

# THE OLD PATHS

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## “A Stopped Clock ...”

Jarrod Jacobs

### 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 stopped because of only one defective component.
- Could be stopped 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 fellowshiping false teachers among us? Could we not justify almost any man who teaches falsehoods with similar reasoning as was offered for 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.
- Teaches falsehood in only “one area” of Bible teaching.
- Generally, teaches the truth on all other subjects.

Some might suggest that in the case of the stopped clock, if someone would work with that clock, it may be possible to get the clock working again. This is true. So also, it is 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, Gal. 6:1) we may be able to win them to the Lord when they repent of their false doctrine and preach the truth. This is right.

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.

Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way ...” (Jer. 6:16).

2:18), and some who “*will depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron*” (I Tim. 4:1-2). In such cases, we must not continue in fellowship with them, pretending as if nothing is wrong, but “*mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them*” (Rom. 16:17). John condemned continuing in fellowship with those in error stating, “*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds*” (II Jn. 10-11).

One 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 says is necessary to stop a false teacher (Titus 1:11). Most people are not afraid to fix the stopped clock. In fact, we are appreciative when someone calls attention to the clock. Yet, ironically, when it comes to false teaching, people seem afraid to speak to those in error, and those in error often become angry at the possibility that 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 is the one who points it out; not the one who is so afraid of hurting feelings that he keeps it bottled up (Gal. 4:16). Jesus said, “*But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death*” (Rev. 21:8). Notice the first group mentioned as having their part in the second death are the “*fearful*”! I 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!***

## **Does The New Testament Talk About Instrumental Music?**

Joel Raulerson

**M**uch of the religious world wishes to say that we have the authority to use musical instruments in worship. To support their beliefs, they may cite passages from the New Testament. Some have cited passages like Luke 7:32, which says, “*They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, ‘We played*

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*the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.*” Some will point to Luke and proclaim that Jesus talked about musical instruments, therefore, we are allowed to use musical instruments in worship today. However, we must pay attention to the context of the passage. Nowhere in the context of Luke 7 is Jesus talking about using instruments in worship. To attempt to apply Luke 7:32 to the use of musical instruments in worship would be completely taking the passage out of context.

Another passage that commonly gets misused is 1 Corinthians 4:6-7, where Paul states, *“Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played?”* Some will try to use this passage to justify the use of musical instruments in worship because Paul mentioned the use of a flute and harp. Again, we must pay attention to the context of the chapter. 1 Corinthians 14 is talking about the use of miracles in the first century church. Specifically, in verses 6-7, Paul told the brethren what standing before the congregation and speaking in tongues would be like if you have no interpreter. Paul uses a simple allegory that the brethren could understand. If they were to get up and speak in tongues and no one could interpret. They would be like an instrument just making a racket. Paul also uses a similar allegory in 1 Corinthians 13:1 when he says, *“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.”* Trying to make any of these verses to justify the use of musical instruments in worship would be to completely change their original meaning.

Does the New Testament mention musical instruments? Yes, it does. However, nowhere in the New Testament do we find authority to use instruments of music in our worship to God. Every time we see the mention of music in worship in the New Testament, it is a very specific kind of music. In our worship, the New Testament refers to singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Acts 16:25). One of the passages that talks about the specific use of singing in worship is 1 Corinthians 14:15. This passage is just a few verses further in the same chapter that so many want to take out of context. 1 Corinthians 14:15 says, *“What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also.”* If we wish to worship God as He has directed in the New Testament, the only kind of music that we find authorized is singing praise with our voices.

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## Spotlight On A Bible Verse: Acts 20:28

*“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”* These words are spoken to the Ephesian elders when Paul met them at Miletus (Acts 20:17-18). He reminded them of many truths he had taught them during his three years with them, and encouraged them to continue to be faithful to God. As we put a “spotlight” on Acts 20:28, this verse reminds elders to watch for themselves as well as for everyone else in the congregation. Elders are men and can fall. This will be noted in the following verses (v. 29-31). Therefore, let elders take heed first of all to self and then to everyone else. This reminds me of the teaching of Matthew 7:1-5. Elders are to be overseers (“a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian or superintendent,” Thayer’s) and must feed (“nourish, cherish, serve,” *ibid.*) the flock of God. Too many churches have elders that are merely “check-writers” and “door-lockers.” Elders need to make sure they are guarding and serving the church, because Christians have been purchased with the precious blood of Christ (Matt. 26:28; I Pet. 1:18-19)! This makes them special, loved, and saved. Elders are Christians, and are recipients of the same blessings. Thus, they have a “vested interest” in making sure the congregation is pure, for in doing this, they are also saving themselves! – Jarrod Jacobs



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

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**Preacher/Editor:** Jarrod Jacobs

**Phone:** (270) 589-4167

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