



A Publication of  
Princeton Christian Church

# The Princeton Path Finder

## Ancient Paths

Winter  
2024

This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, 'We will not walk in it.'" Jeremiah 6:16



### In This Issue

- *Ancient Paths in This Modern World*
- *The Ancient Paths*
- *Follow the Ancient Paths*
- *Old Time Religion*

## Ancient Paths in This Modern World

*Thus says the Lord, Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk in it.*

*Jeremiah 6:16*

As I began meditating on this verse, I wondered what the Lord meant by the ancient paths. Here we are directed to ask for the ancient paths. The first thing I did in my investigation of the passage was to look up the Hebrew word for ancient to discover its meanings. I found that the Hebrew word is OLAM. Some of the meanings of this Hebrew word are: old, concealed, hidden, perpetual, eternal, timeless, from eternity.

When I read the words from eternity, something inside me jumped, and I remembered reading in the book of Hebrews how everything on the earth is patterned after things in heaven. The things on the earth are really just types and shadows of the things in heaven. God's ways are heavenly, eternal, timeless. Before God created man or the earth, His ways were established, and He walked in them. When God created Adam and Eve, He made them in His own image and established within them His ways: supernatural, timeless, from eternity. These were ways of thinking, ways of speaking, ways of behaving and relating to one another. Since man chose sin, he has departed further and further from these ways. Today we don't even recognize what these ways are any more, so we couldn't return to them if we wanted to do so.



Nevertheless, God instructs us through the prophet Jeremiah to see and ask for the ancient paths again. He tells us that they are the good way. The Hebrew word for GOOD used in this passage is the word TOV. Some of the meanings of this word are: pleasant, agreeable, happy, well-off, prosperous, great, excellent, cheerful, merry, distinguished. Such characteristics are the result of walking in the ancient paths of God. This inspired passage further goes on and says that when you walk in these paths, you will find rest for your soul. So many people today have very little rest or peace on the inside. Life is a constant struggle, and there is a continual torment on the inside of many. God never intended for us to have to live this way. Such a state of being is definitely not walking in the ancient paths.

*~Continued on Page 2*

## Ancient Paths in This Modern World - *Continued*

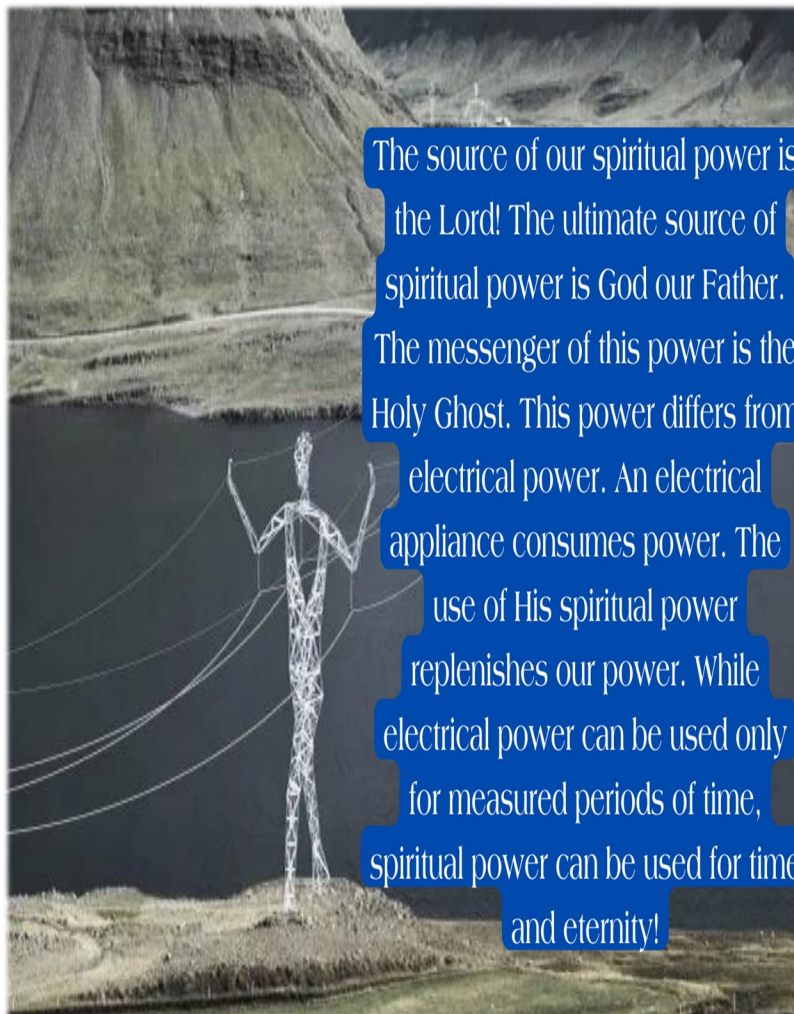
When God created man and placed him on the earth, He made him in His own image and imprinted him with His own ways. Since that time, man has departed further and further from the original ways of God. Even after sin entered the world, man still lived 900 years. By the time of Noah the life span of man had already decreased to around 600 years, while in Moses' day men lived only 120 years. Today the average life span is only about 80 years. The further away from the original ways of God man has departed, the shorter his life span has become, and the more complicated he has made his own life.

### POWER JUMP

Everyone knows that the high-tension power lines that stretch across our country carry high voltage electricity. Electrical power from these lines can be accessed by physically connecting a conductive wire to these lines. However, few people know that electrical power can be induced in a conductor wire that is simply stretched parallel to an active electric line without the conductor wire's touching the line or being physically connected to it in any way. By simply being stretched parallel to a set of electric lines, a copper wire may conduct electric power right through the air with no physical connection whatsoever. On the other hand, a copper wire stretched perpendicular to electric lines will not conduct any power at all. Electrical power line workers have been electrocuted from not understanding this vital principle.

