

(Cont. from pg. 2) **Christ unto eternal life**” (vs. 21). This approach to time neither retreats to the past nor hides in the future, but uses the past as we look to the future.

The past is a burden that many people carry with them to the grave. If we do not use the past as God would have us to it becomes a cruel burden that drags us down and offers us no benefit. Jesus Christ can forgive the sins of the past, and by His blood bring us before the presence of God with **“exceeding joy”** (vs. 24). Yet, if we will not come to Him in faith and obedience, the grandeur of the offer of His grace will itself one day have “passed.” Please do not wait until

the offer of eternal life with God has itself become an option that you once had in the “the past.”

By Kyle Pope



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Faithful Sayings

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
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The Past

Consider with me an interesting concept that we use regularly in our daily speech - “the Past.” This refers to time that is not current (“the present”) nor that which is to come (“the future”). This aspect of time is that which has already “passed” through the corridors of time. It may refer to those moments of our lives that have touched our lives in our own life, or it may refer back to those of time which reach long before our own life. In either case the undeniable reality of this aspect time is that once it has gone it can not be retrieved. When it becomes “the past” all opportunity to influence it has “passed.” People deal with the past in different ways. Some carry their personal past with them. They daily relive the wounds and bruises of past battles already been. It has over and over. Some cling to past glories and imagine themselves with all the honors of former times. Others find the past to be so painful and burdensome that they try to avoid it altogether. They neither learn from their mistakes, nor treat their bleeding emotional woumds. (Cont. on pg. 2)

(Cont. from pg. 1) They live their lives focusing all of their attention on the “here and now” or build havens of security for themselves in some far away place in the future.

People also deal with our human past in different ways. Some retreat into their favorite era. They feel as if they were “born in the wrong time.” They glorify its men and women and idealize its culture and morals. These souls believe that past surpasses the present. Yet others see no value in the past at all. Their only thoughts focus on those things which stand immediately in front of us on the stage of time.

In the short New Testament book of Jude the Lord presents us with a balanced view of time. By holding an eternal perspective on things, the Lord shows us how we should deal with the past, the present and the future. In this book the Holy Spirit leads Jude to write to a group of unidentified brethren about some unknown apostasy that was plaguing their work. In the twenty-five verses that make up this epistle there are ten references to what the past can teach. To begin with, Jude declares that years ago Jesus had declared that

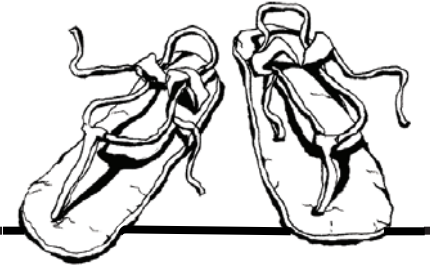
“there would be mockers in the last time” (vss. 17,18). Men like these, **“long ago were marked out for destruction”** (vs. 4). They behave just like the ancient reprobates Cain, Balaam and Korah (vs. 11). From such instances, we learn from the past that the same God who can rescue His people will punish them if they rebel (vs. 5). This is seen in the fact that even angels who sinned were punished (vs. 6). Angels who were conscious of this fact dared not speak evil against heavenly authority (vs. 9). This is a lesson to us that if we fail to submit to God, as was promised ages ago (vs. 14,15) God will execute judgment upon us as he did on Sodom and Gomorrah (vs. 7).

The Lord shows us in these texts that the value of the past lies in what it can produce in us in the present, and in where it can lead us to in the future. Brethren are to **“contend earnestly for the faith”** (vs. 3) and to build themselves up in their **“most holy faith”** (vs. 20). To do so He calls upon us to **“remember”** (vs. 17) things from the past as they keep **“looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus** (Cont. on pg. 4)

“As He Walked” – I John 2:6

Studies in the Character of Christ

By Kyle Pope



Love for Children

Jesus loved children. He took the time for them and gave His affection to them. This is easy to understand when we consider how He viewed them. In Mark 10:14 Jesus said - **“...Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God”** (NKJV). This “man of sorrows” who, so often found Himself in constant turmoil from those who ridiculed, persecuted and rejected Him, loved children and found in them a spirit that was heavenly.

On another occasion when asked “who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” Scriptures tell us that Jesus **“...called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.’”** (Matthew 18:1-3). With these words Jesus illustrated clearly the type of spirit that must fill the hearts of those who would serve Him: a spirit of humble acceptance (Matthew 18:4) and a spirit of innocence concerning sin (Matthew 18:6).

The Apostle Paul put this in perspective when he taught those in Corinth

- **“Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature”** (1 Corinthians 14:20). When Jesus tells us to be converted and be like children He isn’t telling us to be naive like children. Instead He is teaching us to be humble, gentle and innocent like little children. To be a disciple of Jesus means more than just doing what Jesus said. It involves acting as He acted. As adults we often view children much differently than the Lord did. We are often impatient and short with them. We may find them to be an interruption or a distraction to our affairs. The gospel of Mark tells us that Jesus - **“...took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them”** (Mark 10:16). Jesus said - **“Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me...”** (Mark 9:37). As disciples of Christ let us heed Jesus’ words and His example as we love and accept little children more in our lives, seeking to become more like them ourselves.

