

The Old Paths

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“What Will You Leave Behind?”

Jarrod Jacobs

Every time we pick up our local newspaper, we read of people who have died. Some die in their old age; some die in their youth. People die from accidents, murder, disease, suicide, and many other things. Regardless of how long we live, or the reason for dying, our life on this earth is brief at its longest. David wrote that our life is “soon cut off” (Ps. 90:10). James says our life is, “even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (Jas. 4:14).

With this in mind, have you considered what you will leave behind at your death? Some perhaps have taken out life insurance policies, and similar things to provide financial stability for their survivors. But, is this the true measure of a man? Is this all that one will leave behind at death? By no means! What is the true measure of a man that he will leave behind at death?

Influence

Your influence, good or bad, will be felt by those who are left behind at your passing. Concerning the death of the saints, Christ said, “their works do follow them” (Rev. 14:13). This is also taught in I Timothy 5:24. If we are unsure as to whether or not it is true that our influence is felt after our death, tell me how many newborns are being named “Jezebel” or “Judas” these days? In contrast, many babies are

named “Paul,” “Hannah,” “James,” and “Sarah.” Why do people still cringe and shudder at such names as Adolph Hitler, or Mussolini if it is not for the influence those people left behind?

Yes, our influence is felt even after our death. Therefore, while we live, let us make sure our influence is godly. Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). Our children and grandchildren deserve no less than to observe a righteous influence in us!

Things Left Undone

The obituary page in the newspaper is filled with people who planned on a “tomorrow” that never came for them. Once this earth-life is over, there is no coming back. Job said that a tree that has been cut down may sprout once more, but “man lieth down, and riseth not” (Job 14:7-12). Solomon said, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (Ecc. 12:7). Therefore, let us get our priorities in order. If you die in your sins, you will have wasted your life. When you die, decisions left undone will remain undone! Seeing that this is the case, perhaps we can better appreciate the emphasis the Bible makes on folks doing things “now” and “today” while we still have the opportunity (ex: Acts 16:33). Make the right decision and remember “now is the accepted time ... now is the day of salvation” (II Cor. 6:2). If we don’t

take advantage of this day, and the opportunities before us, we may not get another chance!

Friends and Enemies

Who are our friends? Who are our enemies? Jesus said that if we wish to serve the Lord, the world will hate us (Jn. 15:18-20). James said a similar thing when he said, “whosoever ... will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (Jas. 4:4). When we die, will we enter into the bosom of Abraham, and to the safety of our Father? (Lk. 16:19-31) Will we be lost in our sins? If we love Christ, we will be busy doing His will right now (Jn. 14:15). Sadly, many are satisfied to do their “own thing”, living a life of carelessness and wickedness; (being friends of the world and enemies of God) and will not be ready at all to enter into eternity. Some may think they are ready for eternity, but if God is not our friend, we’re not ready!

Are you a friend of God, or Satan? Make no mistake, you will be one or the other! Jesus said, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.... He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad” (Matt. 6:24, 12:30)! Therefore, there is no “middle ground” with God. You’ll either be for Him or against Him. You’ll either be His friend, or you’ll be His enemy. Remember, friendship with God depends upon whether or not you are a Christian (Acts 22:16), a child of God who is His heir, and a joint-heir with Christ (Rom. 8:17). Are you a Christian? If not, please heed the gospel message today (Mk. 16:16).

When the end of your life comes, ***what will you leave behind?***

“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.” (Jer. 6:16)

“What Is Your Attitude?”

Jarrold Jacobs

What is your attitude toward sin? Is it something you consider funny? The Bible says, “fools mock at sin” (Prov. 14:9). We ought to have an attitude which says that sin is a great cause for concern! When people have little concern for sin, or “mock” it, such an attitude results in people becoming “worse and worse” as the years go by (II Tim. 3:13).

Is sin something that you consider “no big deal”? Or, perhaps you think sin is something serious, but not serious enough that you need to change your life “right away”? Look into the Bible, and see that when we read about sin, we read of folks being encouraged to change their lives immediately! (Acts 22:16; II Cor. 6:2; etc.) Tomorrow may be too late.

Perhaps our attitude toward sin is not what it ought to be because we do not appreciate how terrible it is. Let us consider God’s definition of sin as it is revealed in the Bible:

1) The Bible compares sin to a **terrible wound** (Isa. 1:6). God looked upon national Israel and said, “From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.” David described sin in a similar way in Psalm 38:7-8.

2) Another description of sin is that of a **heavy burden** (Ps. 38:4). David wrote some 1000 years before Christ saying, “Mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too

heavy for me.” He continued to describe their putrid nature by saying, “My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness” (Ps. 38:5).

3) Our Lord describes sin as a **debt** (Matt. 6:12). He instructed His disciples to pray: “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” Do we recognize that sin is a debt we have before God? Furthermore, have we forgiven others that need our forgiveness? If not, how can we expect God to forgive us of our debts against Him (Matt. 6:14-15, 18:21-22, 35)?

4) The Bible also describes sin as a **stain** (Isa. 1:18-20; Jas. 1:27). The “stain” of which Isaiah speaks is compared to a garment which has been “double-dipped” in dye, so that the fabric is vibrant with the color (scarlet). James reminds Christians to make sure and not be “spotted” with the corruption found in this world! The way we can keep from such is described for us in James 1:25-27.

5) The New Testament reveals that sin **enslaves** us (Jn. 8:34; Rom. 6:16; II Pet. 2:19). One who is in sin is in slavery and a citizen in the kingdom of darkness (Col. 1:13; I Pet. 2:9). Hence, the need for “redemption!” The word “redemption” means, “ransom in full, i.e. (fig.) riddance, or (spec.) Chr. salvation:--deliverance” (Strong’s). Mr. Vine says, “a releasing for a

ransom” (Vine’s Amplified Expository Dictionary, p. 659-660). “A releasing effected by payment of ransom ... liberation procured by the payment of ransom” is Mr. Thayer’s definition (Thayer’s, p. 65). How terrible it is, though, when we see folks who are slaves to sin and either don’t know or don’t care! May we avoid such attitudes!

6) Finally, sin results in **spiritual death** (Rom. 6:23; Rev. 21:8)! No one who dies in sin will see God.

Sins such as immodest dress, drinking alcohol (“socially” or otherwise), adultery/fornication, homosexuality, filthy language, and lusting toward the opposite sex, etc. (Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3-7) are not jokes, or “minor” things. Your soul is at stake friend, so long as you continue to live in such sins!

Seeing that the above is true, may we better appreciate the Bible’s warnings against sin, and the encouragement to leave sin and be forgiven as quickly as possible (II Cor. 6:17-18). Seeing the condition that one is in while living in sin, if one could go to someone who can **heal** the wound, **lift** the burden, **forgive** the debt, **cleanse** the stain, give us **freedom**, and bring **spiritual life**, would we not do it? Of course we would! Then, what is YOUR delay? Repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38).

Now, what is your attitude toward sin?

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