

The Old Paths

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"A Stopped Clock"

Jarrold Jacobs

receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works" (II Jn. 10-11).

- A** stopped clock
- ◆ Is right twice a day.
 - ◆ Implies that there was a clockmaker.
 - ◆ Might have once run well.
 - ◆ Could be started again.
 - ◆ Could be such because of only one defective component.
 - ◆ Could be such because of someone's negligence.

If human reasoning could find so many "positive" lessons from a stopped clock, is it any wonder why many of our brethren can find justification for the fellowshiping of false teachers among us? Could we not justify almost any man who privately or publicly teaches falsehoods with similar reasoning as was offered on behalf of the stopped clock? See for yourself. Some might say

- A** false teacher
- ◆ Is right on most things.
 - ◆ Believes in the same God we do.
 - ◆ May have done many wonderful things for God in the past. (Compare: Ezek. 18:24, 26)
 - ◆ Might change if he is given enough time.
 - ◆ Generally teaches falsehood in only one area of Bible teaching.
 - ◆ Generally teaches the truth

- ◆ on all other subjects.
- ◆ Is sometimes justified as saying he took this position because of (sins in the family, a friend, etc.) and not because he really believed it.

Some might suggest that in the case of the stopped clock, if someone would merely work with that clock, it may be possible that the clock can work correctly again. This is a true statement. So also is it true that if we will take the time to work with false teachers, (not compromising the truth, but taking the time to teach them the truth) we may be able to win them to the Lord when they repent of their false doctrine and preach the truth.

However, if our stopped clock is beyond repair, we need not keep it around. In like manner, the Holy Spirit speaks of some who were "past feeling" (Eph. 4:19), some "who concerning the truth have erred" (II Tim. 2:18), and some who "will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared" (I Tim. 4:1-2), etc. In such cases, we must not continue in fellowship with them, pretending as if nothing is wrong, but "watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). John condemned continuing in fellowship with those in error stating, "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not

One evident problem today is that while most people will do what is necessary to fix a stopped clock, many are not willing to do what the Bible describes as necessary to stop a false teacher (Titus 1:11). Another evident problem is that most people are not afraid to fix the stopped clock, and in fact are appreciative when someone calls attention to the fact that their clock not working. Yet, when it comes to false teaching and false doctrine, we find just the opposite attitude. Often, we find people afraid to speak to those in error, and those in error often becoming angry that someone might suggest that they are wrong. How sad!

Let us not be afraid to call a "spade" a "spade." If there is false teaching being promoted, the one who is the friend to the teacher is the one who points it out; not the one who is so afraid of hurting feelings or friendships that they keep it bottled up. Jesus said, "But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). Notice the first group mentioned as having their part in the torment of the second death are the "cowardly" or "fearful"! I myself have had to work on this problem, and by God's grace I keep working at improving. What about you, dear readers? Brethren, where are our priorities when it comes to the problem of false doctrines being spread?

***Brethren, it is later than we think.
We are drifting!***

Be Not Of The World

Aric Russell, Mooresville, IN

Have you ever felt like you are out of place? Out of place at school, at work, just in common public places? Maybe you feel like wherever you are you stick out like a sore thumb. Well, you are not alone with these thoughts. There are others who are constantly in battle with themselves on how to live in this world. So, how can we live from day to day in this world when our morals, our values, and our standards are so different from the world's standards?

First of all, we have to have the right attitude when looking at the world. We are told in I John 2:15-17 to not love the world. It says there: *"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."* Now we have to remember that it is ok to enjoy our time while we are here as Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 tells us. At the same time, we have to remember where to lay up our treasures (Matt. 6:19-21). We are also told to come out of the world. II Corinthians 6:17 states: *"Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you."* The text here suggests that we are to separate ourselves from evil desires and temptations. We cannot allow ourselves to get in situations where we want to turn our backs on God. We are in the world, but we are certainly not to be of the

world. We understand that we have to live our lives. We understand that we have to associate at times with people who are of this world. Knowing this, we must also keep Romans 12:1-2 in our minds. It says there; *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."* We are told that we have to be in the world, but we have never been told to act like the world.

Another aspect of living in the world, but not being of the world is seen when we remember that no matter what we do, some people will not like us. In fact, Jesus told us in the book of Matthew that some would hate us without a cause (Jn. 15:18-19). We are also told in 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2 that some people, no matter what the case is, will treat us unfairly. Life was never promised to be fair, or to be easy. But we are promised that if we stay faithful to God, that we will have a great reward in Heaven one day.

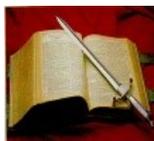
So you ask, "How can I live in

a world where my morals, my values, and my standards are so different from others?" Well, remember what Matthew 5:13-16 says? It says: *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let you light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven."* We are to live as Christ has told us to live. Too many times we get caught up in thinking we look goofy or thinking we look different. Maybe it is time we accept being different in the eyes of men. Be different, knowing that we are not here to please man, but to please God. Peter told us in 1 Peter 4:1-5 that some will think we are strange. I encourage you to accept being thought of as strange by men. Be different, and stick out like a sore thumb so that others will see your good works. So others will know through you, that there is a God.

Editor's Note:

Here is another good article from our brother Aric. Please read this carefully. We're so glad he is here preaching today. Please remember him and his family in prayer.

Your Bible questions answered ...
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