

THE OLD PATHS

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“Our Last Chance”

Jarrod Jacobs

On Wednesday night (12/14/16), those who were here heard a very moving and heart-felt exhortation taught by brother Billy. The words he spoke still ring in my ears as he reminded us of the need for becoming a Christian before it is everlastingly too late. His words also reminded us to tell others about the Lord while we can. We may not get another chance! His illustration of what he witnessed a few months ago, reminds us of the Bible truth that we never know what will happen in a day (Prov. 27:1). Will today be our last day on earth? Only God knows the answer. Will the last chance we had be “our last chance”?

Who knows (except God) whether or not today will be our last day to hear the gospel? Who knows whether or not this day will be our last day to repent? Who knows whether or not today is the last day we will get a chance to speak to someone about the gospel? Someday, the last chance we had will truly be the “last chance.” What then? Will our lives show that we wasted the opportunity or that we used it to God’s glory?

The urgency to not waste our time is seen on numerous occasions in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit inspired this writing: *“Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts”* (Heb. 3:7-8, 15, 4:7; Ps. 95:7-8). These Christians were also told to, *“Exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today’ ...”* (Heb. 3:13). The apostle Paul, after quoting Isaiah 49:8, told the Corinthians, *“behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”* (II Cor. 6:2). In addition to these passages, we might also add the example of the Philippian Jailor and his family, who became Christians “straightway” or immediately after hearing the gospel preached (Acts 16:33)! Neither on this occasion, nor in any other case of conversion, do we read about people being encouraged to wait days, weeks, or months to be saved. At the moment they understood that they were sinners, and knew what to do to be saved, folks were encouraged to obey without delay (Acts 2:38-41, 8:35-39, 10:48, 16:14-15, 31-34, etc.).

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Why are these examples important? They are important because they show us the Biblical emphasis on taking advantage of our choices “here and now”! We never know when the last chance we had will become “our last chance”! What if this bulletin is the last bulletin you will read? What if this worship assembly is the last one you will attend? (I can remember when a sister in Christ attended worship on a Sunday morning, and she never had a chance to return! Her health would not allow her to come back. Her last time was her last time.)

Brethren, consider the following questions and answer honestly

- What if the last person you talked to was the last one you will ever be able to reach with the gospel? Do you remember what you said to that person?
- What if the last time you heard a sermon preached would be your last time to ever hear a sermon? Were you paying attention as God’s word was explained? What was the subject?
- What if the last invitation you heard and ignored was the last one to which you would be able to respond?
- What if the last prayer you prayed was the last one you would be able to utter for a particular person concerning their spiritual health or physical health? Do you remember what you talked about to the Lord?

These are serious questions and demand serious answers. This is because one day, you will answer all of those questions! Men are finite creatures facing an infinite future. Will we spend our eternity in Heaven? Will we spend our eternity in Hell? The answers to these questions are determined while we live upon this earth. Are we wasting our time on earth, or using it to God’s glory (I Pet. 4:11)? Let us compare our lives with the word of God and answer that question (Jas. 1:22-25). When will our last chance be “our last chance”? We never know until it is too late (Prov. 27:1). Don’t waste another minute (Ps. 90:12)!

The Power Of A Lie

Joel Raulerson

Many think of a lie as something that is not very harmful. Most even believe that you cannot get through life without telling at least a few “harmless” lies. In fact, one of Satan’s many

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deceptions is downplaying the power of lies in our minds.

Matthew 28:13-15 says, ***“Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep’...this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.”*** One of the greatest lies spread throughout history was that Jesus never arose from the grave. Looking back, this seems like such a simple lie that it should be easy to disprove. However, this is one of the most prevalent lies believed by some of the biggest false religions in the world, such as Islam and Judaism.

Islam teaches that Jesus was just a prophet and not the son of God. Islam also teaches that Jesus did not rise from the dead. They claim it was some kind of trick. He either passed out and revived in the tomb, or the disciples took His body away. This lie spread not only to the Jewish people, but to many other religious groups as well.

The lie spread by the chief priests in Matthew 28 was spread for the same reasons that many tell a lie today. It was an attempt to cover up a wrong. The chief priests recognized they had Jesus crucified because they were jealous of the attention He was getting. If folks knew Jesus had resurrected, then the chief priests would lose all credibility and their position in the nation. Therefore, they spread the lie that the disciples came and took Jesus away. In spreading this lie, the chief priests attempted to pass the blame for the disappearance of Christ on to the disciples.

Do these excuses sound like reasonable reasons for lying? These same excuses are used by many today to excuse the sin of lying. Many attempt to cover up wrongdoing with lies because they believe telling a lie will allow them to avoid consequences they wish to avoid. From a child with his hand caught in the cookie jar, to the attempts to cover up a murder, or excuse any other sin, lies are spread by many to make others look bad and paint themselves in a positive light.

Lies are easily spread by men. The sad fact is it is far easier for a lie to spread than for the truth to spread. If and when men are caught in a lie, the truth is usually not spread as far. For example, a lie spread among the media might take decades to correct because it was the main story for weeks, when the truth and apology might only get a segment of a minute in the news. A lie spread about someone in a community might never go away because more people have heard and believed the lie rather than the truth. Remember, the lie that Jesus Christ did not die and come back to life

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has been taught by some of the biggest false religions in the world. Lying is a sin and Satan is very good at it (Gen. 3:4; Jn. 8:44; Rev. 21:8). Do not make the mistake of thinking that your lies do not have power. Do not allow the lies of the world to persuade you to follow Satan rather than Christ (Col. 2:8).



Spotlight On A Bible Verse: Matthew 7:21

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” These words are found near the end of Christ’s “Sermon on the Mount.” They stand as a reminder that going to Heaven requires more than merely wishing for it to happen. Going to Heaven demands that men be active! I have seen cars that had “Honk if you love Jesus” bumper stickers. Is honking horns all that Jesus wants? Of course, not! It is not enough to say “Lord, Lord.” Good intentions will not save us, either. In Matthew 7:21, Jesus demands action! He demands that we act upon what we know and obey Him. Jesus says the one who does God’s will has the opportunity to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Are you living a life of obedience to the Lord? If not, why not? - Jarrod Jacobs



“I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!”

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Website: <http://caneyvillechurchofchrist.com>

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Sunday: 10:00 am (Bible classes), 10:45 am & 5:00 pm (Worship)

Wednesday: 7:00 pm (Bible classes)

Other opportunities for Bible study:

“The Ancient Landmark” Radio Program airs Mon-Fri on 99.9 FM, WXMZ (10:30-11:00 AM) & 101.5 FM, WLBQ (5:30-6:00 AM)

“The Ancient Landmark” television program airs on:

www.youtube.com/theoldpaths1994

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