Even as electrical power jumps across free air to a parallel conductor wire, so God's supernatural power and life can jump from Him to you when your ways are lined up parallel to His ways. The only problem is that we've drifted so far away from what God intended us to be we no longer know what God's ways are so that we might line up our lives parallel with them.

God originally established His ways in culture so that they would be imparted naturally from one generation to the next. In my study of several different cultures of the world, I have concluded that God has established a significant deposit of His eternal ways within virtually every culture of the world. When God's ways are established within any given culture, there is no need for a specific intellectual knowledge of these ways. However, when God's ways are systematically eliminated from a given culture over a few generations, then the people within that culture perish for lack of such knowledge (Hosea 4:6).



~Continued on Page 3

## Ancient Paths in This Modern World - *Continued*

In our North American culture, over the last several generations, people have decided that we don't have to think, behave, or do things Bible ways any more, so that now most people, even within the church do not know what that way is. Consequently, the Lord admonishes us. When we once again find God's ancient ways and begin to line up our lives and families accordingly, we will begin to experience a supernatural jump of God's life and power into our lives.

### SUPERFICIAL HEALING

*For from the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is greedy for gain, and from the prophet even to the priest everyone deals falsely. And they have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, saying, 'Peace, peace, but there is no peace. Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done? They were not even ashamed at all; they did not even know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time that I punish them, they shall be cast down, says the Lord. Thus says the Lord, Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.*

*Jeremiah 6:13-16*

These verses, immediately preceding verse 16 of Jeremiah 6, give us some further insight into our present experience of life here in North America. Because we have not walked in God's ancient paths, many areas of our society, as well as personal and family life, seem almost overwhelming on a daily basis. Consequently, important spiritual, emotional, financial, family, and health needs seem to go unmet day after day. As a result, as verse 13 tells us, we become very self-focused and greedy after gain. When his/her needs go unmet, a person tends to become selfish and greedy. It is impossible to tell a drowning man not to be so greedy for air or a starving man not to steal for food. As verse 13 tells us, greed and deceit are bound to operate when crucial needs go unmet.

Verse 14 states that we are not helping people when we, the church, attempt to bring healing to the brokenness of people in a superficial way. Perhaps we have thought we were helping people through speaking peace, peace, thus attempting to remove their guilt and pain without dealing with the root causes of their problems.

People in our generation are interested in instant solutions to problems. I have often thought that a drive-through church would probably be very popular. I could see people pulling up to the drive-through window on Sunday morning and ordering: one order of **McHealing**, three **McSalvations**, two **McDeliverances** and one **McSermon** to go, please. In fact, we are beginning to see this very thing in our culture with online church services. We are an impatient self-serving society which is unwilling to deal with root causes of problems; we want only instant pain alleviation. As a result, many times we go through life daily making choices aimed at just eliminating the painful consequences of our last foolish choice.

We rarely look far enough ahead to see the longer-term consequences of the choices we make.



*~Continued on Page 4*

## Ancient Paths in This Modern World - *Continued*

### SHORT-TERM FIXES ARE ALWAYS THE SEED OF LONG-TERM DESTRUCTION

Suppose a teenage girl who has been deeply wounded and alienated from her father because of rules set in the home to protect her, enters into rebellion and cuts off her relationship with him. She has now stepped outside the circle of spiritual protection which God designed in the family for her safety. Having been deeply wounded and hurt by her father, the young girl now goes out in search of love. Suppose she meets a young man who says that he loves her. Because of the hurt and need in her life, she allows herself to become sexually involved with him, resulting in an unwanted pregnancy. Unfortunately, her second, foolish, short-term choice of sexual satisfaction has resulted in a longer term consequence. Pressured by an unwanted pregnancy, this young woman makes a third, foolish, short-term choice by deciding to abort her baby. This action results in the long-term consequence of untold guilt and shame at having taken a life. The torment and hurt of this situation then result in a new quest for comfort and love. Another romantic relationship is entered, and again an unwanted pregnancy occurs. However, still carrying the tormenting guilt and hurt from the previous abortion, the young woman chooses this time to have her baby. She begins to pressure the father to marry her, and eventually he does.



Each choice that this young woman makes is only an attempt to remove the pressures of the last short-sighted poor choice. After only a little time of being married, the young woman discovers that the man she has married is full of anger and very verbally and physically abusive. As a result, after a year she chooses to divorce her husband. Still carrying tremendous hurt and pain from the rejection from her father, the abortion, the second unwanted pregnancy, the abuse of her husband, and now the divorce, she once again sets out on a quest for love and comfort. You can probably play out the rest of the scenario yourself in a string of broken relationships and devastatingly painful life events. A life ruined all because she chose to not live under the guidelines her father had set in place to protect her from the very painful events that have played out in her life as a result of her rebellion.

Verse 15 of Jeremiah chapter 6 tells us that when we make short-sighted choices attempting to bring peace without dealing with the roots of the former wrong choices, we harden our own hearts and are not even convicted of any wrongdoing. Jeremiah says that when men do this, they don't even know how to blush. This hardening of heart then becomes the very cause for their downfall and destruction. This is why Jeremiah in verse 16 urges us to seek after and ask for the ancient paths where the good way is.

*~Continued on Page 5*

## Ancient Paths in This Modern World - *Continued*



### MUSTANG VS. MACHETE

*But they will say, 'It's hopeless! For we are going to follow our own plans, and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore thus says the Lord, 'Ask now among the nations, who ever heard the like of this? The virgin of Israel has done a most appalling thing. Does the snow of Lebanon forsake the rock of the open country? Or is the cold flowing water from a foreign land ever snatched away? For My people have forgotten Me. They burn incense to worthless gods and they have stumbled from their ways, from the ancient paths to walk in bypaths, not on a highway,*

*Jeremiah 18:12-15.*

In this passage, Jeremiah is again urging us to return to the ways of God. He states that forgetting God is as foolhardy as turning away from the only source of fresh water in a desert land. In verse 15 the prophet tells us that when we don't walk in God's ancient paths, we are walking in bypaths. When I first read this passage, I could picture a man attempting to cut his way through a thick jungle with a machete in order to get from point A to point B. The distance was quite vast, and it looked as though it might take the man most of his life to progress to the goal.

