Gospel, that would restructure the church and turn it into a denomination, history will say, “This was our finest day in 200 years.” And, now, for the hope of all of us, when the last battle shall have been fought and the last summons shall have come, may we confidently go to our grave with the full assurance that we have given the last full measure of devotion to the greatest cause in all the world.

When loved ones left behind start looking around for appropriate words to engrave on our tombstones, may they consider the dying message of the apostle Paul, who said, “*I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith.*”

Part 2 of 2
Sermon delivered over
20 years ago

“CHRISTIAN” SCHOOLS?

More often than not, when people refer to schools operated by brethren, they refer to them as Christian schools. This expression uses the word “Christian” as an adjective. An adjective describes a noun and often answers the question “what kind.” In the expression “Christian” school, the word Christian seeks to describe the kind of school it is. This is a misuse of the

word Christian.

The word Christian is found three times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). It is always used as a noun, referring to individuals, never as an adjective. (See the article on page 71 of this issue). Therefore, it is not appropriate or accurate to describe or refer to a school, book store, publication, or even a church, etc. as being a “Christian ____.”

Another common expression that is not correct is to refer to certain schools as “our” schools as if they were part of the church. Schools that provide secular education are owned and operated by individuals, not the church. The church has no such schools. It has not been given the work of secular education and therefore has no authority to establish, own or operate them. The work of the church is limited to evangelism, edification and benevolence. On the other hand, it is good when one can study in an atmosphere where principles of righteousness are upheld.

— Garland M. Robinson

APOLLOS WATERED

Tom Wacaster

In years gone by, when the opportunity afforded itself, I would plant a garden in my back yard. Between the planting of the seed and the reaping of the crop, there are certain things that I had to do, like tilling the soil, keeping the weeds out along the way, and applying water in the absence of sufficient rain.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he too made a distinction between the planting and the watering: “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” (1 Cor. 3:6). Think about what is involved in spiritual watering.

First, *there is the sheer importance of watering.* God, in His marvelous design, arranged the natural order of things so that a seed planted in the ground must receive water in order to sprout and grow. Deprive the seed or plant of water, and it will die. So it is with God’s spiritual seed, the Word of God (Luke 8:11). The soil may determine the amount of care required to bring the seed to full fruition. But without water, there simply can be no growth.

Second, *there are the specifics of watering.* A good example is essential to nurturing the seed. A good example must be provided by the teacher, as well as those who claim any association to the message of that teacher. If brother Jones takes the time to teach some lost soul, it is imperative that he set a proper example. Teaching, coupled with action, is the golden key that unlocks the vault of influence. But it is also

important that each member live a life that is exemplary to the message and hope to which they have been called. Hypocrites in a congregation most certainly render a negative influence upon those contemplating attendance or obedience. Yes, a good example is important.

Then, there is the need for additional teaching and instruction once the seed has been planted. Paul introduced the Corinthians to the Gospel. Apollos did the follow up work. Seldom does a soul obey the Gospel after just one lesson (though there are exceptions). Sometimes it takes weeks, months, or even years of encouragement and instruction. As long as a man is willing to learn, let us provide him with the “sincere milk of the word,” and pray for his obedience.

Third, *let us realize that ‘planters’ and ‘waterers’ share in responsibility and reward.* The planting is of no greater or lesser importance than the watering. It takes both. The ‘planter’ may include those who visit and set up studies, conduct cottage classes, teach and preach the word publicly and/or privately. The ‘waterer’ may follow up with encouragement, a visit or call on the phone, or a prayer in behalf of those who have heard, yet not obeyed. The ‘planters’ do their job well, the ‘waterers’ contribute to the completion of the work, and both share in the reward. Let us not forget, “for as his share is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his share be that tarrieth by the baggage: they

shall share alike” (1 Sam. 30:24).

Fourth, *it is important that both the ‘planter’ and the ‘waterer’ be versed in the scripture.* A successful gardener must have a knowledge of gardening. On occasions, I have actually pulled out precious flower plants because I thought they were weeds. Someone might accidentally poison a plant if he is ignorant of what chemicals are good and/or bad for the care of his garden. And so it is with planting and watering.

In Matthew 5:16, Jesus commanded us, “Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” What constitutes a “shining light?” Is my example beneficial or detrimental to the well being of those who are watching me? Am I using scripture properly in the exhortation and encouragement that I lend to others? How can you be certain if you don’t know God’s word?

