

Title: **“ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS.”**

Text: Jeremiah 6:16

Subject: *Fundamentals of the Faith*

Introduction:

As we make our pilgrimage through this life, we often come to cross roads, cross roads laid in our path by Satan, by which the adversary would turn us away from the gospel, away from Christ, and away from God. — **“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”** (Proverbs 16:25)

- Free Will
- Legalism
- Antinomianism
- Pentecostalism
- Ceremonialism
- Denominationalism
- Worldly Advantage
- Emotionalism

When we come to these cross roads, we must look to the Word of God and to the Word of God alone for direction, lest we be deceived and taken by the craftiness of the Wicked One. — I have seen many taken by the Wicked One. I have seen many seduced by the whore of Babylon, turned out of the way, and intoxicated by the wine of her fornication.

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Turn with me to the 6th chapter of Jeremiah. I spoke to my dear friend, Bro. John Mitchell in Great Falls, Montana last week. We needed to discuss a very sad, heart-breaking situation. Bro. John said, I told the Church, — “Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.” That is precisely the counsel our God gives to us by his prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah 6:16.

(Jeremiah 6:16) “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.”

That is my subject tonight. That is my message. — “**ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS.**” When anyone comes to you with some new thoughts, presenting a new way, “ask for the old paths” marked out by the Word of God, the paths of the flock and church of God through the ages. Do not act like the countless religious fools of our day, who run from one doctrine or religion to another, looking for the right path. — “Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.”

- The old paths are the paths of righteousness and true holiness, sovereign grace and everlasting salvation.
- The old paths are the paths are the paths of salvation

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in which God’s saints have always steadily walked with God — (Adam and Abel — Job and Enoch — Noah and David — Solomon and Simon Peter).

The old paths are found in the Gospel of Christ. He is the Old Path of Righteousness, Life, and Salvation, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God’s promise to all who heed his counsel is, — “**and ye shall find rest for your souls.**”

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

ISAIAH 8

We have similar instructions in the 8th chapter of Isaiah’s prophecy. In this chapter (vv. 11-16) Isaiah gives every prophet and preacher the instructions God gave him as his prophet. — Standing in this pulpit, standing as God’s watchman upon the walls of Zion, speaking to you in the name of God, as God’s ambassador, it is my responsibility to faithfully deliver to you the Word of God without addition, without subtraction, without adornment. With

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simplicity and plainness of speech, I am responsible under God to give you His Word. **In verse 16 we read God’s commandment to every preacher.**

(Isaiah 8:16) “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.”

(Nehemiah 8:8) “So they **read in the book in the law of God distinctly**, and **gave the sense**, and **caused them to understand the reading.**”

(Acts 28:23) “And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; to whom **he expounded** and **testified** the kingdom of God, **persuading them concerning Jesus**, both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening.”

“The Testimony” I am responsible to bind up is the Word of God. It is the Word he had given to his prophet, particularly the Word he had just given Isaiah concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (7:14; 8:14-15).

(Isaiah 7:14) “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

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(Isaiah 8:14-15) “And he shall be for **a sanctuary**; but for **a stone of stumbling** and for **a rock of offence** to both the houses of Israel, for **a gin** and for **a snare** to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (15) And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.”

The Testimony of God is the Gospel of Christ (2 Tim. 1:8-12).

(2 Timothy 1:8-12) “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; (9) Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (11) Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. (12) For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him

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against that day.”

The preacher is responsible to “bind up the testimony” as something indescribably valuable, taking great care that no part of it be neglected or lost. By diligent study, prayer, and preparation, he is to bind it up in his own heart and mind like a priceless treasure.

Then he must, by his preaching “seal the law among my disciples.” “The law” here does not refer to the ten commandments, or to the ceremonial law of Moses, but to the whole Word of God. It is the whole doctrine of Christ. **It is the responsibility of every gospel preacher to establish God’s saints in the doctrine of Christ** (Eph. 4:11-14; 2 Tim. 4:1-4).

(Ephesians 4:11-14) “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (13) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (14) That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to

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deceive.”