On the other hand, verse 15 says that the ancient paths are like a super expressway. I could picture another man also moving from point A to point B. However, rather than hacking his way through a jungle with a machete, he was riding in a Mustang on a superhighway. The second man in the Mustang was able to reach in one day the same goal that it took the first man with the machete all his lifetime to reach. If we will just stand in the way, see and ask for the ancient paths, and begin to walk in them again, I believe that we will find ourselves riding on a highway instead of slowly cutting a path through the jungle in many areas of our lives and society.

**Daniel 11:32** tells us: *But the people who know their God will be strong and do exploits.*

Now most of us have not had any time to do any constructive exploits, because we are caught up in survival mode. When we have to spend most of our time cutting through underbrush and fending off wild beasts, we have no time to do anything other than just survive. This is not how we were created.

**We Are Created To Thrive! Not Simply Survive.**

God's Word reminds us of this very fact; time and time again.

*Jeremiah 17:7-8 Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.*

*Luke 6:43-45 For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

~Continued on Page 6

**Ancient Paths in This Modern World - Continued**

# GENERATIONAL EVANGLISM



When thinking of evangelism and expanding the Kingdom of God, I had always heard that each generation is responsible to evangelize its own generation. However, over the last couple of generations especially, we have had to evangelize in our own generation plus reach back and evangelize the previous generations. This has caused a Machete Effect on the Church. We have had to set up coffee houses and street ministries to win back to the Lord the children of Christians. Why?

We have thought that if we just take our kids to church, pray for them, teach them the Bible, or even put them in a Christian school, then they will grow up to serve the Lord. However, experience has proven to us that although all these things are valuable, in and of themselves, they do not adequately set the course for life.

What then is necessary to set a course in the lives of Christian young people which results in their serving Jesus Christ all the days of their lives? I believe that the answer to this question has to do with an impartation (teaching) of two key qualities from the Lord at very crucial times in life. *(but it's better late than never to learn these qualities).*

In every culture God established His ancient ways of instilling these key qualities at important times in the lives of children. However, in our culture here in North America, we have forsaken and forgotten Gods ancient ways and, as a result, have failed to receive in our own lives or to impart to our children these two key qualities.

Walking in Gods ancient ways results in generational evangelism. Each generation is responsible not only to evangelize its own generation, but in reality to evangelize at least two generations ahead. If we again rediscover Gods ancient paths and begin to walk in them, we will virtually ensure that our children and grandchildren will serve Jesus Christ all the days of their lives.

In the next issue of Princeton PathFinder we will examine the two key qualities which God intended to impart and establish powerfully in each of our lives: IDENTITY AND DESTINY.

~Aaron Jones

## The Ancient Paths

There's no denying the fact that a lot of Christians today have drifted apart from the way the good Lord had ordained for us. It is a bit sad that modern day Christians would want to be in the church and still be in the world. He/she finds it very comfortable to, for instance engage in immoral behaviors and still be in the church to worship his Creator as though nothing had happened.

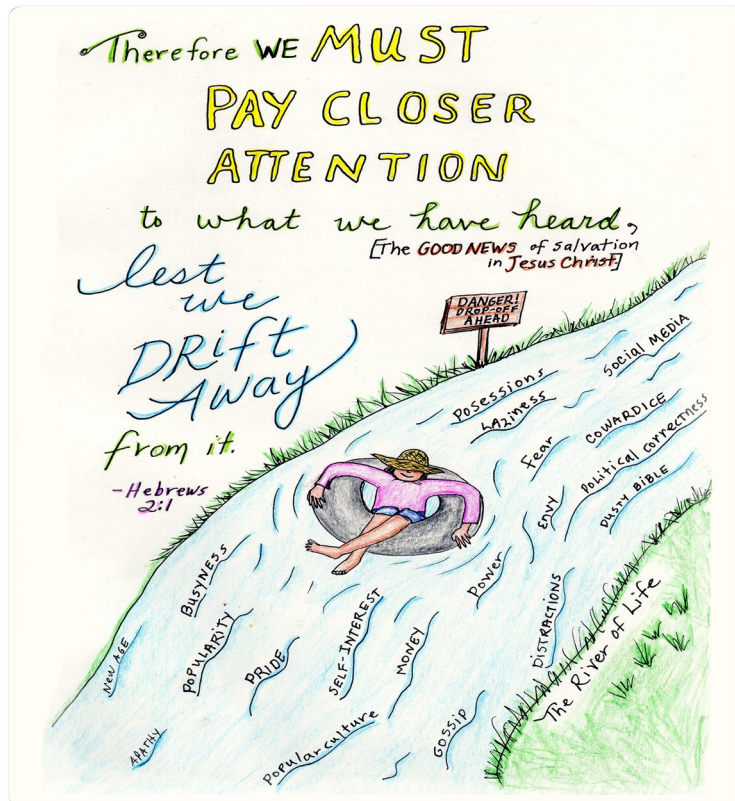
The most unfortunate aspect of this episode is that such Christians because they do not understand how grave their behaviors entail do not find the need to even pray to ask for the forgiveness of sins. Surprisingly such behaviors happened a long time ago in the lives of the Israelites. Our anchor scripture recounts how God had to send his prophet, Jeremiah, to forewarn His children how certain behaviors they were doing and putting up with, and how He wanted them to come back to Him.

God sent the Prophet Jeremiah to speak to the Israelites.

The text I turn to is **Jeremiah 6:16** - *Thus says the LORD: "Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls."*

**Stand and look...** The Lord is commanding the **people to look...to think...to consider** as a traveler does on a journey. They should take care to find their way. Matthew Henry, the great Bible commentator wrote: "O that men would be thus *wise for their souls*, and would ponder the path of their feet, as those that believe lawful and unlawful are of no less consequence to us than the right way and the wrong are to a traveler!"

