

The Better Way

Volume XXXIX, Issue 43

October 20, 2024

THE OLD PATHS

Leslie G. Thomas

Thus saith Jehovah, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls: but they said, We will not walk therein. And I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet; but they said, We will not hearken (Jer. 6:16, 17).

The imagery of the text is that of travelers who are on their way to a certain destination, but who have either lost their way, or have reached the place where the road forks and where a decision must be made before any further progress can be had. It was at such a time as this, or amid such confusion, that someone saw their plight and provided the information which they needed. But it sometimes happens that people who are in need of this kind of advice are not willing to accept it.

The lesson, of course, is a moral one, and represents travelers on the way of life who have lost their direction. Jehovah is always willing and ready to direct people into the right way, but not everyone is willing to heed His instruction. The contrast between man's lost and helpless condition and God's love and mercy toward him is to be found on almost every page of the Bible. The Lord does not want anyone to be lost, and He has made ample provision for the salvation of all men (1 Tim. 2:3, 4; 2 Pet. 3:9; Heb. 2:9).

The plural "**paths**" does not imply that there are many ways to heaven; for it is in these paths that the "**good way**" is to be found. The *old paths* are those in which God's people have always walked, such as faith, love, and obedience. Another Old Testament prophet stated the case in this way: "**He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God**" (Mic. 6:8). But in studying the lesson now before us, let us consider it under the following headings:

THE DIVINE ADMONITION

1. "**Stand ye in the ways and see.**" The term "**stand**" implies that the travelers are to stop in the midst of the ways before them, while "**see**" indicates that they are to take into consideration the condition in which they find themselves. No one is prepared to accept the mercy of God who does not realize his lost and undone condition (Acts 2:14-37).

2. "**And ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein.**" Notwithstanding man's lost and helpless condition, he still has a responsibility in the sight of God. (1) He must ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and (2) he must walk therein.

To ask for the old paths is to show a willingness and a determination to please God. That has always been true of people who realize their

SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST

Physical Address:
1327 Spring Cypress Rd.
Spring, TX 77373

Mailing Address:
25403 Lancewood Dr.
Spring, TX 77373

Office: 281-353-2707

springcoc@gmail.com
www.churchesofchrist.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:00 a.m.
Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Afternoon Worship.....1:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:30 p.m.
(via Zoom Meetings)

ELDERS

David P. Brown
Ken Cohn
John West

DEACONS

Bret Bailey
J. D. Gunter
Eric Paluka

EVANGELIST

David P. Brown

SECRETARY

Sonya West

lost state, and who want to please God (Acts 22:10). To walk therein means complete obedience to the gospel plan of salvation; for it is only in the gospel that the good way is to be found (Rom. 1:16, 17; Acts 2:38-42).

THE PROMISED REWARD

"And ye shall find rest for your souls."

This has always been the Lord's promise to those who love and serve Him. No one can read this promise without thinking of a similar statement made by Jesus:

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Mat. 11:28-30).

The rest which is promised to those who walk in the **"good way"** is no mere outward repose. It is rest of the heart, the conscience, the mind, the affections, and the will. How great is the difference between the *memory* of the past and the *power* of the present, when people do as God directs (1 Tim. 1:15, 16; 2 Tim. 1:12; 4:6-8).

The promises of God fill a large part of the Bible, and not one of them has ever been broken, if its fulfillment depended upon Him. **"For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea: wherefore also through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us"** (2 Cor. 1:20). The promises of God have power to move men, (1) according to the value they place upon the things promised; and (2) according to the faith they have in Him who made the promises.

THE RESPONSE OF THE LOST

"But they said, We will not walk therein."

How often has that spirit been manifested by people who needed the Lord's guidance!

And all the people when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him (Luke 7:29, 30.)

Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did

not subject themselves to the righteousness of God (Rom. 10:1-3).

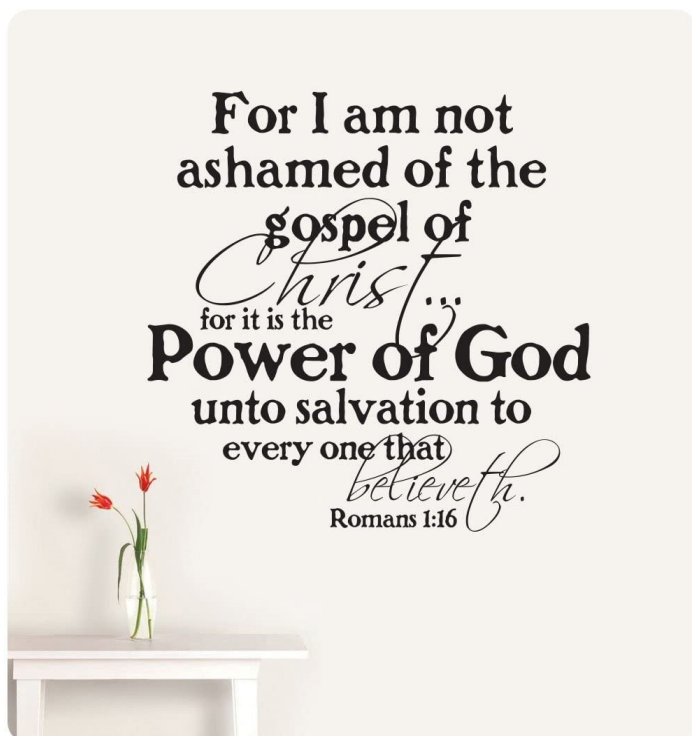
But God was not willing to stop with their refusal to walk in the good way. **"And I set watchmen over you, saying, Harken to the sound of the trumpet."** God is never willing to give up anyone, as long as there is any possible hope of saving him. **"Jehovah appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee"** (Jer. 31:3). **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life"** (John 3:16; Eze. 33:1-9).

