

# The Old Paths

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## “Believing In God Or Believing God?”

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**T**he statement above might sound strange at first, but I believe the distinction between believing in God and believing God is significant. In fact, it separates those who truly wish to serve God with those who are merely giving “lip-service” to God. There is a world of difference between believing in God and believing God. Let us study this difference together. Consider the following very carefully.....

1) One may acknowledge that a “higher power,” or a “higher intelligence” is responsible for creating this earth (i.e., he believes in God), but this same one may not believe His word at all. This person does not believe God (II Tim. 3:16-17)!

2) There are some who say in no uncertain terms, that they believe in God. Some will declare they read the Bible, too, but they say God is too “kind” and too “loving” to ever send anyone to Hell for their sin. These people do not believe God (Rom. 11:22).

3) Part of the population today readily acknowledges God as Supreme, and as our Creator, but they think one can belong to any denomination/religious group, and be accepted with Him. They think so long as one is “religious” or “spiritual” that God is pleased. These people do not believe God (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28).

4) Another segment of society

has adopted what I call the “Tom T. Hall philosophy” which is reflected in one of his well-known songs which says, “Me and Jesus got our own thing going ...”. These people commonly carry the conviction of a Don William’s song which goes as follows: “I don’t believe that Heaven waits for only those who congregate ...”. Such people with this attitude do not believe God (Matt. 7:21-23; Jn. 14:6; Acts 2:47; Heb. 10:25).

5) Even some of our own brethren fall into this category. When some claim to believe in God and love Him, but then turn around and involve a local congregation in activities not found in the Bible, these people do not believe God. God made His church all-sufficient to do the work of evangelism (I Thess. 1:8), edification (I Thess. 5:11), and benevolence toward needy saints (Acts 11:28-30). But, there are people today saying that this is not enough. They clamor and cry for something “new,” and “different.” When this happens, we are witnessing people who do not believe God.

Certainly other examples could be given, but aren’t these enough to show us the difference between believing in God and believing God? I think so. When one believes God, he will not rely on his own experiences, nor the experiences of others to dictate what he does spiritually. When one believes God, he will be interested in simply doing “Bible things in Bible ways.” This one who believes God does not have time to cater to the wishes of society, for he knows that

he has plenty to do when he simply does things God’s way! Paul said, “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him*” (Col. 3:17). When one believes God, he is interested in believing and obeying only, and all of what God says.

Remember that faith is powerful. Our faith must be based upon the word of God (Rom. 10:17). It should not “*stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God*” (I Cor. 2:5). When my faith is grounded in the word and will of God, then my soul will crave nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else than the word of God. Where is your faith, dear friend? Could it be that your attitude has been found in one of those five categories we mentioned? Do you need to change and resolve to truly believe God? Is your faith in men or in God today?

Remember also, that if I am one who believes God, then I will also believe the promises He has made. I will believe the promises He has made for blessing those who obey His will, and for cursing those who disobey his will. “*To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God*” (Rom. 2:7-11).

### Conclusion

While all of us may believe in God, do we believe God? That is the question that makes all the difference!

## “Children”

Jarrold Jacobs

Children are mentioned quite often in the Scriptures. While it seems many in our society have a very “cheap” or “dim” view of children, the Bible does not. The Bible uses the words “child,” and “children” some 2037 times. “Offspring” is a term used 12 times. God often praises children highly. Let us learn what God expects of children.

### “Children, Obey Your Parents”

This phrase was used by Paul in Ephesians 6:1. He said, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth” (Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20). For children to please God, they must be obedient to their parents. God said, it is “right” when you do it. One who is disobedient to his/her parents is placed in the same category as: “unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, deceit, malicious, haters of God” and a host of other sins (Rom. 1:28-32).

Obedience to parents is something that pleases God, and it is something which can produce a long life on this earth! Why did Paul say this? It is because listening to, and obeying your parents can keep you from many dangers in this life. Your parents love you and want you to be safe. Therefore, they establish rules that they believe will help you stay safe. Listen to them, and obey them. God loves you, and your parents love you!

### “The Fruit Of The Womb Is His Reward”

Parents, this lesson is not only

for “them,” but for “us,” too! David declared, “*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate*” (Ps. 127:3-5). The Bible says that children are a “reward” from God, not a curse! If you don’t believe this, talk to those who, for whatever reason, cannot have children of their own. Parents, let us remember to love our children, and realize that their lives and futures rest in our hands. Therefore, we have the responsibility to teach and train them (Eph. 6:4). Let us not provoke our children to anger (Col. 3:20). Let us train up our children correctly in the ways of God, so when they are old, they will not depart from it (Prov. 22:6). Let us thank God every day for His “reward” to us — our children!

### Children Can Determine Whether Or Not A Man Is Qualified To Be An Elder.

“*For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?*” (I Tim. 3:5) As we have been studying on elders and deacons this year, remember, that an elder needs to have “*children in subjection with all gravity ... faithful children not accused of riot or unruly*” (I Tim. 3:4, Titus 1:6).

Just think children, you can help your father be an elder one day! What a responsibility that is. In describing the qualifications of elders, God declares that children play a vital role in his qualifications.

### Children Reflect The Values Taught In The Home.

As the home goes, so goes the nation. We know that statement is true. We know it is true because we recognize that our children reflect our values to the world. Therefore, if they are not taught right, it will be seen in the years to come when they have opportunities to have their influence felt. If one ever wants a good “mirror” to show what is going on in the home (good or bad), just look at the children! Often, they will reflect what is happening in the home. This is a fact. We may be able to “fool” people in town, but we cannot “fool” that little one who lives in the house with us. There are multiplied examples of this being true in the Bible, as well as “modern-day” examples of this in our lives and in the lives of people we know.

Finally, children will grieve parents (Gen. 26:34-35; Prov. 10:1) or make parents happy (Prov. 23:24-25) based on their decisions. Please make sure you make the right ones! Go to God for direction!!

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