

The Old Paths

Volume 20, Issue 34

October 20, 2013

“Doing What Is Right”

Jarrod Jacobs

Doing what is right is becoming an increasingly rare thing. In a world that encourages us to think in terms of “situation ethics”, and “the end justifies the means”, it is difficult to find people who are ready and willing to do the right thing all the time.

This is not a new phenomenon. Looking back through the years, we see people who did not do the right things. It may be that they were motivated by money, by popularity, by family issues, etc., but the result was that they rejected what was right and did what was wrong. Let us not be like this.

Let us look into the Bible and see some examples of folks who did the right thing even when it was difficult. Then, let us resolve to act like them.

Moses

When Moses stood before Pharaoh, and told him God’s message to “*Let my people go*” (Ex. 5:1, etc.). Moses had to do what was right and speak the truth to a world leader who had God’s people enslaved. Moses met Pharaoh several times in Exodus 5-12 and God’s message never changed.

Pharaoh’s response to God’s word was compromises such as: “Go sacrifice to your God within the land” (Ex. 8:25), and “... you must not go very far

away” (Ex. 8:28). One of Pharaoh’s compromises was that the men may go and worship, but leave the children (Ex. 10:8-11). Later, he said, “*Go, serve the Lord; your little ones also may go with you; only let the flocks and herds remain behind*” (Ex. 10:25).

Notice that in every case, Moses stood firm. Moses did not compromise when it came to sacrificing in the land, for he said they had to do, “*as He tells us*” (Ex. 8:26-27). Nor did he compromise in leaving the animals. He said, “*Not a hoof shall be left behind*” (Ex. 10:26)!

At any time, Moses might have compromised and won Pharaoh’s favor. However, he chose to do what was right! Yes, he upset Pharaoh, but he gained God’s favor (Heb. 11:25-27; Jas. 4:4; Deut. 34:10-12)!! Can we say we are ready and willing to follow what the Lord said without compromise? It must be done! (Rev. 22:14)

Balaam

Another example of doing the right thing was a man often called the “mongrel-prophet”, Balaam. While he certainly was not without fault, I appreciate his attitude when he stood before king Balak. In Numbers 22-24, we read about Balak’s work to curse God’s people, and his use of Balaam to curse them.

As we read this account, it is clear that Balak wanted to give Ba-

laam “great honor”, money, and many other rewards if he would but curse God’s people. In our terms, Balak was offering bribes to Balaam for this work. I am impressed with Balaam’s answer when he tells Balak on two occasions: “*If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the Lord my God to do less or more*” (Num. 22:18, 24:13). It didn’t matter what Balak offered, Balaam was only going to speak what God said to speak. He was going to do what was right. Can we say we are ready and willing to do what is right even when it means we are not going to receive “honor” or get the money others may have? (I Tim. 6:10; Matt. 16:26)

Elijah

Elijah is a prophet that has always had a special place in my heart. Elijah was ready to do what is right even when his life was threatened. Beginning in I Kings 17, Elijah stood before wicked King Ahab and told him what God had said.

We also see Elijah standing against 450 prophets of Baal (I Kings 18). He fought and killed these men by the brook Kishon (I Kings 18:40). He did not look at the numbers of people, nor the “sincerity” of their practice and decide to leave them alone. Rather, Elijah stood and showed who the true God is — Jehovah (I Kings 18:30-39)!

Sadly, the longer Elijah preached, the more his life was threatened (ex: I Kings 19:2). Thankfully, Elijah did not listen to the threats (even in his depression). His strong preaching and determination to do what is right resulted in him finally being taken from this earth and not seeing death (II Kings 2:11-12).

As we know, doing what is right will not please the people. It will not make everyone happy, and in fact, puts us at odds with people we love at times (Matt. 10:32-37). What will we choose? Will we choose to serve the Lord even when people do not like it? Or, will we choose to say and do things which placate the "majority"? Will we choose to act like Elijah (Rom. 15:4)? If not, why not?

The Heroes Of Hebrews 11

Just as the Hebrew writer, "time would fail me" to speak of all that need to be mentioned in this article. Yet, Hebrews 11 speaks of many faith heroes "who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated -- of whom the world was not worthy--wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" (Heb. 11:38).

Friends, let us stop for a moment and consider what these folks did. They did what was right despite of what physical consequences might follow. They did this because they had faith in their Creator, and trusted in His promises when they never enjoyed the promises while on earth (Heb. 11:39).

As we consider our lives, are we living in a manner similar to

these great faith heroes? If not, why not? In contrast with those folks, we are allowed to enjoy and experience blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3). These are not promises we are waiting to enjoy. Rather, they are things we can enjoy now.

Doing the right thing can cost us quite a lot in this world. Are we willing and ready to pay the price?

Conclusion

Our study has just named a few of the Old Testament heroes. This is not to diminish the good works and right decisions of folks in the New Testament. The apostle Paul suffered much so as to do the right thing in God's sight (II Cor. 11:23-28).

Of course, the greatest example of all is Jesus the Christ! "He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth" (I Pet. 2:22). Books deserve to be written about the decisions He made in doing what is right. Let us look to His example and see what is best. Note that in all of the examples above, men were not pleased with the decisions of the faithful. Yet, God was, and He is the One we must please!

What decisions have you made that show you are trying to do what is right?

- ◆ A preacher who cannot preach better than he can practice is not worth listening to, and a preacher who will not try to practice what he preaches is not fit to listen to.
- ◆ Some friends are like your shadow. They are always near when the sun shines upon you; but when the clouds come and darkness gathers about you, they have vanished.
- ◆ You give a child candy to get him to do your chores; you flatter grown-ups to get them to grind your ax.
- ◆ A hint to speakers and writers: There are only two adjectives in Psalm 23.
- ◆ A sermon should be well-proportioned; its length should correspond to its width and depth. Some sermons are long at fifteen minutes.
- ◆ Some preachers manipulate people; others teach them.

(From: Doctrinal Discourses, p. 154, 65)

One way we spread the gospel.
www.facebook.com/
CaneyvillechurchofChrist.com



I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!
Come and meet with the church of Christ in Caneyville.
Location: 103 N. Main Street Caneyville, KY

Meeting Times:

- Sunday Bible Study ----- 10:00 a.m.
- Sunday Worship ----- 10:45 a.m.
- Sunday Worship ----- 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday Bible Study ----- 7:00 p.m.

Watch: "The Ancient Landmark" Television Show airs on You Tube (www.youtube.com/TheOldPaths1994) and Insight Cable, channel 6

Listen: "The Ancient Landmark" Radio program airs on WXMZ, 99.9 FM (10:30-11:00 am) and WLBQ 1570 AM (8:30-9:00 am) Monday-Friday. It is also broadcast online at: thez999.com and beechtreeneews.com
Preacher/Editor: Jarrod Jacobs Phone: (270) 589-4167