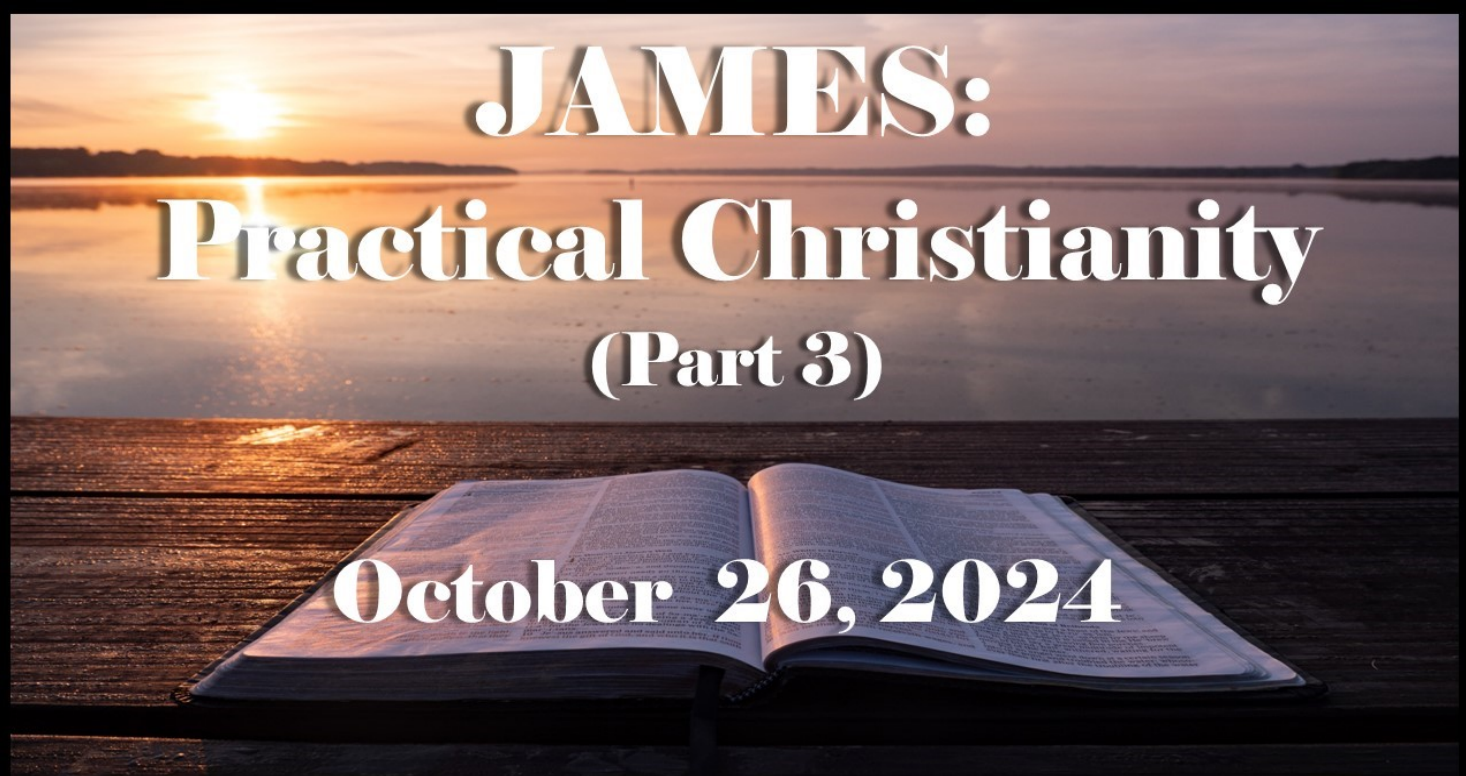
Moffatt's translation of the text now under consideration is very suggestive:

"Stand at the crossroads," the Eternal said, "and look for the old path, ask for the good road and take it, so shall ye be safe and prosper." But they said, "We will not take it." I posted sentinels for them, I bade them listen to the trumpet-blast; they said, "We will not listen."