And then we find another imperative - **ask for the ancient paths**. What are the paths? They are the way of faithfulness that had been given to Moses and the people. The paths are the way of God and that which he blesses. They are the way of godliness and righteousness and peace and joy. They are the way of God's law. They are the paths laid out in Holy Scripture...the written Word of God given to us to be treasured and followed. These are the good paths that we are to walk in



**Psalm 1:1-3** - *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.*

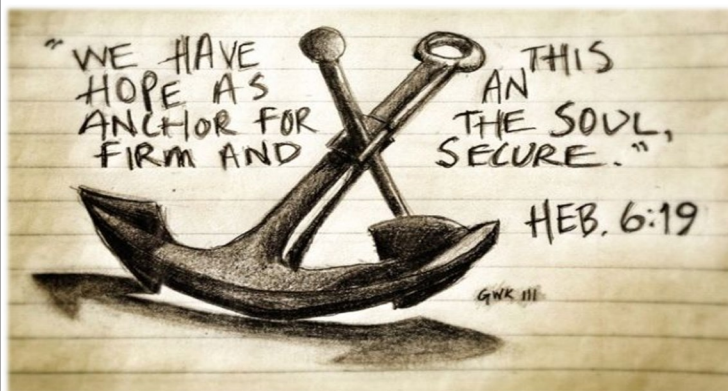
This ancient path is the way of delight in the Lord and in his ways. It is delight in his Word and in all that he has given us. It is following these ways even when the road seems quite rough. It is an ancient way, not necessarily a smooth way. It will likely cost you a bit of pain, but you will find much help along that way, and certainly the end of the journey will make it all worthwhile. It is a way that will bring rest to our souls. The way of faithful obedience is the way of true and lasting **growth (John 15:1-17)**. And we have a forerunner, because this is the path that our Lord walked before us and through Him we have the strength to walk it too.

~Continued on Page 8

## The Ancient Paths - Continued

Yet there is a little bit of the verse that I left out - **the response:** *But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'* Let us not say the same thing. Let us walk the road before us. Let us take up our cross and follow our Lord on His path of obedience and blessing. It is the good road. It is the road that reveals the heart of God...that He desires the best for His children.

And similar is what is happening in our today's world. Many people are not ready to turn from the wrong path to embrace the ancient paths, which is God's way. But it's important we understand that the entire Christian life is a journey and therefore has a definite destination which is Heaven. The path along which we are travelling has also been laid or defined by God. It's our duty to walk in that path if truly we want to make it to that glorious place one day to spend eternity with God. For God, His duty is to show us the way. The will to choose to walk in that path is however ours. And it is because of this that **Matthew 6:33** admonishes us to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added.



Our anchor scripture is an appeal from God to His people through the prophet to seek the ancient paths. In other words, the prophet was calling the people back to the Lord's way of living, which simply is the Ancient Paths.

The **Ancient Paths** therefore most likely refers to a time when His people were living righteously by God's standards and embracing the practices along with the spirit behind them.

In this verse, we are given the image of a traveler who comes to a fork or junction in the road. He has the opportunity to go anyway he desires, but God tells him

to ask for the "*old paths, where is the good way*". Instead of just travelling blindly on, this traveler is to stop and ask directions. The scripture provides us with six elements of which we can pick lessons which are relevant to the life of the today's Christian.

### 1. Stand at the crossroads and look;

As Christians we're also faced with **choices** of different kinds on a daily basis. Our crossroads are represented in the critical period in which we live. An old commentary states that this is the "image from travelers who have lost their road, stopping and inquiring which is the right way on which they once had been, but from which they have wandered" The crossroads of life is a critical time of decision making not just outwardly, but also inwardly as we contemplate our relationship with Christ, with others, as we assess our goals, etc. In the case of Jeremiah and the initial recipients it was the sobering reality of the imminent judgment and destruction of the kingdom. Many Christians/believers, and by extension the church today are at a crossroad. And we need to ask which the right path is. Salvation or prosperity or both? We need to ask what the right way to go as a Christian or church is. Thank God we have seasoned men of God, some of whom are young, who are guiding the Church in our day today.





## The Ancient Paths - *Continued*

### 2. Ask for the ancient paths:

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.

In our anchor scripture Jeremiah essentially urged the people to repent of their sins and turn back to God. In today's verse the direct appeal is from God, "*This is what the LORD says.*" **Acts 16: 30-31** ... "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" **Acts 9:5** ... Who are you, Lord? Saul asked. Asking for "ancient paths" doesn't always sound very exciting or adventuresome; innovation or something "new" which seems more enticing to the appetite. Ancient paths are allegedly those dusty diatribes (criticism) of patriarchs and prophets long "dead" young people disparage and ignore history as the buried relic of a past irrelevant to their lives today. Jesus addressed the myth of the innovative and new over against the everlasting good of the ancient paths: "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced [of the eternal value of the ancient paths] even if someone rises from the dead." (**Luke 16:31**) .

### 3. Ask where the good way is:

Ask for the old paths, where is the good way. Ask what the way to heaven is. Jesus told Thomas in John 14:6 "I am the way. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Jesus is the way from sin to holiness, from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty, from misery to happiness, from the gates of hell to the throne of heaven.



### 4. and walk in it:

God is commanding His people not to allow themselves to be led astray by the false prophets and leaders of their day. They are 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 are to

seek that path for themselves. God is also commanding His people not to just go anyway, but that they take the time to find the right path, that old, well-worn path that represents the best way.

### 5. and you will find rest for your souls:

God's promise to those who walk in His paths is that they will find rest for our souls. That is, in His paths, we can be assured of three great truths. When we take the Lord's highway, we can be sure that it will end in His presence. We can travel in safety knowing that the Lord is guarding our way. Not only will we end up where we want to be, but we will get there in the safest, most peaceful manner possible. The deepest needs of our soul will be met. There will be fellowship with Him and joy in His presence at the end of the way. 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.

