

Ask For The Old Paths

Text: Jeremiah 6:16

Introduction:

- Jeremiah was known as “the weeping prophet.” He is a great example of why abortion is murder. In chapter 1 we learn that God called him and set him apart while he was still in his mother’s womb!
- He was called by God to predict the coming slavery of the southern kingdom of Judah as part of God’s judgment. His message went against the popular messages being preached in his day- peace, peace
- The fact is, our society loves to go after the “new” things- new tech, new trends, new philosophies. Many people pride themselves on being “progressive” and willing to embrace all new ideas and things.
- However, I believe as Christians we would be wise to follow Jeremiah’s advice and seek the old paths. Deut. 32:7, Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.
- It has been said “You cannot put old heads on young shoulders.” But we can ask, seek and learn of the tried and true ways of our faith.
- Preface: we are not opposed to things just because they are new. Some new things are a blessing! We want to make sure we never compromise the same Bible convictions, and principles we’ve always had!
- The phrase means the old paths of faith in which the fathers of Israel had walked for 1300 years,--the paths of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,--the paths of Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel,--the paths of David, and Solomon, and Hezekiah. Etc.

I. **Stand and see- stop and think**

a. Consider

i. The landscape of society

1. Isaiah- my people doth not consider! There is an end/destination that our choices will lead us to
2. Ex. Esau, Lot- only thinking of the present and not the past

3. They sowed to the flesh, and they reaped a harvest of sorrow and disappointment, because they did not "stand and see."
- ii. The landscape of contemporary Christianity (Evangelicals)
 1. Become a student of history- the mile markers along the pathway!
 - a. The paganism of Israel (they did not become a nation of Atheists!)
 - b. Israel had been adopting the pagan worship practices of that day. Please note: they never completely renounced belief in God, their sin was mixing pagan culture with their faith. This was called idolatry!
 - c. Jeremiah used many metaphors comparing Israel's idolatry to adultery- The application for us Christians: today many are committing spiritual adultery by mixing in the paganism of our day into our faith! Jeremiah uses metaphors of prostitution, promiscuity, and unfaithfulness to describe the situation. i.e. Jeremiah 3:6-11
 - d. The compromise of Christians through history (ecumenical movement). Churches have shifted and are now affirming pop culture instead of preaching against it, and even borrowing from pop culture-James 4:4
 - b. Examine
 - i. The best way to weed out truth from error is to study the truth!
 - ii. Illustr- bank teller and counterfeit bills
 - iii. He would have them to consider, not to proceed rashly, but to do as travelers in the road, who are trying to find the right way which will bring them to their journey's end, and will pause and enquire for it. O that men would be that wise for their souls!

II. Ask- inquire: seasoned saints, the Holy Spirit, God's word

- a. The old paths
 - i. Man is continually running after something new, and in doing so, end up away from GOD, because He is of old, from everlasting.

- ii. Many despise the old paths. Perhaps they seem old fashioned or un-cool. Yet there is wisdom – life saving wisdom – in the old paths of God’s word and work in days gone by.
- iii. Job 8:8, For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:
- iv. The way of repentance is as old as John the Baptist, yea, as old as David; the way of faith is as old as Abraham; the way of communion with God is as old as Enoch; the way of approaching God by the lamb slain is as old as Abel; yea, the true Lamb was slain from before the foundations of the world- CH Spurgeon
- v. The oldest path there is goes back to the Bible!
- vi. False prophets of Jeremiah’s day taught a new message- peace, peace- instead of God’s warning of judgment- Jer 6:13-14
- vii. The new path
 - 1. Lightens up on holiness and commitment to Christ. It wants to modernize our faith into 21st century Christianity. I submit we need a return back to 1st century Christianity! Christians were faithful to church services, committed to learning the Bible, and spreading the Gospel!
 - 2. Some are always striving to be trendy and in-step with the world, instead of in step with the Word!
 - 3. Young people: you cannot hold fast to Bible convictions and be hip and accepted by pop culture at the same! The Bible is a really old book! Carl Lentz of Hillsong church interviewed by Katie Couric, says “we have conversations” when asked about homosexuality. It’s no wonder it was soon discovered that they had a gay choir director in their church!
 - 4. Christians need to understand that pop idols such as JAY-Z and Beyonce promote a worldview that is anti-Bible! They promote rebellion, pride, materialism, fornication, and worst of all a life without God!
- viii. Illustr- On a cold winter day in Michigan, a woman in labor was being rushed to the hospital when the unthinkable happened. The ambulance slid off an icy road into a ditch. A passing four-wheel drive truck stopped and tried to haul the emergency vehicle out but couldn’t get a grip. That’s when help arrived. An Amish man driving a two-horse team stopped to offer help. He told the

ambulance service that the horses' shoes had been sharpened so they would bite into the ice. Once he hooked up the horses to the ambulance, they walked it right out of the ditch. By today's standards, this young mother received help from a source of strength that was old-fashioned and outmoded. But on that day, old ways helped to ensure the safe arrival of new life into the world. Talk about horsepower!

b. The good way

- i. It is not just antiquity, or being old. The broad path leading to destruction is just as old as the straight and narrow, and has been frequented far more often! Therefore seek not only the old paths, but the good way!
- ii. Micah 6:8- He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?
- iii. The good way of true Christianity- Why Christianity?
 1. Rest for your souls. Reminds me of Matthew 11:28-29, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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."
 2. The way into rest is by Jesus Christ! Jesus said I am the way...
 3. This is the oldest way there is! Since the fall of man, yea before the foundations of the earth was made- God made a way of rest for mankind. OT saints looked forward to the cross, we look back at it.
 4. The only faith, the only worldview or philosophy that can properly make sense of life's most important questions is Christianity. Our souls may clamor, but Christ gives rest!
- iv. Why follow the Bible? It is the very word of God! Jesus- "Have ye not read?"
- v. Why are we Independent Fundamental Baptists?
 1. True Baptist doctrine is synonymous with NT Christianity
 2. Fundamentalist- "orthodox" we hold to the fundamentals of the faith. We do not compromise on the core essentials of the faith!

III. Walk

- a. He assures them that, if they do thus, it will secure the welfare and satisfaction of their own souls: there may be pains along the way, but the end brings a reward that no other road can bring. "The way of transgressors is hard..."

Conclusion:

- This is a unique time for all of us as a church. You could say we are in uncharted waters! However, we still have the same map for the pathway that we've always had! We need to now more than ever seek after and cling to the "old paths!"
- The history of Christianity is sadly filled with churches and institutions that have strayed from the path. Bible colleges such as Yale, Princeton and Harvard are now totally liberal and deny the true faith. Churches that once stood firm on God's word have changed into politically correct social gatherings.
- Our methods may grow and adjust, but our message must always remain the same! Our principles never change!
- Men's hearts are just what they were 6000 years ago, and need the same remedy. God in that long period has used several dispensations, and each succeeding age has enjoyed more light. But the foundation truths have always been the same.