

The Old Paths

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“Happy New Year!”

Jarrod Jacobs

H - May our homes be filled with love (Col. 3:19; Titus 4), and may we guide our children in the paths of righteousness in 2010.

A - God, through Peter said, “Be ready **always** to give an answer...” (II Pet. 3:15). Let us be “**always abounding in the work of the Lord**” (I Cor. 15:58). We have much to do for the Lord this year; let’s get busy!!

P - **Perseverance** is key if we are to finish our race. The apostle Paul is a prime example of what it means to **persevere** (Phil. 4:11-13). May we have our eyes on the goal this year (Col. 3:1-3)!

P - Face **persecution** the way godly men and women did in Bible days (Heb. 11:32-40). The apostle said that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus “**shall suffer persecution**” (II Tim. 3:12). Jesus said those who would suffer would be called “**blessed**” (Matt. 5:10-12).

y - To those who can, let us give God the strength of our **youth**. One’s **youth** is the time to: Re-

member God, rejoice in the Lord, and serve Him (Ecc. 11:9-12:1). Remember to “**let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example to the believers ...**” (I Tim. 4:12).

N - **Nothing** can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:35-39). Throughout this year, when we fall, let us return to the Lord in repentance, and ask Him for forgiveness (Acts 8:22; I Jn. 1:9). He will forgive our sins, because He loves us and wants us to be with Him in Heaven one day.

E - Be a righteous **example** before others. Christians have this **responsibility**, whether young or old (I Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:2-8). Remember, our “works” will follow us (Rev. 14:13).

W - **Wisdom** is an attribute we need to acquire at all costs (Prov. 23:23)! It can only be obtained by spending time in God’s word and then actively applying it!! (Wisdom is the *application* of knowledge!) Make 2010 the year that we heed the words of Solomon and “**get wisdom**” (Prov. 4:5, 7-13)!

A New Year’s “Acrostic”
12 lessons for the next 12 months!!

y - As we think about where we have been, and where we are going, are we still **yearning** to go to Heaven? Let this drive and determination dwell within our hearts. This life is not the “be-all and end-all”! We are strangers and pilgrims on this world (I Pet. 2:9). Therefore, let us **yearn** and actively seek that eternal home - Heaven (Heb. 11:13-16)!

E - **Exalt** God and be faithful to Him this year! God wants those ready and willing to worship Him “*in spirit and in truth*” (Jn. 4:24). He wants folks whose faithfulness is seen in their words and deeds whether before men, or when we are alone (Col. 3:17). Let us reverently **exalt** our King, worship Him faithfully, and bring others to Him in 2010!

A - A new year brings with it certain responsibilities. Among those which demand our highest priority is to be **active** in the Lord’s service. There is no room in God’s army for lazy folks! He needs **active** soldiers (II Tim. 2:3-4), “workmen” (II Tim. 2:15) who are ready to live for Him every day of this new year!

R - The Christian can **rejoice** because his name is written in Heaven! In whatever state we may be, we ought to say as Paul, “**Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice**” (Phil. 4:4). No, circumstances in the coming year will not always be pleasant; but we can still have joy! This is a result of our relationship with Christ — we belong to Him!!

"With Him, It's Automatic"

Larry Ray Hafley, Cookeville, TN

Some years ago, the TV announcer was talking about Michael Jordan and his ability to score "during 'crunch time,'" when his team, the Chicago Bulls, needed him to do so. He said, "With him, it's automatic." In other words, you can depend on it. Jordan will come through.

The Lord felt the same way about Abraham. He knew Abraham would not fail to do his duty (Gen. 18:19). He felt the same way about Job (Job 1:8). But what about us? What about you? What about me? With respect to our worship and service toward God, does the Lord know that "with him, it's automatic"? Can we be counted on to be faithful in attendance, liberal in our giving, and constant in our service? Can it be said of you and me in such matters, "with him it's automatic"?

Wife, does your husband know that "with her, it's automatic," that he can safely trust in you? The husband of the "virtuous woman" had that kind of confidence in his wonderful wife. He knew he could rely on her (Prov. 31:11). Men, do our wives know that our love and loyalty is beyond doubt and that we will take care of our responsibilities? Whether it be providing for the family or taking out the garbage, can they say, "with him, it's automatic"?

Things That Should Be Automatic

A prayerful, thoughtful, grate-

ful heart (Phil. 4:6). A reverent attitude toward God (Heb. 12:28). A sincere understanding and a deep appreciation for the death of Jesus (I Cor. 11:23-28). Unselfish service and genuine affection toward all men, but especially unto them who are of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10; Heb. 6:10; 13:1-3). The constant buffeting of our bodies, repelling all malice, envy, jealousy, and evil speaking against others (I Cor. 9:24-27; I Pet. 2:1).

Lips that are swift to praise, slow to criticize, and are a source of riches to ears that will hear (Heb. 13:15; Jas. 1:19; 3:13-18). Holy hands that are lifted up to God, down to the down-trodden, and across to comfort a suffering brother (Acts 20:34; I Tim. 2:8; Jas. 4:8). Feet that are swift, not in "running to mischief," but in spreading the gospel of peace (Prov. 6:18; Rom. 10:15; Eph. 6:15). Eyes that are turned from evil sights unto holy pursuits (Job 31:1; Psa. 101:3; 119:37). A mind that is given to the fear of the Lord, the love of God, and meditation on his word (Psa. 1:2; 119; Prov. 1:7; Eccl. 12:13; Matt. 22:37-40).

Regarding these things, can the Lord say of us, "with him, it's automatic"? Or, are sinful attitudes and actions "automatic" with us (II Pet. 2:14)?

The Lost Art

James W. Adams

Thinking is a lost art with many. In this streamlined age, we are so accustomed to having everything neatly packaged and labeled for us that we have long since ceased to think for ourselves about anything. In religion, this is the road to spiritual slavery and eternal ruin. God has endowed us with minds capable of independent thought and free wills to translate thoughts into deeds. To complement these faculties, He has clearly, completely, and infallibly revealed to us His will to guide our thinking and acting. Think! It may be painful at first, but it has rich rewards.

[Words Fitly Spoken, p. 79]

Editor's Note: In connection with this article, read: Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 12:1-2, 9; I Thessalonians 5:21-22. God encourages and expects His people to think and reason for ourselves! He wants willing followers, not robots! "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him" (Ps. 34:8)!



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