(2 Timothy 4:1-4) “I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; (2) Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; (4) And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

Standing before eternity bound sinners, speaking in the name of God, as I now do, it is my responsibility to deliver to you the Word of God. — When I do, I claim for myself the right to be heard. I do not preach without preparation. I do not give out leftover, rehashed sermons. And I do not simply repeat that which I have heard someone else say, or something I have copied down from a book.

When I come to the pulpit to preach the gospel, what I preach to you in forty-five minutes is the result of many hours of labor in study and prayer, labor spent for your soul. That gives me the right to be heard. **But that does not give me the right to be believed, obeyed, and followed.** I

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do not claim for myself a right to blind loyalty and allegiance. No man, no matter how sincere he may appear to be, myself included, is to be given unqualified allegiance (Read 1 John 4:1). **It is your responsibility to try what I say by the Word of God** (Isaiah 8:20). — “*To the law and to the testimony*” (to the doctrine of Christ revealed in the testimony of God given in the Book of Holy Scripture) “*if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is not light in them!*” — Compare Galatians 1:6-8.

(Galatians 1:6-8) “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: (7) Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. (8) But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

I have come here this hour “*to bind up the testimony*” and “*seal the law,*” to bind a precious treasure, so that nothing be lost, and to seal the doctrine of Christ to you. And I believe God the Holy Spirit has given me the message to do it, if he will speak by me this hour to your hearts. **Here are nine, stubborn, irrefutable statements. They go right to the heart of true Christianity. You will either accept or reject these nine statements. There is no middle ground;**

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and you will find it impossible to be indifferent regarding them. There is no room for compromise on any of these nine points. I say, regarding every man who claims to be a prophet or preacher sent from God that which the Lord God said to Isaiah. — *“To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is not light in them!”*

HOLY SCRIPTURE

1. **Either the Bible, is in its entirety the holy, inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God, or it is in its entirety a lie by which the souls of men are eternally deceived and damned.** If the Bible not the Word of God, throw it away. But if it is, as it claims to be, God’s Holy Word, we better pay attention to it. It claims, as such, a total sway over our lives. It must be our only rule of faith and practice.

(2 Peter 1:21) “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.”

(Psalms 138:2) “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”

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(Psalms 119:128) “Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I hate every false way.”

(2 Timothy 3:16-17) “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (17) That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

2. **Either God almighty is absolutely sovereign, in total control of all things, at all times, or there is no God.** Again, there is no middle ground between these two poles, between God’s absolute, total sovereignty and absolute, total atheism. To speak of a god who is not totally sovereign is utter nonsense. Atheism is far more sensible than Arminianism. If God is, he is sovereign!

(Psalms 135:5-6) “For I know that the LORD *is* great, and *that* our Lord *is* above all gods. (6) Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”

(Daniel 4:35-37) “And all the inhabitants of the earth

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are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (36) At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. (37) Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

3. **Either man is totally depraved, utterly dead in trespasses and in sins, or there is nothing wrong with him and he needs no Savior.** There is no such thing as partial depravity or partial goodness before God. Either we are totally sinful and depraved or we are totally righteous and good. There is no middle ground.

- Utterly Dead, without Ability
- Utterly Corrupt

(Psalms 14:2-3) “The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were

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any that did understand, *and* seek God. (3) They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.”

(Jeremiah 17:9) “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

4. **Either God chose to save some of Adam’s fallen race to salvation and eternal life in Christ before the world began, as the Bible says he did, or no salvation is possible for any man.** Salvation is God’s prerogative, not man’s. Grace is God’s gift, not man’s choice. If God does not choose to save and choose whom he will save, no sinner can ever be saved.

(Romans 9:13-18) “As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. (14) What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. (15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee,

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and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. (18) Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.”

LIMITED ATONEMENT

5. **Either the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God is altogether and alone the effectual Redeemer and Savior of his people, or he is a fraud and a failure.**

Again, there is no middle ground, no room for compromise. Either Christ did what he came to do, or he is a failure. If he is a failure, he is not God, and we have no Savior.

(Isaiah 53:10-11) “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (11) He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.”

The doctrine of universal redemption is the universal blasphemy of this idolatrous, reprobate religious age!
Either the Lord Jesus Christ redeemed his people, or he didn't. Either the Son of God redeemed all for whom he

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died, or his death is of no more meaning or consequence than the death of any other man. — What does the Book say?