Finally, *we must share the bounty with others.* My first local work was in a farming community. Summer’s harvest, though planted by others, was shared by many. It was not uncommon for us to receive so many potatoes, tomatoes, and onions that we simply could not eat it all. Waste is wrong and one’s bounty was passed along to others.

God’s bountiful harvest is to be shared with others. The Gospel is for all. The Great Commission is not the Great Permission. Those who refuse to share what they enjoy with others are guilty of selfishness. Like the lepers who discovered the goods in the abandoned camp of the Syrians: “Then they said one to another, We do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, punishment will overtake us; now therefore come, let us go and tell the king’s household” (2 Kings 7:9). Brother, do not hoard your blessings. Give to others that they too might live.

As we labor together, may we recognize the fact that although some are “planters,” and others are “waterers,” our goal is the salvation of the souls of men to the glory of God the Father, through Jesus Christ His Son.

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THE LORD ONLY DID IT ONCE

Roger D. Campbell

Time and again Jehovah blessed the children of Israel when they wandered in the wilderness. He provided for their every need, guided them, and protected them. His care for them was an ongoing process. Later, again and again the Lord sent His messengers, the prophets, to exhort the children of Israel to turn from their wicked path and return to Him (2 Chron. 36:15).

Yes, there are some actions of God which He repeated a number of times in history. There are, however, some things that the Lord did only once. They were unique, one-time events that He will never repeat. Doing them one time was sufficient. What are some of the great events the Lord carried out only once?

CREATION — No matter how many times we read the account of creation in Genesis 1, we are always amazed with its clarity, brevity, and completeness. Much later, at Mount Sinai God told the nation of Israel, “For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is” (Exodus 20:11). God created all things — one time. Once was enough.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS — Just as Isaiah the prophet had predicted in about 700 B.C. (Isa. 7:14), a virgin gave birth to a son and His name was called “Emmanuel.” The virgin, of course, was Mary, and the son was Jesus (Matt. 1:20-23). The virgin birth of Jesus was no accident, as “the power of the Highest” came upon Mary (Luke 1:35). This miraculous event, a virgin conceiving and giving birth, was a one-time event that will never be repeated. The Lord did it only once.

THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS — During the time the Law of Moses was in effect, the Levitical priests stood “daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins” (Heb. 10:11). There is absolutely no way to count all the animal sacrifices that were offered under the old covenant. In great contrast to that system, Jesus, “after he had offered one sacri-

— *once for all time. Through the Holy Spirit, God gave men “all truth” in the first century (John 16:13). There will be no new Gospel from the Lord because His one Gospel gets the job done! If someone comes to us with what he claims is “a new gospel,” be assured that it is not the Lord’s message (Gal. 1:6-9).*

— *What do the creation of the world, virgin birth of Jesus, sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, establishment of the church, and delivering of the truth have in common? They are all things the Lord did; and, He did each of them only once. Not one of these is a trivial matter. We owe our existence and eternal salvation to the Lord. May we all determine to serve Him with reverence and grateful hearts, being ever ready to tell others of His great deeds.*

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DO NOT DESPAIR

“*E*ven the winds and the sea obey him” (Matt. 8:23-27)! That is what the disciples said after the Lord calmed the wind and the sea.

Storms in our lives threaten us on a regular basis. We think we are about to drown in debt, marital problems, disobedient children, mean bosses, hard to work for companies. Perhaps you’ve been trying to calm the storm by yourself and it’s not working. There is a solution. Awaken the Lord in your life. But, how do we do it?

Obey Him. Faith (John 8:24), Repentance (Acts 2:38), Confession (Rom. 10:9-10) and in Water Baptism the Lord will wash away your sins (Acts 22:16; 2:38).

Walk with Him daily. Live according to his word (1 John 1:7). Study, pray, be faithful unto death (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Thess. 5:17; Rev. 2:10).

Tell others about Him. The woman at the well did so (John 4:29). We can too (Mark 16:15-16).

*— Larry Acuff
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— *once for all time. Through the Holy Spirit, God gave men “all truth” in the first century (John 16:13). There will be no new Gospel from the Lord because His one Gospel gets the job done! If someone comes to us with what he claims is “a new gospel,” be assured that it is not the Lord’s message (Gal. 1:6-9).*

— *What do the creation of the world, virgin birth of Jesus, sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, establishment of the church, and delivering of the truth have in common? They are all things the Lord did; and, He did each of them only once. Not one of these is a trivial matter. We owe our existence and eternal salvation to the Lord. May we all determine to serve Him with reverence and grateful hearts, being ever ready to tell others of His great deeds.*

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DO NOT DESPAIR

“*E*ven the winds and the sea obey him” (Matt. 8:23-27)! That is what the disciples said after the Lord calmed the wind and the sea.

