

Does

GOD

**have a path for
faith in the last
days?**



GOD'S DIRECTIONS FOR FAITH IN THE LAST DAYS

The Word of God outlines for the Christian, God's path which can only be seen by faith and walked in through the power of the Holy Spirit while being kept with the eye focused on the Lord Jesus in glory. **Job 28:7, 8**

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS – GOD'S VIEW

In the first chapter of Ephesians we have the counsels of God according to His glory detailing the wonderful spiritual blessings which are ours in Christ before God the Father, in unclouded perfection.

Then in the second chapter God carries us from the individual's blessings on to the corporate relationships which we have with Christ as Head of the body, and with God as a dwelling place for Him.

There we read:

(1) *"to make in himself of twain, one new man." (v. 15)*

What a wonderful thing it is to think that we have been taken out of what we were, dead in trespasses and sins and that we are quickened together with Christ, and made one new man.

(2) *In the one body we are all united together and to Christ. (v. 16)*

(3) *"Through Him we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (v. 18).*

(4) *we are builded together for an habitation of God" (v. 22).*

This is the wonderful collective position into which we have been brought. The connection of the opening of **Eph. 4** is with the end of **Eph. 2: 22**.

Eph. 3 gives us, in a parenthesis, Paul's part in this blessed work. He is presented as the chosen vessel of the revelation of the mystery and the chapter closes with a beautiful prayer, which is not so much a question of knowledge as in the prayer of **Eph. 1**, but that we might have communion with Himself, that Christ, the object of the Father's heart, might be our object too.

Now from the basis of this unfolding of our position, the apostle beseeches us to *"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called."*

Already in the earliest and brightest expression of the truth in the assembly at Ephesus there was the need of the spirit of lowliness and meekness as the only way in which to walk worthily, using diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit.

Then immediately, lest our thoughts of it should be limited in any way, we find three circles of unity: **(1)** one body, one Spirit, and one hope, where all is real; **(2)** one Lord, one faith, one baptism, *i.e.*, profession, where all may not be real; **(3)** "One God and Father of all," *i.e.*, the whole family, taking in the universe.

In chapter 5 we are told that Christ loves His church and gave Himself for it and how he sanctifies it and will present it to Himself spotless and without a wrinkle and then in chapter 6 we are given important instruction about the spiritual armour that is needed to stand and withstand, against the enemy, in the present evil day.

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY – THE EVIL DAY

The principles or moral ways of God cannot change with the dispensation, they are given to us to form our path, and know no change even though we change!

Everything in this epistle, to Timothy and to ourselves, is pressing that it is the last time and the need to walk according to the vocation wherewith we are called giving instructions for faith even with the change of things brought in by our failure.

This we find in **2 Timothy 2**, *"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His."* **V. 19**

The principles of God know no change, but He knoweth them that are His. *"And let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity"* the unity of the Spirit can only be recognised in accordance with Christ's principles. Separation is God's principle of unity.

Then the illustration of the great house is applied.

The first essential step of the path is **SEPARATION** from what is evil. Then **THE LOINS MUST BE GIRDED**. Take care lest the enemy get in and mock you in the path of separation, but **FOLLOW RIGHTEOUSNESS**, faith, love, peace, **WITH THEM** that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

There are thus the three steps; (1) separation from evil; (2) the loins girded; (3) seeking out those who are similarly separated. Every step of the path is ordered by God Himself.

There remains another unchanging principle.

MATHEW 18:20 – AN UNCHANGING PRINCIPLE

"Where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of them," i.e., the smallest company that could be found not meeting in man's will (in independency), but gathered to the divinely given centre (Christ) in the wonderful character of association with Him.

How blessed to be reminded of these principles; let them challenge our hearts as to whether we are really seeking to carry out the unity of the Holy Ghost **(Matt. 18: 20)!**

THE BOOK OF MALACHI – SAD INDIFFERENCE

In Malachi we find an illustration of the fruits of His grace produced by the power of these things in the hearts of His people.