(Isaiah 53:8) “He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.”

(John 10:11) “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

(John 10:15) “As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

(John 10:26) “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.”

(Galatians 3:13) “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:”

(Hebrews 9:12) “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us.*”

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Nowhere in the Bible is it written, or even suggested, that Christ died for everyone in the world, redeemed everyone in the world, or made atonement for everyone in the world. The doctrine of universal redemption is the most hideous, blasphemous doctrine ever spewed from the pit of hell.

- It reduces the love of God to nothing.
- It perverts the justice of God.
- It is a mockery of the blood of Christ. Did Christ die in vain?
- It makes the wisdom of God foolishness.
- It makes man his own savior.

We believe, according to the Scriptures that Christ died for and redeemed God’s elect. His blood was not shed in vain. Our Savior’s limited atonement was and is the effectual redemption of his people. The atonement of Christ is limited in scope, but not in efficacy. It was limited in design, but not in merit — *“It is finished!”*

The issue of the gospel is not the bare fact that Christ died, but **“HOW that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures”** (1 Cor. 15:3). This is how he died...

(1 Corinthians 15:1-3) “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which

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also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; (2) By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. (3) For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;”

- Sovereignty! — *“I lay down my life!”*
- Substitution! — *“For the transgressions of my people.”*
- Satisfaction! — *“I have found a ransom!”*
- Success! — *“He shall not fail!”*

IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

6. **Either we are regenerated and called to life and faith in Christ by the irresistible power and grace of God the Holy Spirit, or there is no such thing as salvation.**

The only hope for a dead sinner is free and sovereign grace, grace that asks for nothing and gives everything, grace that waits for nothing and does everything.

(Psalms 65:4) *“Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.”*

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(Psalms 110:3) “Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.”

(John 6:63) “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.”

FREE FROM THE LAW

7. **Either God’s people are entirely free from the law, as the Scriptures declare us to be, or we are yet under the bondage of the law and entirely obligated to keep it perfectly.** There is no such thing as being partially under the law and partially free from it, not in biblical terms. The only way sinner can satisfy, fulfill, and establish the law is by faith in Christ (Rom. 3:31). — “*Ye are not under the law, but under grace*” (Romans 6:14). — “*We are not under the law, but under grace*” (Romans 6:15).

(Romans 7:4) “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

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(Romans 8:1-4) “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (4) That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

(Romans 10:4) “For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

(Galatians 3:24-25) “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (25) But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

SURE SALVATION

8. Either every sinner who comes to Christ is saved by Christ, or none are saved by him.

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29)

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Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

(John 6:37) “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

What does it mean to be saved by Christ?

- Completely Forgiven
- Fully Justified
- Perfectly Holy
- Utterly secure

Come humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve;
Come with your guilt and fear oppressed,
And make this last resolve.

“I’ll go to Jesus, though my sins
Like mountains round me close;
I know his courts, I’ll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.

“Prostrate I’ll lie before his throne,
And there my guilt confess;

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I'll tell him I'm a wretch undone
Without his sovereign grace.”

I'll to the gracious King approach,
Whose scepter pardon gives;
Perhaps He may command my touch,
And then the suppliant lives!

Perhaps He will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know,
I must forever die.

But if I die with mercy sought,
When I the King have tried,
This were to die (Delightful thought!) —
As sinner never died!”

COMPLETE PRESERVATION

9. **Either every saved sinner shall persevere to the end,**
being preserved and kept by God's infallible,

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immutable grace, or none shall. The perseverance of the saints is demanded by the purpose of God, the purchase of Christ, and the power of the Spirit.

(Philippians 1:6) “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.”

(Jude 1:1) “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called.”

(Jude 1:24-25) “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, (25) To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.”

(Jeremiah 6:16) “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein.*”

What way do you choose? — Christ is the Only Way. —
Christ is the Old Way. — Christ is the Good Way. —
Christ is the Rest Way.

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(Isaiah 40:31) “But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.”

Amen.

¹ Danville – Sunday Evening — July 11, 2010
Rescue Baptist Church, Rescue, CA — Friday Evening — July 2, 2010
Readings: *Lindsay Campbell and James Jordan*
Tape: Z-92a