

ASKING FOR THE OLD PATHS

DATE: 10/9/2016 am

TEXT: Jeremiah 6:16 – *“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. But they said, We will not walk therein”*

INTRODUCTION

Recently I saw a bumper sticker that read *“All Paths Led to God”*

I thought; If they only Knew the Truth? And how much of a lie that is

It made me think of this text in Jeremiah

Jeremiah’s focus was upon Judah in the last decades before the Babylonians conquered them

Like Isaiah, Jeremiah was dealing with days of deep spiritual wickedness

The people had sinned against God to the point where He was ready to give them up (into captivity)

And, in fact, they went into captivity in just a few short years

Yet, even while they perched on the edge of Judgment, the Lord desired to see them turn back to Him

II Timothy 2:25 – *“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure ... (perhaps)*

Asking for the Old Paths – Jeremiah 6:16

... will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;”

In our Text this morning, we are given the image of a traveler who has come to a fork in the road

He has the opportunity to go anyway he desires,

But God suggests that he ask for the “***old paths, where is the good way***”

Instead of just traveling blindly on, this traveler is encouraged to stop and ask directions

Unfortunately many were too foolish to stop and ask,

And as a result, they wasted their valuable time seeking their own way

The Lord wants people to travel the Right Path

He wants them on a Path that will lead them in His direction

While this word of correction was spoken to the Jews many years ago,

There is a lesson in this verse for you and I this morning

It's my opinion that the Lord would still have people to ask for the Old Paths

Let's take a moment to consider 3 Elements of this verse as we think on this thought ...

“Asking for the Old Paths”