Storms in our lives threaten us on a regular basis. We think we are about to drown in debt, marital problems, disobedient children, mean bosses, hard to work for companies. Perhaps you’ve been trying to calm the storm by yourself and it’s not working. There is a solution. Awaken the Lord in your life. But, how do we do it?

Obey Him. Faith (John 8:24), Repentance (Acts 2:38), Confession (Rom. 10:9-10) and in Water Baptism the Lord will wash away your sins (Acts 22:16; 2:38).

Walk with Him daily. Live according to his word (1 John 1:7). Study, pray, be faithful unto death (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Thess. 5:17; Rev. 2:10).

Tell others about Him. The woman at the well did so (John 4:29). We can too (Mark 16:15-16).

*— Larry Acuff
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CHRISTIANITY IS A TAUGHT RELIGION

Douglas Hoff

How does a person become a Christian? It's a simple question but a lot of people do not know the Biblically correct answer. Some think one is a Christian if his parents are church members in good standing. This would mean one entered a covenant relationship with God much like the Jews did — by physical birth.

Interestingly, the word Christian is found only three times in the whole Bible (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16).

The first occurrence reveals that the disciples were first called Christians in the city of Antioch. When reading about the religion of Christ, one would expect to learn what the followers were called shortly after it was established. By way of contrast, Peter's letter was written about 30 years after the church began. By this time the word "Christian" was fairly well known in the Roman Empire.

The second use of this word reveals an important detail. King Agrippa understood a person must be persuaded to become a follower of Christ (Acts 26:28). Thus, the individual must be taught certain truths and embrace them. This is exactly what Luke did for Theophilus (Luke 1:3,4; Acts 1:1).

To become a Christian, the lost soul must be *born again* (John 3:3-5; 1 Peter 1:22,23). Peter recorded that the soul is purified from sins by "obeying the truth." This indicates that Christianity is a taught religion. Salvation is obtained through a spiritual, not physical birth. Hebrews 8:10,11 shows that one cannot be saved unless he first knows the law of God. This is in contrast with the Jews who were born into God's covenant and later had to be taught the Law of Moses. Today, everyone must first be taught the Gospel before salvation is possible (Mark 16:15,16). The Lord said, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). What must be

taught? Jesus said, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, [then] are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32).

Christianity is also a teaching religion. Someone must teach or do the instructing. Who has this responsibility? Jesus commanded the apostles to teach (Mark 16:15,16). Indirectly, he commands us as well (Matt. 28:18-20). Properly teaching the Gospel includes impressing upon each Christian his obligation to do "all things I have commanded you" (the apostles). Since the apostles were commanded to go and teach all nations, then each succeeding disciple shares in this mission (cf. 2 Tim. 2:2). If you are a Christian, you learned the saving truth. Will you not pass along this good news to some poor lost soul?

Since every child of God has the responsibility of teaching the Gospel, we must study and learn to be properly equipped for the task. Clearly, it is not possible to teach what we do not know. However, remember that for a person to first become a Christian, he must know at least the plan of salvation. If a soul recognizes his need to be saved and obeys the Gospel, then he knows enough to teach that much to others. Sadly, some members of the church do not teach anyone. The problem may be either they cannot or will not engage in this work. Because humans are forgetful, it is possible to lose what once had been gained. The writer of Hebrews rebuked his readers this way, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which [be] the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk [is] unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, [even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:12-14).

Some members of the Lord's church say they are not able to teach others. This admission may be true. If so, they need to repent and start studying. It may just be an admission that the person is either afraid to try or lacks confidence in his ability. The best way to overcome such obstacles is by trying. As the writer of Hebrews stated, it takes "use" to have one's senses exercised. The only way to grow in knowledge is by spending the necessary time to study (2 Peter 3:18).

