

The Old Paths

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“A Lack Of Information Or Application?”

Jarrod Jacobs

The Bible is a unique book, to be sure. While not a science book, it is scientifically accurate. Though it is not a geography book, it is geographically accurate. It is historically true, and is obviously a spiritually-focused book. Within the pages of inspiration, we learn that God has given us “*all things that pertain to life and godliness*” (II Pet. 1:3). The inspired Scriptures are “*profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work*” (II Tim. 3:16-17). The word Christ spoke ought to take first place in our lives because it is this word that will judge us one day (Jn. 12:48). Knowing these things are true, is it any wonder that Peter would, by inspiration, write to Christians and say, “*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen*” (I Pet. 4:11).

I cite the passages above to make it clear that God has provided all the *information* necessary for us to get from earth to Heaven! The Bible has been written; the word is true (Jn. 17:17); and the gospel will save us (Rom. 1:16). The question now is whether or not we will apply the

information to our lives! James wrote that a man who hears and does is considered a “*blessed*” man (Jas. 1:25). He further writes that “*faith without works is dead*” (Jas. 2:17, 20, 26). Jesus said the one who will see Heaven is the one who “*does the will of my father who is in Heaven*” (Matt. 7:21). In other words, we do not lack the *information*, but we often lack the *application*!

Throughout history, this fact is what has separated God’s children from the world! Many people have heard God’s word in various ways (Heb. 1:1-2). In the book of Exodus, we see Pharaoh heard God’s word, but he “*hardened his heart*” (Ex. 7:14, 22, 8:15, 19, 32, 9:7, etc.) and was punished as a result of his pride. Others who knew the truth but refused to obey were many of the “*chief rulers*” in Christ’s day. They knew who Christ was, but refused to confess Him because they feared what the Pharisees would say (Jn. 12:42-43). Another person who knew the truth was Agrippa. He knew the truth, but would not confess Christ, nor be baptized (Acts 26:27-28). This list could be extended, but the point is that God did not leave them ignorant of the truth! Yet, they were condemned because they did not act upon what they knew!

What about us? We have the Bible at our fingertips. Yes, some know more than others, but is this *really* what is stopping us from being what God would have us to be?

Is this really what is stopping us from obeying the Lord and living as He wants us to live? I suggest that it is not so much a matter of *information*, but it is a matter of *application*! We do not want to do those things Christ has said! Shame on us for being that way! Let us listen to the Lord, who tells us to be obedient to Him (Jn. 14:15; I Jn. 5:3) and prepare ourselves for Heaven by applying the information God has revealed! In so doing, we will be a blessed people! (Jas. 1:25)

WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF SIN?

Jarrod Jacobs

Thousands died because they considered sin as nothing! Despite the pleading of Jeremiah, the Jews refused to walk in “*the old paths*” (Jer. 6:16). In the face of Ezekiel, they were hard-hearted and impudent as he pled with them to return (Ezek. 3:7). Others such as Elijah and Elisha, Hosea and Micah, Samuel and Malachi, as well as scores of others, both named and unnamed, (but all known to God) continued preaching God’s word for the purpose of getting people to repent of their sins. Some saw success (Jonah, Oded, etc.); while others died for preaching God’s will, and standing opposed to what the sinful people were doing (Heb. 11:37).

We have a choice. Will we consider sin as nothing, or will we stand with the Lord? The world will hate us for being God’s friend (Jn. 15:19-20), but God will reward us. Choose wisely. Your soul depends on it!

Change Of Address

Jesse Flowers, Baytown, TX

Anyone who has had to move before, especially out of state, knows all the big and little things that must be done. This past week I spent a number of hours on the phone with about a dozen different businesses notifying them of our upcoming change of address. Of course, as it often goes with those sort of phone calls you have to endure the automated service before you actually speak to someone with a pulse. And then, you may spend the next thirty minutes just trying to understand one another because English is not their spoken language. Boy, was that a fun day.

In spite of how difficult it is to pack up all your earthly possessions, leave family and friends, and start all over somewhere else, at least we know where we're going. You see, Abraham did not know, at least initially, his change of address. God simply instructed him to: *"Get of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you"* (Gen. 12:1). *"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going"* (Heb. 11:8).

Can you imagine doing such a thing? Have you ever moved a great distance with your family not having a clue as to where you would resettle? Abraham did - evidently with no questions asked. You want to talk about faith - real faith - take a good, hard look at Abraham. You want to have a

better understanding of what obedience is all about - then study this man's life (Heb. 11:8-10, 17-19). Abraham's unquestioned obedience to God when told to relocate, initially not knowing where, should inspire us to obey God in the relatively simple things He has commanded us.

Abraham was called the *"friend of God"* (Jas. 2:23) because of his obedience to God. What about us? Could God call us His friend, based on our track record of obedient faith? Well, let's get a little more specific.

- When God commands saints not to forsake the assemblies (Heb. 10:24-25), do we obey Him without question?
- When the Lord gave the command to "go" teach the lost the gospel (Mk. 16:15, 16), do we go out or stay home?
- When the Holy Spirit directs a local church to withdraw from the disorderly (II Thess. 3:6), do we obey or disobey?
- When the doctrine of Christ instructs us to identify false teachers and avoid them (Rom. 16:17), do we listen or stop up our ears?

- When God tells us to restore the wayward Christian (Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19-20), do we put forth any effort to do so, or simply excuse ourselves from this urgent duty?

Would God call us His friend? Well, do we obey Him in all that He says? Surely if Abraham could obey God's command pertaining to his "change of address," then surely we can obey the commands of God today (I Jn. 5:3) without any hesitation.

Thought: *"When the watchman on the wall can no longer recognize the enemy, the city is as good as lost!"*

God has always wanted His people to be watchmen (Isa. 62:6-7). Spiritually, His people today are to be watchmen in the church (Acts 20:31). The watchman is responsible for watching out for the enemy (Satan, I Pet. 5:8) and warning God's people against his advances (Col. 1:28). Therefore, just as a city is lost when the watchmen fails in his job, so also the church is lost when the watchman is either too ignorant, or too rebellious to recognize Satan, and warn Christians of his devices (II Cor. 2:11).

- Jarrod Jacobs

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