### 6. But you said, 'We will not walk in it.

Some decided that they would not walk in the Lord's will and in the Lord's path. The result of their choice is chastisement and destruction. There is a high price to pay for refusing to walk in the Lord's will.

**In conclusion**, the ancient/old way is clearly not the popular way. It is being abandoned daily by people who have decided that new is better. They are leaving the Bible, the old songs of the faith, old fashioned worship, praising the Lord, and preaching. Seeker services are replacing old time worship of the Lord. Yet, God has not changed (**Hebrews 13:8**). Let us ask for the old paths and walk in them. The enemies are changing the signs, but the Lord will know the way. Let's ask Him and He will lead!

~ Robin Fortner

## Follow the Ancient Paths

Author Kevin Belmonte wrote in an article titled "Looking for the Ancient Paths." In his writing, he recalled life in the 1950s along the Appalachian Trail. The Trail twisted its way through his father's apple orchard on the Tennessee/North Carolina border. He met hikers who stopped at the orchard in the packing house for a drink of water or apple cider. He said they didn't stay long. They were following white blazes painted on trees, rocks, and fence posts from one end of the orchard to the other.

He continued: Today, approximately 80,000 blazes mark the trail from Georgia to Maine, guiding thru-hikers all the way to Mount Katahdin. Missing the blazes is time consuming, even deadly, for some areas of the Appalachians can swallow up hikers like a haunted forest."

The "religious leaders" in Jeremiah's day were not much different than some in the church (as a whole) are today. Very often in the denominations, the truth of the Gospel is minimized, limited to saying a prayer (which, by the way, is not the prayer of the person repeating the words) and asking God to enter the heart.





Jeremiah would have called it today as he did earlier in his writings when he said, "Prophets and priests alike dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious."

Jeremiah was serious about his calling from God. One Christian minister said once, "While studying Jeremiah, I've been stuck with how frequently Jeremiah used the phrase "This is what the Lord says."

Most people don't care much about my opinion or yours. We may be wrong about some things. We are not without fault.





But what is important and must be considered is: What does the Bible say? What does God say? That is what people need and that is what they need to hear.

### Main Trail Blazes

 <p><b>White Blaze</b> Represents a straight ahead hiking path</p>	 <p><b>Tuxedo Blaze</b> Emphasizes white blaze</p>	 <p><b>Left Turn</b> Indicates a noteworthy directional change in the Trail</p>	 <p><b>Right Turn</b> Indicates a noteworthy directional change in the Trail</p>
---	--	---	--

---

### Side Trail Blazes

 <p><b>Blue Blaze</b> Straight ahead on a Side Trail</p>	 <p><b>Left Turn</b> Indicates a noteworthy directional change on a Side Trail</p>	 <p><b>Right Turn</b> Indicates a noteworthy directional change on a Side Trail</p>	 <p><b>End Blaze</b> Represents the end of a Side Trail</p>
--	---	--	--

Blazes can be found on: trees, fence posts, t-bar posts, stiles, bridges, rocks, hydro poles, etc.

Please stay on the Blazed Trail

## A MIRROR REFLECTION



JESUS



YOU



*When we look at Jesus, we don't just see what the Father is like...*

*... we also see what we are like. This becomes our basis for revealing Him to others!*

Those blazes on the Appalachian Trail are somewhat like what Jeremiah writes about: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls."

Jeremiah 1:16.

Jeremiah was calling his nation to repent. He was warning them of destruction if they refused to heed his warning and find the trail.

In the world we live in today, the church must confront the culture we live in. The church must denounce the evils of the world and show the world the better way.

~Continued on Page 11

## Follow the Ancient Paths - Continued

Jeremiah speaks what the people need to hear. *“Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths; ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.”* Jeremiah 6:16 NIV

When I think about paths several pictures come into my mind. I remember from my childhood walking paths from one place to another. You may have heard this description of a house that is up for sale: “Three bedrooms and a bath”. The one I remember and experienced first-hand, however, was the one that said, “Two bedrooms and a Path.”

So, what are our ancient paths? We can be sure it was not the 50s when I grew up. Nor was it in 1776 when the Founding Fathers established our nation on Judeo-Christian principles. It wasn't the “good old days”.

Jeremiah was not sitting around being nostalgic about days gone by. When he and the Bible refer to the ancient paths, they are referring to things that are truly old, things that go back as far as Creation times, and often things that are eternal.

All paths lead us to different destinations. If I were lost in the woods with no idea how to find my way out, I would want to look for a path. If a path is found, that means that many footprints have covered that same ground, and if I follow that beaten path, I will likely find my way out – if I choose the right direction to travel. A path keeps us on the right track.



And so, we hear Jeremiah say, *“Thus says the Lord, ‘Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths. Where the good way is and walk in it; And you will find rest for your souls.’”* Jeremiah 6:26 NASB

This verse is sometimes used as an edict to keep everything in the church exactly the same as it had always been. That would be those whose battle cry is: “We have never done it that way before.”



Now, this attitude and thinking does have some merit when there is no Biblical reason for making changes. Those changes may be changes in worship style – using praise groups, hand clapping in worship, amplified music, a change in the order of service (communion in the middle of the service or after the sermon; the number of songs to be included in the service) – any number of unfamiliar variations in the elements of worship.

But those changes are not the ancient paths that Jeremiah refers to in his writing. He is addressing the impending destruction of Jerusalem.

His warning refers to God's truth as revealed in His Word, not to methods of ministry; not orders of service, etc.

~Continued on Page 12

## Follow the Ancient Paths- *Continued*

His warning is for God's people to prepare for the doom which is to come.

Jeremiah's warning contains two instructions: 1. Stand in the old ways – the ancient paths, and 2. Walk in the good ways.

The ancient path refers to the right way. Its way is morally upright. It is biblical. It is the path that leads to the desired destination. It is the path that allows one to work toward the right destination.

The message Jeremiah preaches is not a popular message. It has never been so. It isn't politically correct. But, more importantly, it is morally sound.