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Baker C/C, Baker, FL.....	\$25
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Church of Christ, Falfurrias, TX.....	\$200
Frank P. Allen.....	\$125
Anonymous.....	\$25
Anonymous.....	\$50
Anonymous.....	\$100
Jean Ware.....	\$40
Leadale D. Simpson.....	\$25
Anonymous.....	\$20
Jean Boiko.....	\$50
Everett & Colleen Anderson.....	\$50
Bobby & Mary Lawrence.....	\$100
Arlington C/C, McMinnville, TN.....	\$50
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Bob & Nadine Jennings.....	\$50
Anonymous.....	\$5
Carlena Nabors.....	\$25
Ralph Thompson.....	\$30
Max & Carolyn Coleman.....	\$50
Bradford C/C, Bradford, TN.....	\$100
Joe C. Turbeville.....	\$12
Del Brantley.....	\$50
Billy & Linda Jones.....	\$25
Anonymous.....	\$25
Beginning Balance.....	\$3,061.92
Contributions.....	\$1,642.00
Debits	
Postage.....	\$1,616.96
Supplies.....	\$29.98
Ending Balance.....	\$3,056.98



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"I am a new Christian a little less than a year. Can you mail me issues to my home address? Thank you. I would love to follow along" ...**Dave Monday, Indianapolis, IN.** "I was so excited to get my first STOP in the mail with my name on it. Thank you. Wonderful publication" ...**TN.** "James Sloan has passed away" ...**Lecanto, FL.** "Please cancel my subscription to *Seek The Old Paths*. Thank you" ...**Dennis Oliver, Cookeville, TN.** "Please delete James Olin Warmack from your mailing records. He has recently passed away" ...**Montgomery, AL.** "God bless you for printing the truth. I look forward to receiving *Seek The Old Paths* each month" ...**Lorene Wilson, Binger, OK.** "Please send STOP. Thank you" ...**Dennis & Jane Cone, Southaven, MS.** "Enclosed is an offering for the Lord's work. I thank my God for brethren who are sound in the teaching and truth of God's word. Please remember me in your prayers as I do you" ...**Leadale Simpson, Rockford, IL.** "Thank you for this publication. Please continue to send it" ...**Ralph Thompson, White House, TN.** "We appreciate the STOP so very much. We've talked to some friends about it and how it isn't one of these 'liberal' leaflets, but it is true to what the Bible teaches. They would like to receive it and be added to your regular mailing list if possible. They are members of the church. We'll enclose a check to help with the postage" ...**Name withheld by request, CA.** "Murriel Windham has passed away" ...**Las Vegas, NV.** "Thank you" ...**Doug & Denice Hicks, Sutherland, IA.** "Please send the monthly publication, *Seek The Old Paths*, to each address. We are all New Testament Christian friends. Have been receiving around 15-20 years and look forward to the monthly STOP and passing it on to others to read" ...**Elsie Weatherford, Saltillo, MS.** "Thank you for your wonderful publication, *Seek The Old Paths*. Thank you" ...**Beta Pinkley, Jefferson City, MO.** "Keep up the good works. Thanks" ...**Mary Ann McFaul, Kemp, TX.** "In Jeremiah 18:7-10 we read, 'At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy [it]; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And [at what] instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant [it]; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.' How long will this nation turn it's back on God before God turns his back on it? This nation's morals are no longer worthy of upholding and our only hope now is the people of God, pray to God, with a fervent like no other. If we do not pray, who will? *'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much'* (James 5:16). The power of prayer can change this nation and this nation can change" ...**Del Brantley, Salem, KY.**

"The judgment day is a real day, coming at a future date. 'And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment' (Heb. 9:27). The judge will be Jesus. 'And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God [to

be] the Judge of quick and dead' (Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1,8). The words of Jesus will be the standard of judgment for all living this side of the cross. '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' (John 12:48; Matt. 16:19; 18:18; James 1:25; Col. 2:14; Acts 3:22). When judgment day comes, all mankind, from Adam to the end of time, will be gathered before the Lord. 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth [his] sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left' (Matt. 25:31-33). He will recognize the ones who have obeyed him and invite them into heaven (Matt. 25:34). Whose who have refused to confess and obey him, he will send away into hell (Matt. 25:41; 10:32-33; Luke 12:8-9; 2 Thess. 1:8-10). No sadder words could ever be uttered than those spoken by Jesus. 'And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity' (Matt. 7:23). Let us consider to whom these words were spoken. These were very religious people who believed in Jesus (Matt. 7:22). Jesus said they were lost because they had not obeyed him (Matt. 7:21). Have you studied his will and obeyed him?" — **Earl B. Claud, 106 Bradley Hill Dr., Dover, TN 37058.**

Seek The Old Paths is a monthly publication of the **Leoni Church of Christ** and is under the oversight of its elders. It is FREE, being supported by the contributions of both individuals and congregations. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3, 2 Tim. 4:2, Titus 1:13, Titus 2:1 and 2 Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless it is marked "not for publication." The church building is located at: 6818 McMinnville Hwy, Woodbury, TN 37190.

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