

The Old Paths

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“Evidence That Jesus Cares For You”

Jarrod Jacobs

We live in a time in which few people seem to care for us. David knew this feeling, and wrote, *“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared 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 care upon him; for he careth for you”* (I Pet. 5:7).

Yet, how can we see evidence of Christ’s care for us? 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 showed it through His weeping.

We know that Jesus cares for us because of His great sacrifice upon the cross (Rom. 5:8). Before this event, Jesus made the statement, *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends”* (Jn. 15:13). Truly, Jesus did this when He died upon the cross to be the great 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, *“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it*

from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it 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 cast upon Him; not some, 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 for them (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)

“What My Absence Did”

For those who habitually are forsaking the assembling of the saints (Heb. 10:25), please consider what your absence did to folks ...

- It made some question the reality of religion.
- It made some think I was a pretender.
- It made some think that I regarded my spiritual welfare as a matter of small concern.
- It weakened the effect of our worship service.
- It made it harder for the preacher to deliver his message.
- It discouraged brethren, and thereby robbed them of a blessing.
- It caused others to stay away from church.
- It made it harder for me to meet the daily temptations of the devil.
- It gave the devil more power over lost souls.

Forsaking the assembling does much harm to the cause of Christ.

[Adapted from *“Truth,”* a bulletin published by the Dallas Ave. church of Christ in Lancaster, TX.]

Six Habits Christians Should Have

Aric Russell

The word habit is defined as “an acquired behavior pattern regularly followed until it has become almost i n v o l u n - tary” (dictionary.com). We see from this definition, that habits are something we have to teach ourselves to do. Below, we have listed six habits that we should be teaching ourselves to do every day. They are things that we should do without a second thought to them. Let us break down the word “habit” and see what we should be doing every day as Christians.

Have time to pray. How often do we stop to pray? We are told in I Thessalonians 5:17 to “pray without ceasing.” That means we are to pray continually. We can also learn in James 5:13-18, that we are to pray at all times. Not just when it is convenient for us, not just in the good times, and not just in the bad times. Rather, we are to pray always.

Act as an encourager. As Christians we sometimes are guilty of not encouraging one another. It is easy for us to encourage one another when we see someone doing something good. On the other hand, how do we react to people we see that have slipped up? Do we encourage them to do better? We should remember that we all have sinned and slipped up at some point (Rom. 3:23). Therefore, we should work even harder to encourage folks when we see that they have fallen short of the glory of God.

Be with other Christians. As Christians, we have to be careful with whom we choose to associate. We cannot allow ourselves to get caught up in the wrong crowd. II Corinthians 6:14 says, “Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness.” It is also important for us to realize that this is not saying we cannot have friends who are not members of the church. How can we teach others about Christ if we do not spend some time with them? The point, however, is that if we do not spend any time with those who are of the household of God, we can quickly and easily be pulled away from the truth.

Be Interested in doing good. How easy it is for us to want to wish bad things on others. Maybe it is someone who has treated us unfairly, rubbed us the wrong way, or even did something to one of our family members. Are you guilty of thinking this way? Jesus tells us in Luke 6:27-36 that we cannot have this attitude. Rather, we are to love our enemies and do good even to those who hate us.

Take time to read your Bible. How many times have we said, “I need to read more.” “I need to study more.” “I just don’t have time.” Life can get very busy;

however, this does not take away from the importance of reading our Bibles. Revelation 1:3 says, “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophesy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.” Are you reading your Bible as you should? We must read our Bibles so we have an understanding of what the Scriptures say.

Shine your light. Some people may never pick up a Bible. In fact, we may be the only Bible some people may ever read. So, do you let your light shine? Do you live to be an example to all? How do we conduct ourselves in difficult times? How do we handle others who have wronged us? Matthew 5:14-16 says, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do they light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” We have to remember to let our lights shine as brightly as they can. As we have already said, some people may never read a Bible. You may be their only chance of knowing how a Christian is supposed to act and live. Will you live up to that responsibility? Will you let your light shine? Can you find these six habits in your life? If not, let us strive to make these our own personal habits. Let us strive to serve God in all that we do.

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