

# The Old Paths

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## “Christ Changes Us”

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**I**n reading the gospel records of Christ’s life on earth, I can’t help but be impressed with how Christ changed people’s lives. For example, when Christ called those who were to be His apostles, He told some fishermen: *“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men”* (Matt. 4:19-21). He later would even turn the fishermen into mountain-climbers (Matt. 17:1)! On another occasion, Jesus met a man possessed with devils, and changed him from one who *“had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in any house, but among the tombs .... he was bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds ...”*, to *“sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind”* (Lk. 8:27, 29, 35). What a change! In addition to this, we could take note of the fact that when Christ went to a funeral, He would raise the dead (Lk. 7:11-16; Mk. 5:41-42; Jn. 11:43-44; etc.)! Yes, there was a definite change in those folks!

Later on in the first century, we see that people continued to be changed when they heard and obeyed the words of Christ. For example, we read that the some among the Corinthian Christians had been *“fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners”* (I Cor. 6:9-10). What happened to these folks? They

heard the gospel message, they believed it and obeyed it (Acts 18:1-8; I Cor. 6:11)! Christ changed them! In the book of Acts, we also read about the conversion of the Ephesians (19:1-7). They were also changed; and what a change! They were changed from “dead” to “living” (Eph. 2:1)! Note the degree of the change in their lives: *“You were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ”* (Eph. 2:12-13). Again, what a change had taken place in their lives! This change came about as a result of Christ.

In truth, “change” is the very essence of repentance (A change of mind that results in a change of life)! When we read the Bible, we see that the entire Bible has the message of repentance or change in it! For example, Christ called for men to repent while He was on earth (Matt. 4:17; Lk. 13:3). Too, when the apostles took the gospel to the world, they demanded men repent (Acts 2:38, 3:19, 17:30, 19:19, 26:20). Regardless of their background, they needed to repent when they came in contact with the words of Christ.

It is no different today. When we are willing to follow the word of Christ, it will change us as well. The question is whether or not we wish to be changed! Some people

do not want to be changed and come out of sin. They want to remain where they are. This is a grave error if we are satisfied to stay in our sin and never change.

Yet, if we will be Christ’s, He demands that we change! We must repent of our sins in order to be saved from them (Acts 2:38). Yet, it does not end there, for we must continue to change, to grow, and to mold ourselves into the image of Christ. The apostle Paul wrote this to the Roman Christians and the following statement applies to us as well: *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed ...”* (Rom. 12:2).

“Change” can be difficult for those who are “set in their ways.” Yet, Christ changes us, and it is a change for the better! We will be better in many areas of life when we accept what the Lord has said and follow Him (Col. 3:17; I Pet. 4:11) instead of following our own ideas as to how best to run our lives.

Dear friend, why not pause right now and consider your life and where it is headed. Isn’t it time for a change? Oftentimes, the end of the year is a time when people take inventory of decisions made and determine to make better choices for the new year. Why not have your “new year” begin today? Repent of past wrongs, and turn and live for the Lord! Let Him change you for the better and then see the blessings that come as a result of being a child of God (Mk. 16:16; Acts 3:19; Eph. 1:3; I Pet. 1:3-4)! There is no better feeling and no greater blessing to be had than when we change our lives and live for the Lord daily (I Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:10b).

# “God Said It; I Believe It; That Settles It.”

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The above statement has been popular for some years, now. I am sure most of our dear readers have heard this from time to time. It has been on multitudes of bumper stickers, and in fact, one book I own has this phrase at the end of every chapter! It is a good thought, and I appreciate the sentiment being expressed. This statement conveys the message that since God said it, then I believe it. It is then “settled” because I will not argue with my God about it, nor will I listen to anyone who may try to get me to question the word of God.

At the same time, there is an even more accurate way to state this truth, and it is: “God Said It; That Settles It; I Believe It.” Put simply, once God says something, that settles it, regardless of whether or not I believe it! When God speaks the truth, it is settled (Ps. 119:89). If one fights and argues against the will of God, a man’s “unsettled” mind has no effect upon God’s truth (Ex: II Kings 5:10-14). At the same time, when one accepts God’s word completely, the acceptance and obedience to His word had no effect on the truth, either (Acts 2:41, 47)! God said it, and that settles it! Therefore, I need to believe it.

God’s word has been man’s standard from the beginning. So long as we live upon this earth, this standard will not change (Matt. 24:35; I Pet. 4:11).

# “God Said It; That Settles It; I Believe It.”



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