Because of that nature of the message, we can, in our teaching In the church today, show the world a better way.

In order for the church to conduct the work of the body of Christ – the church - she must stand on the truth.

When the church chooses to satisfy the "felt needs" of the congregation, it begins to build a church that exists to suit those needs.

In the business world, that model works and is expected. It works because in the secular world, the goals, and expectations trend in a vastly different direction than those of the church.

Finding the right path is sometimes difficult because other factors get in the way and cause diversion from following the right path.

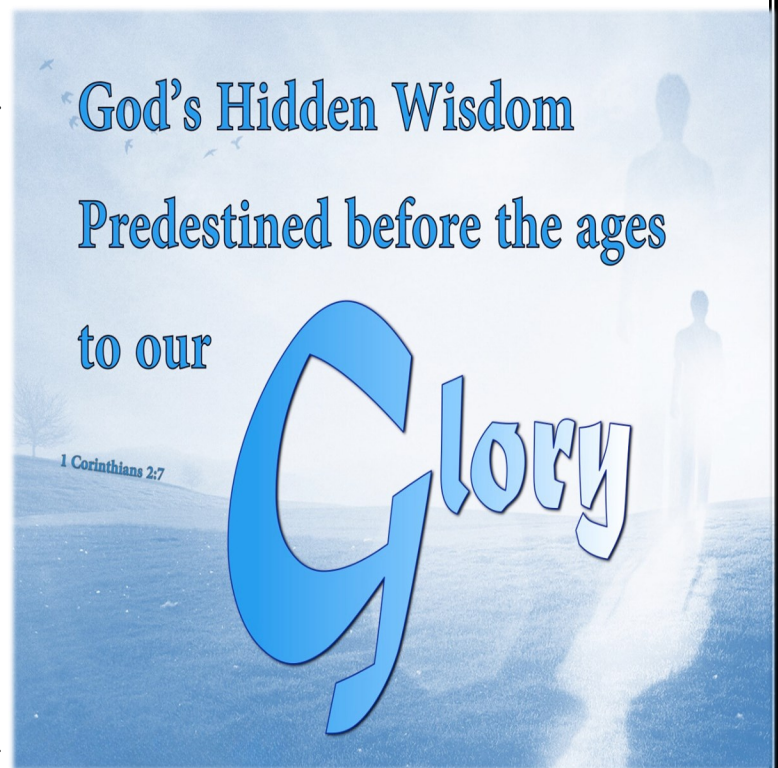
Something like this: *During World War II, during the Battle of the Bulge, there was a group of German soldiers who dressed themselves in the uniforms of the Allies (US soldiers). These German soldiers used American military vehicles and went through the German countryside, changing the road signs. When the American troops came to the various crossroads, they were often fooled and led off in the wrong direction. This deception by the Germans almost gave them the victory in this very decisive battle of the Second World War. The lesson to be learned there? If we don't know where we are going, it can be dangerous.*

Jeremiah's prophecy is not just for the people of his day. It is also for us a stark reality to our duty as the church. Look at the action words and thoughts he uses:

Stand: this implies that we need to take the time to think about our responsibilities as we face forks on our road.

Look: this implies that we must spend time observing and wisely deciding which fork in the road is the right one to follow.

Ask: Seek the wise counsel of someone who has been there – they are the old paths.



*Continued on Page 13*

## Follow the Ancient Paths- *Continued*

Walk: If we Stand, and we Look, and we Ask – all of that is useless if we have no intention to walk the old paths.

Find: It is only when we find those old paths that we can find rest, knowing that we have prepared ourselves for the journey.

The Old Paths Jeremiah wrote about are solid. We know and believe that. But when it comes to applying them to our lives, we sometimes find that difficult. Or we could make it difficult because we are not so sure we want to travel along the old paths, preferring newer paths, more up-to-date ways of living.

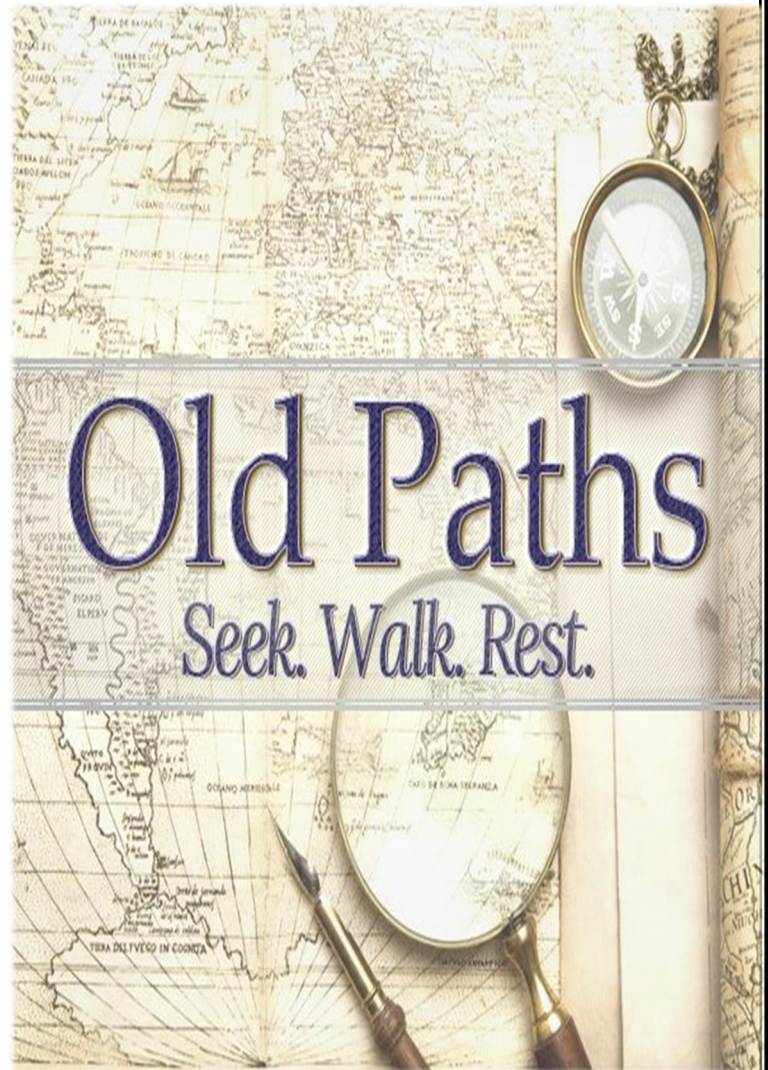
But, if we allow ourselves to understand that the value in walking in the old paths here on earth in our daily lives is



worth so much more than any other path we might tread,

As Jeremiah closes his writing of chapter 6, verse 16, we see a sad note: "But they said, 'We will not walk in it,'"

