

Going Forward by Going Backward

Peter wrote to the Christians, “*To stir you up by putting you in remembrance*”. Many times we are encouraged by the Lord to go back to what He has already said and done to guide us in our walk forward toward the kingdom of heaven. We’re in a day when new ideas are being introduced continually to the church so she can be considered relevant and progressive. But is it time to go back to His Word alone in order to go on faithfully for the Lord? Following are seven examples of knowing and the valuing past.

1. Israel Ready to Enter the Promise Land. “And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness ... that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD ...” (Deut. 8:2,3). Israel’s success in the Promised Land would come by following the Word of God, which, – they were to remember back – had guided them successfully through the wilderness.

2. Josiah’s Revival. “And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant” (2Kings 23:21). King Josiah led the people back to observe again the old-time feast of Passover as it was written in the Word.

3. Hezekiah’s Revival. “He appointed ... the set feasts, as it is written in the law of the LORD” (2Chron. 31:3). Similarly, Hezekiah went backward – to what was written in the book of the Lord. He restored the nation back to God, and back to His heart and ways.

4. Rebuilding of the Second Temple. “And builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God” (Ezra 3:2). Unlike their forefathers who built their own altars all over the place and introduced a new “*great altar,*” they now went back to God’s way – worshipping at THE altar of the Lord.

5. The Lord’s Supper. “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1Cor. 11:26). As we wait for the Lord Jesus’ coming (looking forward), we do so by remembering His historical death for us to save us (looking backward).

6. The Thessalonian Christians. “Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle [written instruction]” (2Thess. 2:14,15). As they focused on the coming Lord and glory, they were to hold (not let go) what they were already instructed.

7. The Church at Sardis. “Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent” (Rev. 3:3). The church that was considered dead by the Lord was exhorted to look back in remembrance to what they had first heard and received in the beginning. This reminder John was to “*write in a book*” to the 7 churches (Rev. 1:11). The church also has a book (the Bible) in which we are to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

We do not need to find some new truth to make the church more appealing in modern times. We simply need to trust and obey what has been once revealed and delivered to us

by the Lord and His chosen apostles. Paul said, “*The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*” So – “if it’s new, it’s not true, and if it’s true, it’s not new.”