

The Old Paths

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“A Lack Of Information Or Application?”

Jarrold Jacobs

The Bible is a unique book, to be sure. While not a science book, it is scientifically accurate. Though it is not a geography book, it is geographically accurate. It is historically true, and is obviously a spiritually focused book. Within the pages of inspiration, we learn that God has given us “*all things that pertain to life and godliness*” (II Pet. 1:3). The inspired Scriptures are “*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*” (II Tim. 3:16-17). The word Christ spoke ought to take first place in our lives because it is this word that will judge us one day (Jn. 12:48). Knowing these things are true, is it any wonder that Peter would, by inspiration, write to Christians and say, “*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen*” (I Pet. 4:11).

I cite the passages above to make it clear that God has provided all the *information* necessary for us to get from earth to Heaven! The Bible has been written; the word is true (Jn. 17:17); and the gospel will save us (Rom. 1:16). The question now is whether or not we will apply the information to our lives! James wrote that a man who hears and

does is considered a “*blessed man*” (Jas. 1:25). He further writes that “*faith without works is dead*” (Jas. 2:17, 20, 26). Jesus said the ones who will see Heaven are those who “*do the will of my father which is in Heaven*” (Matt. 7:21). In other words, we do not lack the *information*, we often lack the *application*!

Throughout history, this fact is what has separated God’s children from the world! Many people have heard God’s word, in various ways. In the book of Exodus, we see Pharaoh heard God’s word, but he “*hardened his heart*” (Ex. 7:14, 22, 8:15, 19, 32, 9:7, etc.) and was punished as a result of his pride. Others who knew the truth but refused to obey were many of the “*chief rulers*” in Christ’s day. They knew who Christ was, but refused to confess Him because they feared what the Pharisees would say (Jn. 12:42-43). Another person who knew the truth was Agrippa. He knew the truth, but would not confess Christ, nor be baptized (Acts 26:27-28). This list could be extended, but the point is that God did not leave them ignorant of the truth! Yet, they were condemned because they did not act upon what they knew!

What about us? We have the Bible at our fingertips. Yes, some know more than others, but is this *really* what is stopping us from being what God would have us to be? Is this *really* what is stopping us from obeying the Lord and living as He wants us to live? I suggest that it is not so much a matter of *information*, but it is a matter of *application*! We do not want to do those things

Christ has said! Shame on us for being that way! Let us listen to the Lord, who tells us to be obedient to Him (Jn. 14:15; I Jn. 5:3) and prepare ourselves for Heaven by applying the information God has revealed! In so doing, we will be a blessed people! (Jas. 1:25)

Change Of Address

Jesse Flowers, Baytown, TX

Anyone who has had to move before, especially out of state, knows all the big and little things that must be done. This past week I spent a number of hours on the phone with about a dozen different businesses notifying them of our upcoming change of address. Of course, as it often goes with those sort of phone calls you have to endure the automated service before you actually speak to someone with a pulse. And then, you may spend the next thirty minutes just trying to understand one another because English is not their spoken language. Boy, was that a fun day.

In spite of how difficult it is to pack up all your earthly possessions, leave family and friends, and start all over somewhere else, at least we know where we’re going. You see, Abraham did not know, at least initially, his change of address. God simply instructed him to: “*Get of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you*” (Gen. 12:1). “*By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going*” (Heb. 11:8).

Can you imagine doing such a thing? Have you ever moved a great distance with your family not having a clue as to where you would resettle? Abraham did

- evidently with no questions asked. You want to talk about faith - real faith - take a good, hard look at Abraham. You want to have a better understanding of what obedience is all about - then study this man's life (Heb. 11:8-10, 17-19). Abraham's unquestioned obedience to God when told to relocate, initially not knowing where, should inspire us to obey God in the relatively simple things He has commanded us.

Abraham was called the "friend of God" (Jas. 2:23) because of his obedience to God. What about us? Could God call us His friend, based on our track record of obedient faith? Well, let's get a little more specific.

- When God commands saints not to forsake the assemblies (Heb. 10:24-25), do we obey Him without question?
- When the Lord gave the command to "go" teach the lost the gospel (Mk. 16:15, 16), do we go out or stay home?
- When the Holy Spirit directs a local church to withdraw from the disorderly (II Thess. 3:6), do we obey or disobey?
- When the doctrine of Christ instructs us to identify false teachers and avoid them (Rom. 16:17), do we listen or stop up our ears?
- When God tells us to restore the wayward Christian (Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19-20), do we put forth any effort to do so, or simply excuse ourselves from this urgent duty?

Would God call us His friend? Well, do we obey Him in all that He says? Surely if Abraham could obey God's command pertaining to his "change of address," then surely we can obey the commands of God today (I Jn. 5:3) without any hesitation.

Kids' Kolumn

Jarrold Jacobs

It is a good thing when adults think of you as a good person. Solomon said, "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure and whether it be right" (Prov. 20:11). Even at a young age, we need to remember that we are known by what we do! What do older folks see when they look at you?

A Respectful Person? The Bible says, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD" (Lev. 19:32). God's wants you to show respect and honor to those who are older than you. This includes parents, too (Eph. 6:1-3)!

A Humble Person? Peter wrote, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (I Pet. 5:5-6).

A Loving Person? Numerous times in the Bible, God tells us to be loving (Matt. 22:37-39; Prov. 17:17; etc.). Do we love God and others?

God's way is the best way. Remember this as you obey God and your parents this week. (Eph. 6:1-3)



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Parents' Paragraphs

Jarrold Jacobs

Psalm 127:1 states, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" In this same chapter, we read, "Lo children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them ..." (Ps. 127:3-5). What position does God hold in your family? What attitude do we have toward our children? Some families give little thought to God, and treat their children as a nuisance. This ought not be among men! Parents need to remember that children are given to us by God (Ps. 127:3), and need to be treated as a special gift that they can train in the ways of the Lord (Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6).

Yet, none of this will happen if the Lord is not allowed into your life and into your family. Therefore, who is it that rules over our house? Do we allow the Lord's will to be our constant guide, or are we allowing our own opinions and experiences to guide us? The Lord's way is best, therefore, let each individual in the family put the Lord first and we all will have happiness (Col. 3:17).

Parents, let us learn from the example of Abraham (Gen. 18:19).

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