The people rejected the ancient paths and the ancient values. They continued down the broad road that would lead to judgment.



Jeremiah taught the ancient pathway. It is the road less traveled. But it is the one with the blazes that will keep us on the trail until the end.

And those who follow that road will find rest for their souls, inner peace, knowing God is in control, and possessing the full assurance that our lives are anchored to the Rock.

~ Gary K Fair

## Old Time Religion

Give me that old-time religion  
 Give me that old-time religion  
 Give me that old-time religion  
 It's good enough for me!



It was good for Paul & Silas,  
 It was good for Paul and Silas,  
 It was good for Paul and Silas,  
 Lord, it's good enough for me!

People say that I am old-fashioned; they are probably right. One of my favorite movies is Old Fashioned, which came out in 2014. I identify strongly with the lead character Clay Walsh. Clay drives an old truck, works in an antique shop where he restores old furniture, and is an outspoken advocate for old-fashioned morals and dating practices.

Another favorite of mine is Sgt York, which was released in 1941. It portrays the true story of WWI hero Alvin Cullum York and, more importantly, his bravery in battle. It portrays his conversion from an enslaved person to sin to a servant of Christ. On a stormy Sunday night Alvin York walks into a one room church in rural Tennessee as the congregation is singing Give Me That Old Time Religion and his life was forever changed.

My prayer is that this series of articles challenges us to do some self-evaluation of our personal path and to seek the good ways and walk in them.

*This is what the Lord says:*

*"Stand at the crossroads and look;*

*ask for the ancient paths,*

*ask where the good way is, and walk in it,*

*and you will find rest for your souls.*

*But you said, 'We will not walk in it. Jeremiah 6:16*

The tribe of Benjamin knew God's holy commands, yet they refused to walk in the ancient ways. They were warned over and over again until finally, God told them since they would not listen, punishment was about to come upon them. The charges against them included oppression, wickedness, violence, and destruction (Jeremiah 6:6-8). But their ears were closed, and the word of the Lord was offensive to them. (Jeremiah 6:10) Their religious leaders were corrupt and manipulated them for financial gain while they trivialized sin and God's warning against it. Jerusalem's worship was spiritually bankrupt. People were just going through the motions. If you think ancient Israel was a lot like modern America, you would be correct.

*Continued on Page 15*

## Old Time Religion - Continued

In 1963, America's religious leaders sounded the trumpets to warn the people of the dangers that awaited if prayer and the Bible were removed from public schools. But the modernists shouted that this was the age of science and reason and that the Bible was ancient fiction that needed to be removed from the hearts and minds of children. Ten short years later, America began reaping the consequences of not walking in the ancient paths. In 1973, religious leaders warned that the sin of abortion would multiply; today, euthanasia is legal in 11 states, and as of 2016, 57% of doctors support it. Also, in 1973 mental healthcare providers decided to abandon the ancient paths and no longer classify homo-sexuality of gender dysphoria as a mental illness. Once again, America's religious leaders sounded the alarm, but it fell on deaf ears. In 2015, homosexual marriage became the law of the land; now, there is a push for acceptance of legalized pedophilia. Straying from the ancient paths has immediate and severe consequences as well as eternal consequences.



But we do not have to go down the wrong path, nor do we have to continue on the wrong path if we have veered off course. Today, we are much better off than the children of Israel. They depended on their religious leaders to proclaim to them the word of God and offer sacrifices on their behalf. We live in the age of the printing press and computers. Israel depended on the priest to proclaim God's word, but we have direct access to the word in our native tongue. They lived in the Mosaic age under the law, but we live in the Christian age under grace. Jesus made the perfect sacrifice once and for all so that every man can be a priest with direct access to God through the blood of Jesus.

We have direct access to God and direct access to his word. WE also have a family of believers to hold us

accountable and encourage us to seek the ancient paths and walk in them. We are without excuse if we go astray.

So, how do we seek the ancient paths? By reading the roadmap.

*As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. Now, the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Acts 17:10-11*

If the Bereans were around today, they would never be led astray by Joseph Smith, Benny Hinn, or Joel Osteen. The Bereans searched the scriptures daily and, FACT, CHECKED the preacher. We should be searching the scriptures DAILY. If we don't KNOW the scriptures, we will fail to recognize false teachers who come in as wolves in sheep's clothing. John Quincy Adams has this to say about bible study.

"So great is my veneration for the Bible that the earlier my children begin to read it the more confident will be my hope that they prove useful citizens of their country and respectable members of society. I have for many years made it my practice to read through the Bible once every year."



And the Lord said to me,  
 "Amos, what do you see?"  
 And I said,  
 "A plumb line."  
 Then the Lord said, "See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people.

Amos 7:8

## Old Time Religion - Continued

Compare John Quincy Adams' America to ours, and it is clear just how important the Bible is to keep us on the ancient path.

Not only do we need to read the roadmap, we need to spend time with the Father.

