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PRESENTS

Frankly Speaking Notes . . .

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Ed Smithson, Editor

“OLD PATHS”

Billions of dollars annually is spent on the development of new products in pharmaceuticals, business, industry and others. Trial and error is the name of their game for they don't know it will work at the beginning. The word “new” is the catchword of the age. If you want to attract interest, put the word “new” either before or after the name of the product and interest is automatic.

Human nature has not changed since the Garden of Eden. Few people are satisfied with what we have and many are always looking for “some new way.” When I started this web site, I wanted to put a name to it that would be recognizable and say something solid. I chose “Old Paths” from the passage in Jeremiah 6:16.

While the majority of people are looking for something new, I hope there are a good number of people looking for something tried and true, the Word of God. While “new” is sometimes exuberating and exciting, “Old” also has its strong points.

Old means tried and true. Sometimes “new” does not work very well. Since there is no experience, one does not know exactly what is going to happen. With “old” that is not a problem. When the Lord told Israel through Jeremiah to “[ask for the old paths,](#)” He also told them it was the “[good way,](#)” and “[ye shall find rest for your souls.](#)”

By this time many things had happened to the people of God and when they walked in His way he saw to it they were taken care of and rewarded. So when we tell people the “old way is best” we know whereof we speak.

Old means solid. Even with new friends you don't know how they are going to act to adversity. You do not know their background or history. You do not know how they are going to do "under the gun," or in crisis. But there isn't a person among you that does not have friends to whom you can go, under any condition and circumstances, and you will know exactly how they are going to act. That is solid. And that is good. When uncertainty arrives it is always good to know exactly the reaction you are going to get.

With God and His word old is what we get. Nothing new, no changes, His word is "forever." (Matthew 24:35) It is something of which we can be absolutely sure.

Old means experience. What seems to be and often is a catastrophe to the young, it is just one of the experience of life to the old. Many young people do not want to listen to the old because they are "out of date." But humans being what they are, the experiences of life do not change that much through the years. The old might not have the exact experience the young do today, but those they have had are often very similar.

Old is often compassion. Everyone in this world needs compassion at times and the old have had many experiences that taught them this character trait. When things go wrong, as they often do, the old have been through many of the same kinds of trials that make them understanding. "And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

Old is fearlessness. Because of the many experiences in life and because they have relied upon His Word, they have learned not to fear. God's Word says, "Jehovah is on my side; I will not fear: What can man do unto me?" (Psalms 118:6) "So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?" (Hebrews 13:6) The old have had enough experience with events of life to know these words are true, therefore they do not have the fear that comes without experience.

For a long time now I have wondered how people think they can be pleasing to God and go to heaven when they die, when they haven't spent enough time with the Word of God to know what is in it for them. There are so many things in life the Word addresses. While we frantically search

sometimes for answers to the problems life delivers, the answers are there before us, written in a language we can understand, the “Old Paths.”

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ed Smithson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "E" and a long, sweeping underline.

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