I want you to know that there is a Right Path and there is a Wrong Path

We must be sure we are walking the one which God has ordained,

The one that He can bless, the one that honors Him

~~~Prayer~~~

**I. THE “REQUIREMENTS”**

Life is uncertain at best

Do you think you have everything under control?

If you think you do, how do you know?

We may think we know, but I think most people are only fooling themselves

Without God’s Direction in a person’s life, we will never walk the Right Path

**Jeremiah 6:16** is affording us the opportunity to know the Right Path

**A. The ‘Consideration’ – vs. 13-15 ...**

The Consideration that God is issuing to His people is for them not to allow themselves to be lead astray by the false prophets and leaders of their day

**II Peter 2:1 – “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction”**

**I John 4:1 – “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”**

Israel was to look back to men like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and others who walked the Path of Obedience and Holiness before the Lord and they were to seek that Path for themselves

Today’s Believer is to look to Jesus

**Hebrews 12:2 – “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”**

God Requires the use of the Word of God for Direction!

We are Required to Live by Faith

## **B. The ‘Caution’ – v. 16**

God's Caution is that they not just go any-which-way,

But that they take the time to find the Right Path,

That old, well-worn Path that represents the best way

The problem Israel faced is a problem people have faced down through the ages

Let me **Illustrate**: During World War II, at the Battle of the Bulge, there was a group of German soldiers who dressed themselves in the uniforms of the Allies. These German soldiers used captured American military vehicles and went through the German countryside changing the road signs. When the American troops came to the various crossroads, they were often fooled and lead off in the wrong direction. This deception by the Germans almost gave them the victory in this very decisive battle of the war.

God Requires us to use Caution

Depending on Him for Direction / He knows the way

### C. The ‘Confusion’

Just like those German soldiers caused Confusion and death by changing a few signs,

So, many folks are being led in the Wrong Direction by those who are changing the road signs of the Faith

Let me share with you a few of the road signs that are being changed today

#### 1. Salvation through the Blood

**Hebrews 9:22 – “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Lev. 17:11)**

They want a bloodless Sacrifice, just like Cain’s

#### 2. Belief in the Bible

**II Timothy 3:16 – “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”**

**Psalms 119:89 – “For ever, O LORD, Thy Word is settled in heaven”**

All 66 Books; 1,189 Chapters; 41,173 Verses; 774,746 Words; 3,566,480 Letters in the Bible are the Word of God

**Jesus said in Matthew 5:18 – “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled”**

They want to tell you that the Bible is not the Word of God (Don't you believe them!)

### 3. Love for the Church, the Bride of Christ

**Hebrews 10:25 – “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching”**

### 4. The Reality of Heaven and Hell

**John 14:2, 3 – “In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also”**

## *Asking for the Old Paths – Jeremiah 6:16*

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**Psalm 9:17 – “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God”**

I don't care what John Lennon sang

Jesus tells us to the contrary

### 5. The Value of a Human Soul

**Mark 8:36, 37 – “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” “Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”**

Life is considered cheap today, and taken indiscriminately

### 6. The Soon Return of Christ

**Revelation 22:20 – “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus”**

**II Peter 3:4 – “And saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation”**

### 7. The Holiness of God

**I Peter 1:16 – “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy”**

Man has always tried to create God in their own image

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Regardless of which signs the world changes, it does not change the road!

The Word of God is Forever settled in Heaven

The “**old paths**” are still there

There is no question about what way is the right way

The Question is ...whether or not we will walk in it

**Isaiah 30:21b – “...This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left”**

And, God's Requirements has not changed:

Ask for the Olds Paths and walk therein!

### **II. THE “REFUSALS” – vs. 10 (end), 16 (end), 17**

To **Refuse** is to declare or indicate someone’s intention not to do something

#### **A. The ‘Unbeliever’s’ Refusal**

These verses tell us that some decided that they would not walk in the Lord's Will and in the Lord's Path

The results of their choice would be chastisement and destruction – **v. 19**

There is a high price to pay for refusing to walk in the Lord's will!

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We are living in a day when many are refusing to walk in the Old Paths

Either the Old Way is too Narrow, or they feel that God just doesn't know what He is talking about

### 1. The Word - v. 10

***“The Word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it ...”***

This text sounds like the attitude of many folk in our churches today

Most intend never to do anything with what they have heard

Such an attitude is a strong warning of judgment to come

### 2. The Way - v. 16

***“Ask for the old paths .... the good way ...”***

But the Unbeliever said ***“We will not walk therein ...”***

Though the people were called to the ***“old paths”*** of obedience, they refused the exhortation

They would not walk in God's ways

### 3. The Watchman - v. 17

***“I have set watchmen over you ... Hearken to the sound of the trumpet ... We will not hearken”***

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The watchmen's mission was to warn the people of danger

This is often the ministry of God's preachers,

But like Jeremiah, the people would not hearken to his warning

### **B. The 'Believer's' Refusal**

Yet, no matter what the unbeliever does, let us, the people of God, stand tall in the old ways

Let us be unashamed of who we are

Let us hold our heads high and walk in the way God has ordained without apology and without backing down

Let us be everything the Lord commanded us to be in His Word

***I Corinthians 15:58 – “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord”***

### **THE “REQUIREMENTS”**

### **THE “REFUSALS”**

### **III. THE “REWARDS”**

The Word of God Promises in many Places Rewards for those who will be found Faithful

One such Reward is found here and is ...

### **A. The ‘Rest for’ the Soul**

The Reward for Walking in the Old Paths is ...

**v. 16 – “*and ye shall find rest for your souls*”**

God's promises to those who walk in His Paths is ...

... Rest for their souls

That is, in His Paths, we can be assured of 3 Great Truths

#### **1. Surety – John 14 (coming again)**

One, we can be sure that we will arrive at the proper destination!

When we take the Lord's Path, we can be sure that it will end in His presence!

#### **2. Safety – Hebrews 13:5 (will never leave us)**

We can travel in safety knowing that the Lord is guarding our way

I find such comfort in knowing that

Not only will we end up where we want to be,

But we will get there in the safest, most peaceful manner possible

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### 3. Satisfaction - II Tim. 1:12 (persuaded)

We can know that while we are on the Lord's Path,

That the deepest needs of our soul will be met!

There will be Fellowship with Him and joy in His presence every step of the way!

### **B. The 'Distress of' the Soul – v. 25 ...**

However, those who fail to ask for the Old Paths will find themselves walking in the ways of Destruction and Misery

When we turn our backs on the way God has chosen as the right way

We will find that the way is difficult, there is no peace or safety and the destination is ever in question

There is a Reward for those who will walk in the Lord's Pathway!

And Harsh Consequence for those who won't!

## **CONCLUSION**

**Jeremiah 6:16 – *“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...”***

**THE “REQUIREMENTS”  
THE “REFUSALS”  
THE “REWARDS”**