We cannot imagine a darker day the mass characterized by profound indifference to everything of God. The Lord had restored a remnant from the captivity (Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zachariah) but all soon became clouded over by failure, and the restored remnant was profoundly indifferent, *e.g.*, the priests that despised His Name said, *"Wherein have we despised thy Name?"* The Lord said, *"Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar,"* and they said, *"Wherein have we polluted thee?"* **(Malachi 1: 6, 7).**

Of the table of the Lord they said, *"What a weariness is it"* **(Malachi 1: 12, 13).**

In **Malachi 3: 7**, the Lord said, *"Return unto me, and I will return unto you,"* and they said, *"Wherein shall we return?"* What indifference!

Then in chapter **3:16 and 17** we have; *"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name."*

How sweet in that day of general indifference there still shone out of it a bright light for God. There were hearts knit together, who loved to meet, to speak of Him. He listened, and kept a book of remembrance for those who even *thought* on His name. We have the immense cheer for our hearts, that in the darkest days He will have a remnant which He marks as His own — His seal is set upon them!

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE – GRACE

Four hundred years later, we still find a few cleaving to Him — Zacharias, Mary, Simeon, and Anna (**Luke 1: 5, 27**).

In spite of her great age the widow Anna departed not from the temple, the centre of God's interest upon earth. As long as He owned it, she owned it (**Luke 2: 36, 37**).

Then we see another widow at the close in **Luke 21: 4**. The poor widow cast in all the living she had for the maintenance of God's house which was still recognised by faith. The Lord owns her devotedness showing that up to the last there was some still cleaving to His principles.

What a word for us beloved!

THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION – REMNANT TESTIMONY

In **Rev. 2 and 3**, we have the history of the church in responsibility.

At the close of this history we can look back and see all the main features of the church's history stamped on the prophetic page. Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea are found together at the end.

In the Epistle to Philadelphia, the Lord gives us what answers to His own heart in the midst of the ruin.

He presents Himself in His own blessed character as the holy and the true, because that is what He would have in His people.

He is looking for what is genuine! Then "*He that has the key of David*" sets before us an open door. Who will occupy the door He has opened? This depends upon condition.

"Thou hast a little strength:" He is not looking for any great display of power, which would attract the notice of the world.

"Thou hast kept my word;" He is looking for complete subjection to His Word, as the condition that answers to His heart.

It is a day of subtle working of the enemy. We are called to uncompromising fidelity. Oh, that we may seek to answer to this revelation of what suits Him.

Then the Lord goes on, *"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience."* His whole heart is set upon having us where He is. He is patiently waiting for that moment; thus it is the word of *His patience*.

Then He puts His seal on what His grace has produced, *"I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation."*

It is deeply solemn that it does not state that the one who has been in that path, will be preserved in it to the end, but it does assure us that *some* will be in it to the end. Some may be unfaithful, and have to be set aside!

"I come quickly"; here He addresses those who are awake in their affections, so it is, *"I come quickly,"* to sustain fidelity in the testing, *"Hold that fast which thou hast."* In **v. 12**, how often that little word *"my"* comes in; it is the association with Him of the heart, which faithfulness leads us into, right on to the heavenly glory. The last phase of things in Laodicea does not displace what has gone before. The very character of its judgment flows from the fact that it comes after the awakening of the hearts of His people. There is the indifference as in Malachi and the Lord spues it out of His mouth, *i.e.*, judgment long forewarned.

How encouraging it is to know that what His grace has produced in the past, He can produce in the present too.

May the Lord grant that we may be found in that path, keeping His Word.

Little Flock # 256

- 1. Praise the Saviour, ye who know Him,
Who can tell how much we owe Him?
Gladly let us render to Him
All we have and are.*
- 2. Jesus is the name that charms us,
He for conflict fits and arms us,
Nothing moves and nothing harms us
While we trust in Him.*
- 3. Trust in Him, ye saints for ever,
He is faithful, changing never;
Neither force nor guile can sever
Those He loves from Him.*
- 4. Keep us Lord, O keep us cleaving
To Thyself and still believing,
Till the hour of our receiving
Promised joys with Thee.*
- 5. Then we shall be where we would be,
Then we shall be what we should be;
Things that are not now not could be
Soon shall be our own.*

T. Kelly

