

# The Old Paths

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## “The Dangers Of Assuming”

Jarrod Jacobs

**2** Samuel 10 (and its parallel text, II Chron. 19) speaks of the occasion when David’s kindness was misinterpreted as evil. An assumption was made by the princes of the Ammonites that David had sent spies into the country (v. 3). He had not done this. Rather, this was a diplomatic visit following the death of Nahash the Ammonite (v. 2). Yet, because of the princes’ assumption, David’s men were insulted, horribly mistreated, and sent away (v. 4-5). The end result was that the Ammonites hired the Syrians as soldiers and David and Israel went to war with the Ammonites and Syrians. By the end of the chapter, we read that the Ammonites and Syrians lost to David and the Israelite army (v. 6-19).

**THINK ABOUT THIS:** This whole event, including the resulting war, came about because someone ASSUMED the wrong thing and then acted upon that assumption. Consider for a moment the death, the bloodshed, the widows, the fatherless children, the economic problems, and the other consequences that came to the people because the princes of the Ammonites could not imagine David doing a kind thing for them (though it was a kind act, v. 2)!

Truly, Psalm 19:13 would ring true in David’s life. He asked

God, “*Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me.*” In essence, Psalm 19:13 is David’s prayer that he might not act as the Ammonites did on this occasion! Let this be our prayer as well.

I Corinthians 13:4-8 declares that an attribute of love is that it “*thinketh no evil*” (v. 5, KJV). Love also “*believes all things*” and “*hopes all things*” (v. 7). No, this is not encouraging some naïve display of love. Rather, love thinks the best of others and of their intentions. Love wants to believe the best and strives to believe the best in people until proven wrong. Love does not assume things, nor try to “read hearts”. Again, this is not being naïve, nor blind to the truth. Instead, love is thinking the best of others, while having one’s eyes open to the facts. Friends, do we do this? Please go back and reread II Samuel 10 and I Chronicles 19 and see the results of presuming or assuming the motives of others. In truth, those chapters would not even read the way they do if it had not been for the assumption and evil surmising of the Ammonites!

In making application to ourselves, stop and consider the following. When someone does something nice for us, do we say or think, “I know the real reason why they did that...”? I have seen folks who were treated nicely look to the person and ask, “OK, what do you want?” Are we always assuming that others have “ulterior motives”

in what they do? Why is this? Biblical love doesn’t act this way. If one says, “I act like this and assume people’s motives because those people have shown themselves to be two-faced”, then my question is, why are you still associating with them (I Cor. 15:33)? Let us stop presuming things about others. Love does not do this, and as we have already noted, assuming matters brings trouble and hardship!

No, we cannot read other people’s minds (I Cor. 2:11a). Let’s stop acting like we can by presuming or assuming things about God and others! Let us do as love demands and then see how we (and others) can be blessed.

*“Not to know is ignorance, but to refuse to learn is pride.”* -- L.E. Sloan

## Some Spiritual Thoughts

- ♦ “One cannot learn error and obey truth.”
- ♦ “Nothing can be a substitute for the gospel.”
- ♦ “If the Christian’s faith does not sustain him in moments of ordinary need, of what value would it be in a moment of supreme need?”
- ♦ “Human wisdom seeks to devise plans whereby the Lord’s work is done with a minimum amount of sacrifice.”  
-Selected

# Evidence That Jesus Cares For You

Jarrold Jacobs

**W**e live in a time in which few people seem to care for us. David knew this feeling, and wrote on one occasion, "Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no man cares for my soul" (Ps. 142:4). In contrast, we read Peter's words, reminding us of the care Christ has for us: "Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you" (I Pet. 5:7).

Yet, how can we see evidence of Christ's care for us in this world? Let us look first at His care for others while He walked the earth. A very well-known passage is the statement, "Jesus wept" (Jn. 11:35). Do we remember the context in which this statement was made? Jesus wept while standing at the tomb of Lazarus. He cared for Lazarus and his family and expressed this care through His weeping. He is compassionate toward us, His creation!

We know that Jesus cares for us because of His great sacrifice upon the cross (Rom. 5:8). Even before His crucifixion, Jesus made the statement, "Greater love has no one than this, than someone lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. 15:13). Truly, Jesus did this when He died upon the cross to be the ultimate sacrifice for man's sin. The "lamb of God" took away the sin of the world (Jn. 1:29). Yet, unlike a literal lamb, who was taken against its will and killed in Old Testament days, Jesus said, "For

*this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again"* (Jn. 10:17-18; cf. Matt. 26:53-56). Truly, it is evident that Christ cares for us when we see the extent of His sacrifice for us!

Christ's care is seen when we read of the Lord's plan for salvation (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38). Our Lord wants us to be saved from sin and live with Him in Heaven one day. Therefore, He cares enough to tell us what to do to be saved and have a right relationship with Him. Read I Peter 5:7 again, and remember that these words were written to Christians. Christ wants our care/anxiety cast upon Him; not some of it, or part of it, but "all" of it! How many today would look to their fellow-man and say, "Please give me all your cares, concerns, and worries, because I care for you"? Yet, Jesus Christ, the son of the living God wants "all" our care "cast" upon Him, and He means it! Men may disappoint us, but Christ never will! He loves and cares for us.

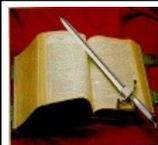
These are but a few examples of Christ's care for us. In learning this great truth, let us also remember that the Bible says we are to walk

in His steps (I Pet. 2:21-22). We are to speak and act according to what the Lord has authorized (permitted, Col. 3:17). Therefore, who has been the recipient of our care (Matt. 25:31-44)? How many can say they have seen "Christ in us" (Gal. 2:20) by the care we have shown them? (cf. Matt. 5:16)

"If there was no error in principle or practice, then controversy, which is only another name for opposition to error, real or supposed, would be unnecessary. If it were lawful, or if it were benevolent, to make a truce with error, then opposition to it would be both unjust and unkind. If error were innocent and harmless, then we might permit it to find its own quietus, or to immortalize itself. But so long as it is confessed that error is more or less injurious to the welfare of society, individually and collectively considered, then no man can be considered benevolent who does not set his face against it. In proportion as a person is intelligent and benevolent, he will be controversial, if error exists around him. Hence the Prince of Peace never sheathed the sword of the Spirit while he lived. He drew it on the banks of the Jordan and threw the scabbard away."

Alexander Campbell — 1830

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