That is the picture of sinful and stubborn men's reaction to the love, sacrifice, and mercy of God. **"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I cast thee off, Israel? ... my heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together"** (Hos. 11:8).~

Deceased





JAMIES: Practical Christianity (Part 3)

October 26, 2024

Fish Hatchery Road Church Of Christ

1380 Fish Hatchery Road, Huntsville, Texas

Phone: 936-581-4346 Email: bruces_l@netzero.com

The book of James is so practical that some have called it “the gospel of common sense.” Because the Christian faith is not just an organization to join or a few abstract doctrines to hold, a letter like James’ is immediately relevant to every Christian. The Christian faith requires each believer to bring every thought and action into conformity to the Word of God. It proclaims a Christian philosophy of life in stark contrast to the self-seeking, unfocused, and often tumultuous existence that frequently characterizes those outside the faith. A matter worth pondering is the fact that the very first topic James discussed involved the difficulties encountered in the Christian life. Totally foreign to him was the curious modern notion that becoming a Christian will make life easier, that all problems will disappear.

9:00 am: *Don't Leave God Out Of Your Plans (4:13-17)* ~ Jose Gamez

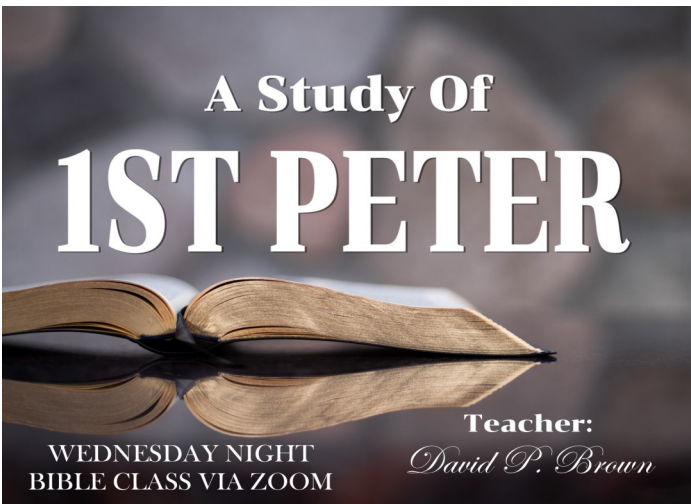
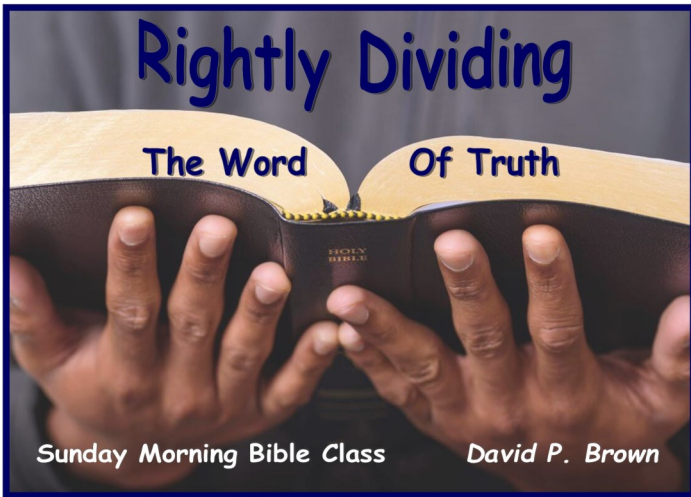
10:00 am: *The Misuse Of Riches (5:1-6)* ~ Eric Paluka

11:00 am: *Patient Endurance (5:7-12)* ~ David Brown

1:30 pm: *The Prayer Of Faith (5:13-18)* ~ Jack Stephens

2:30 pm: *Saving A Soul From Death (5:19-20)* ~ John West

3:30 pm: *Question & Answer Session*



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- . Articles
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- . Debates
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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- **This Saturday, October 26th:** Fish Hatchery Road Lectureship. "James: Practical Christianity Part 3"
- **Sunday, October 27th:** Monthly meal and afternoon singing service
- **Tuesday, October 29th:** Ladies' Bible Class (last one for this year)
- **Saturday, November 23rd:** Chili Cook-off at Burroughs Park

THOSE TO SERVE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2024

Announcements Ken Cohn
Scripture Reading Steven Johnson
Genesis 1:20-23

Song Leader Gary Blasingame
Prayer Steven Johnson/Andrew Paluka (AM)
 Bret Bailey/Ken Cohn (PM)

Speaker David Brown

Lord's Table (AM)
(Luke 22:63-65)

Stephen Cohn Eric Paluka
 Bret Bailey J.D. Gunter

Lord's Table (PM)

Steven Johnson Andrew Paluka

Audio/Video Monitor Joshua West
Camera/Door Monitor Bret Bailey

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2024
(via Zoom Meetings)

Announcements Bret Bailey
Speaker Jonathan West
Bible Class Teacher David Brown

FOR OCTOBER

Prepare Communion Bailey
Lock Buildings Gunter
Prepare Bulletin Board Mercier/Ferguson

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Gayle Barnett, Noah & Glenda Hackworth, Robbie Kirby, Edith Young, Zack Nero, April McCain, Debbie Brannon, Cynthia Jackson, Elnora Oxendine, Charles & Ann Nero, Chuck & Nancy Verkist, Freda Smith, Orlinda Chumbley, and Roelf & Janice Ruffner.

TEST YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

Who were the Grecians or Hellenists?

Answer to last week's question:
 Turning it upside down; 2 Kings 21:13