"A WAY WHICH SEEMETH RIGHT UNTO A MAN"
Prov. 14:12

INTRODUCTION:

1. We can see from the text that there is danger in traveling the wrong way.
2. The Bible contains many warnings about traveling the wrong way --
   (1) Jesus warned about the "wide gate" and the "broad way" that leads to destruction -- Matt. 7: 13 - 14
   (2) Jesus warned of the "false prophets" that would lead men in the wrong way -- Matt. 7:15
   (3) Peter warned of false teachers -- II Pet. 2: 1- 3
   (4) Paul warned -- II Cor. 11: 13 - 15; Rom. 16: 17 - 18
3. Our ways are not God's way -- Isa. 55: 8 - 9
4. "As for God, His way is perfect;" --Psa. 18:30

I. THE BIBLE TEACHES WE MUST NOT FOLLOW THE WAY THAT IS:

   1. BROAD -- Matt. 7: 13
   2. The way that is POPULAR -- II Pet. 2:2; Luke 6:26; I John 4:5
   3. The way that is NEW -- Jer. 6:16 -- "Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk there-in"
   4. The way that is "IN US" -- Jer. 10:23
   5. The way that is "OUR WAYS" -- Isa. 55: 8 - 9

II. SOME WAYS THAT SEEM RIGHT:

   1. Direct operation of the Holy Spirit to convert the soul.
      (1) The Word of God teaches that the Spirit DOES NOT operate separate and apart from the Word in conversion of sinners.
      (2) Eph. 6:17; Rom. 1:16; James 1: 21; I Pet. 1: 23; John 8:32; I Cor. 15: 1 - 2; Rom. 8:2
      (3) Objections to the direct operation of the Spirit:
         1. It makes God a respecter of persons -- Rom. 2:11; Acts 10: 34 -35
         2. It takes away personal responsibility -- Acts 2:40; Matt. 7:21; John 5:40
         3. It makes the preaching of the gospel unnecessary -- Mk. 16: 15 - 16
         4. It makes God responsible for the condemnation of sinners.
   2. " Faith only" seems right to many:
      (1) James said, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" -- James 2:17
      (2) James said in James 2:24 --"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."
      (3) Salvation is by grace through faith -- Eph. 2:8; Rom. 5:2
         1. Gal. 5:6 "Faith which worketh by love"
      (4) Heb. 5: 8 - 9
3. The way of the "mourner's bench" or the way of prayer for the sinner's salvation:
   
   (1) God does not teach in His word that prayer is the means by which He saves sinners.

   (2) God has LAW that the sinner must obey to be saved -- Rom. 8:2; Matt. 7:21; Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 15:1 - 4; II Thess. 1:8 - 9

   (3) Prov. 28:9; Luke 6:46

4. The way of Denominational churches -- that one church is as good as another:

   (1) This is not so unless -- One founder is as good as another.

      1. Christ is the founder of but ONE church -- Matt. 16:18; Heb. 8:2

   (2) Not unless the blood of Christ is unimportant, because Christ's church cost His blood-- Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25; I Cor. 6:20; I John 1:7

   (3) Not unless the churches not mentioned in the Bible are as good as the one spoken of in the Bible -- Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16

   (4) Not unless one head is as good as another, because different churches have different heads -- Eph. 1:22 - 23

   (5) Not unless one doctrine is as good as another, because different churches preach different doctrines -- I Tim. 1:3

      1. The doctrine of Christ teaches only ONE church -- II John 9; Eph. 4:4; 1:22 - 23; I Tim. 3:15; Matt. 13:19

5. The way of "Original sin" or total depravity -- Matt. 18:3 - 4

   (1) This way teaches that Adam's sin is transmitted to us -- we are born today guilty of Adam's sin.

      1. Sin was something Adam DID -- an ACT.

   (2) The idea of total depravity or original sin gives rise to a number of false theories such as:

      1. UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION --or "Predestination" -- Mark 16:15 - 16; I Tim. 2:4 - 5; II Pet. 3:9; Matt. 11:28 - 30; Acts 10:34 - 35

      2. LIMITED ATONEMENT -- Christ only died for the ones that God had unconditionally elected --the imputed righteousness of Christ is taught by this theory -- Heb. 2:9; I John 2:2; II Cor. 5:14; I Tim. 2:4 - 6

      3. IRRESISTIBLE CALLING --or "direct operation of the Holy Spirit" -- II Thess. 2:14; Rom. 1:16; Mk. 16:15 - 16; Psa. 19:7

      4. PERSERVERANCE OF THE SAINTS --"Once saved always saved" -- I Tim. 4:1 - 4; 5:8; I Cor. 9:27; 10:12; II Pet. 2:20

   (3) What is SIN?

      1. Sin is an act of going beyond God's law --"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of law" -- I John 3:4

      2. God's law is His limit and we must not go beyond His law -- II John 9

      3 Sin is foreign to the nature of man --it is not something existing as a part of man's nature.

      4. Sin was something Adam acquired, not inherited -- Luke 3:38

      5. Man's nature is not corrupt -- Matt. 18:3 - 4
6. Acquired traits are neither transmitted, nor inherited.

(4) The Bible DOES NOT teach original sin, and with this theory goes the other theories.

1. Infant baptism came from the false doctrine of original sin.

CONCLUSION

Donald Townsley

(Underwood Hts 1975; Radio WXOR 1975; Hebron Lane 1990; River Bend 1997)