

# The Old Paths

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## "Taking Out The Trash"

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**E**veryone is familiar with the above phrase, I'm sure. It seems that taking the trash out is a daily occurrence in many homes. When it is not removed, folks in the house soon know it! In a spiritual sense, there is "trash" that needs to be removed from the lives of people. Perhaps we have not thought about it in this way, but it is true. If we are to be what God wants us to be, we need to take out the "trash". What does this mean to us in a spiritual sense? Let's find out.

### Put Off The Old Man.

When one becomes a Christian, the Bible declares that we have put off, or have put the "old man" to death (Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 3:5; Eph. 4:20-24). Yet, it seems that from time to time some Christians act as if they want to slip the old man back on! That is the worst thing a Christian can do! When the apostle Paul wrote the Colossians (3:5-9), he pointed out some things that these Christians used to do. He said they lived in sin at one time (v. 7). Now, they were not to do that anymore. Paul told them to, "*Put to death therefore what is earthly in you ...*" (Col. 3:5). He also told them in verse 9 of Colossians three, "*Do not lie to one another, seeing that ye have put off the old self with its practices.*" It is essential to "*put off the old self*" if we plan on pleasing God, and going to

Heaven one day! Take out the trash!

Sadly, there are people who will become Christians, but then turn back to their old lives of sin. Such action is like someone bringing their trash back into the house! Have we ever known of people who went "dumpster diving"? In other words, folks went out to dig through others people's trash in order to find something they considered valuable. When we put the old man of sin back on, we are acting like those "dumpster divers." Or, to describe it the way the Bible does, attempting to live that life of sin after we have been forgiven, makes us like the dog who "*returns to his own vomit ...*" (II Pet. 2:22).

### Do Not Look Back.

Jesus dealt with people that said they would follow Him, but really had no intention of doing so. In Luke 9:57-62, He met three people who said they would follow Him but were doing it on their terms, not Christ's. In verses 61-62, one fellow said: "*I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at home. Jesus said to him, No one, who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.*" The spiritual application can be made that we are not fit for the kingdom if we obey His word, and then look back. In other words, we are not fit for God's kingdom if we obey God's word, and then turn around and act like the Devil! Friends, we need to be as the apostle

Paul who said, "*Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind, and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*" (Phil. 3:13-14). In other words, once the "trash" has been removed from our lives, let us make sure it stays out!

### Do Not Give In To Fleshly Lusts.

Fleshly lusts in this life seem to overwhelm us at times. However, we need to combat these things, and not give in to them. Notice what the apostle Peter said concerning this subject: "*Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles, to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which war against your soul*" (I Pet. 2:11). Regardless of what it might be: drinking, smoking, filthy language, pornography, etc. Our command is to "*abstain*" from those things. Abstain means "to hold oneself from" (Vine's, p. 18). Thayer says abstain means, "to hold back, keep off, prevent" (p. 57). "Abstain" does not mean to go ahead and do it, as long as I do not get caught! A true Christian will not give in to the fleshly lusts of this world. What will you do, friend? Let us be faithful to "take out the trash" and live in a way that is well-pleasing in the sight of God (Rev. 2:10; I Cor. 15:58)!

**David Said:** The blessed man will not associate with evil people, "*But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*" (Ps. 1:1-2)

### Something to Think About...

Is the Bible your delight, or something that is keeping you from doing what you like???

# FAITH and OBEDIENCE

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**D**enominational disciples have forever been unable to see that faith and obedience are not opposed to one another. They breathe the word faith like it was a feeling and avoid the word obedience like it was a disease. Concerning faith, they pervert Paul. Considering obedience, they jumble James. "Faith," they declare, "saves by itself alone." Thus, they see obedience as a stumbling-stone.

While fully, freely acknowledging a distinction between simple belief in Christ and overt acts of obedience, gospel preachers have sought to show that "the faith that saves is the faith that obeys." Numerous New Testament passages plainly present the truthfulness of such teaching. Let us examine a select few.

**(1) Acts 15:9 And 1 Peter 1:22** — When reviewing the fact of Gentile regeneration, Peter said, "God...put no difference between us (Jews) and them (Gentiles), purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). However, when he wrote to the Christians scattered over a wide area, he said, "ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth" (1 Pet. 1:22). Are we to conclude that there are two modes of purifying, sanctifying, and justifying the soul? No, for one is forgiven by faith when he obeys the gospel (Rom. 5:1, 6:17-18; 1 Pet. 3:21; 4:17-18).

**(2) 1 Peter 1:9 And Hebrews 10:36** - In 1 Peter 1:9 we learn that the "end" (consummation, fulfill-

ment) of faith is "*the salvation of your souls.*" A parallel pronouncement is placed in verse 36 of Hebrews 10. "*For ye have need of patience that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*" The fruition of faith and the object of obedience equals "*the promise,*" the "*salvation of your souls.*"

**(3) Romans 1:8 And 16:19** — Paul told the Romans "*that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world*" (Rom. 1:8). But in concluding the same epistles he said, "*your obedience is come abroad unto all men*" (Rom. 16:19). Here we find faith and obedience interchangeably entwined. The faith of the Romans was manifested by their obedience likewise manifested their faith (James 2:18).

**(4) Galatians 5:6 And 1 Corinthians 7:19** — Note these unmistakably, synonymous texts. "*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love*" (Gal. 5:6). "*Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God*" (1 Cor. 7:19). Does faith which does not work avail, or profit? No, for "*faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone*" (James 2:17). What avails, what is it that is acceptable unto God? "*Faith that*

*worketh by love,*" and "*keeping...the commandments of God,*" that is what is approved of God. Having faith without being obedient is like having a dry bar of soap with no water. "*Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him*" (Acts 10:34-35).

Faith and obedience cannot be separated. "*Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also*" (James 2:24, 26).

## Will You Help Yourself?

**S**omeone remarked, "I just can't get interested in Bible study." Another answered, "No, some can't. It is like getting interest at the bank. You have to put money in first. Therefore, the more (time, prayer, work) you put in, the more the interest can be expected to grow."

If your interest is down in Bible study, etc., begin now to put more into it and watch the interest grow!

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