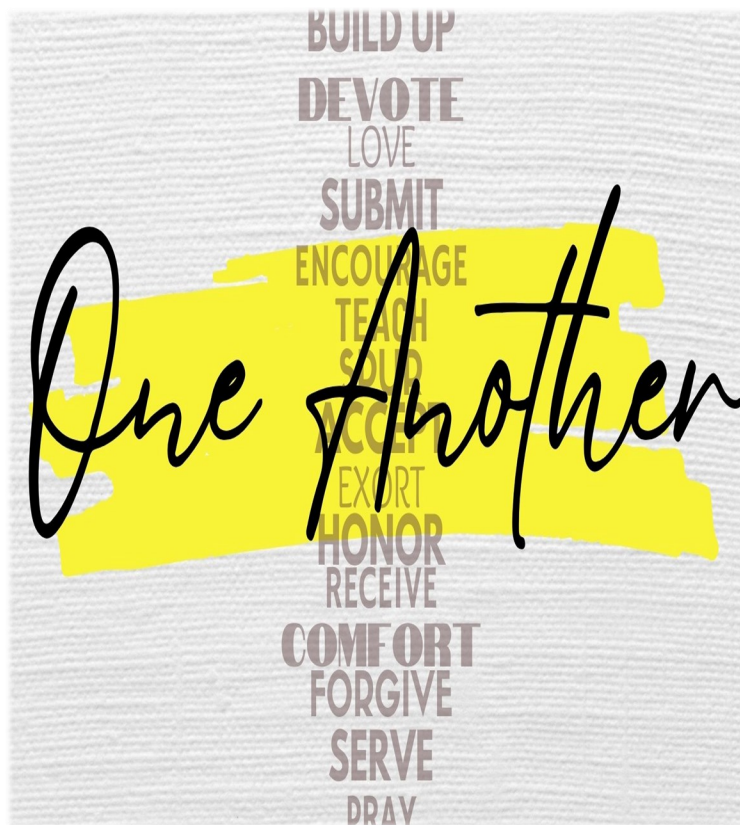
*Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Mark 1:35*

Early in the morning, Jesus went to a solitary place to spend time in prayer. In this fast-paced world, we live in, it is even more critical than ever to spend time with the Father before facing the day. This may mean going to bed earlier to get up earlier. But isn't your spiritual and mental health worth it? Quiet time with God is crucial. If you are married, both you and your spouse need to spend time alone in prayer seeking the Father's guidance and time together seeking his guidance. Be sure to respect each other's prayer time and bible reading time.

Another thing that is essential to seeking and walking in the ancient ways is being present in the assembly. Corporate worship and bible study are NECESSARY for spiritual growth and keeping ourselves on the right path. It is when we are away from the flock that the wolf attacks.

*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25*

The church never has been and never will be for God's benefit. The church is for OUR benefit. It is where we go to be mutually encouraged by each other's faith and bear each other's burdens. It is where we assemble to learn God's standards for Holy living and encourage each to live lives Holy and acceptable to God. The church is God's gift to us. It is a spiritual hospital to help us thrive in this sinful, fallen world until Jesus comes to take us home.



*Give me that old-time religion*

*It was good for Paul and Silas*

*Lord, it's good enough for me!*

In part 2, we will look at the importance of worship for staying on the ancient paths.

In His Service

~Ron Smith



## Jumpstart To Your New Beginnings

### Opportunities To Connect With Us

Sunday School - 9:30 am How To Be Complete In Christ

Morning Worship - 10:30 pm Dr. Gary Fair

Sunday Prayer Meeting - 5:30 pm A Special Time to Talk to God and Intercede on Others Behalf

Sunday Evening Worship - 6:00 pm Investigating Jesus Series

Wednesday Evening Bible Study - 6:00 pm The Godhead Bible Study Series

### Monthly Events

# .. FRIENDS & FAMILY .. SUNDAY

**Held Every First Sunday Of The Month**

We encourage everyone to invite their friends and family to join us in worship. Excellent time for visitors to feel comfortable attending as they will most likely will not be only new faces there, thus not felling singled out.



Serving Our Savior  
Women's Ministry Group

#### S.O.S Women's Ministry

Meets Every First Tuesday Of The Month at 6 PM  
At Church Fellowship Area (*Handicap Accessible*)

Meal and or Snacks Provided



#### WatchMen Men's Ministry

Meets Every Second Saturday Of The Month at 8 AM  
At Church Fellowship Area (*Handicap Accessible*)

(*Manly Sized*) Breakfast Provided



# The Princeton PathFinder

## Ancient Paths

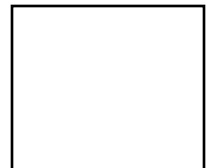
Winter  
2024

  
PRINCETON CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
LOVING GOD - LOVING OTHERS - LOVING YOU

			
<b>GET IN</b>	<b>GROW UP</b>	<b>GIVE BACK</b>	<b>GO OUT</b>
<p>Connect to God through faith in Jesus Christ and to the local Church. We want to help people discover what it means to have life through an authentic connection to God and His Church.</p>	<p>Grow in relationship with God (vertically) and in relationship with other Christ-followers (horizontally). A true sign of life is constant growth. Our hope is that people will learn to know and live in response to God's love.</p>	<p>Serve the local church by recognizing and utilizing each person's God-given hardwiring. Our desire is to walk with people in discovering how God has uniquely equipped each one to strengthen Christ's Church and bring joy to their souls.</p>	<p>Reach those far from Christ, locally and globally, with the good news we have in Jesus Christ and inviting them to know and follow Him. Our desire is to equip people so they can confidently declare and demonstrate their faith in Jesus Christ through words and deeds.</p>

  
PRINCETON CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
LOVING GOD - LOVING OTHERS - LOVING YOU

219 N. Gibson St.  
P.O. Box 567  
Princeton, IN 47670  
**(812) 385-2136**  
www.princetonchristianchurch@gmail.com



## our mission



**Engage** with the lost  
**Establish** in the faith  
**Equip** to serve  
**Empower** to go

facebook  
  
 Instagram

Connect With Us

Want To Know More?  
Check Us Out !

