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Heb. 10:36). This man needs to remember that labor in the Lord is not in vain (1 Cor. 15:58). Also, by considering the trials of Christ, one can gain courage and energy to press on (Heb. 12:1-3).

Jesus said, “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men” (Matt. 5:13). Again, the child of God is to be an example, and a preservative, in the world. However, if he loses his influence by becoming like the world—by polluting himself—he will be “good for nothing” and “thrown out.” In other words, he is not fit to serve God and will lose his soul.

Are you murky and muddy or clear and clean?

- Steven F. Deaton

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Sunday Morning	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening	6:00 p.m.
Wednesday	7:30 p.m.

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**Hebron Herald**  
Published by the Hebron Lane Church of Christ  
Shepherdsville, KY

Volume 29 Number 10

October 2005

**Muddy Water**

“A righteous man who falters before the wicked  
is like a murky spring and a polluted well.”

Proverbs 25:26

This proverb reveals the true consequences of one who fails to do right before a wicked world—they muddy the water. A righteous man’s mouth is a “well of life,” pure and wholesome (Prov. 10:11). However, when he falters, his well is corrupt and useless.

A righteous man may falter for various reasons: fear, favor, weakness, weariness.

1. He may fear the consequences of his stand for truth. This becomes a trap to him (Prov. 29:25). He is enslaved to the whims of men who hate God and His truth. The fearless man, on the other hand is free. He fears God, not man, and is free to act in a way that pleases God and satisfies his own soul (Heb. 11:5-6).

2. He may have favor for those who are in sin, overlooking because of personal feelings. This will cause him to be an abomination before the Lord (Prov. 17:15). The one who does not show favor, pleases the Lord (cf. Jas. 2:1-9). He acts in the Lord’s and man’s best interest.

3. He may be weak and give in to sin, returning to the mire from which he came (2 Pet. 2:22). This brings out his true character, showing him to be of little strength (Prov. 24:10). He needs to mature so he is not a slave to his desires and the temptations that come to him (Eph. 4:12-14). A strong man will stand out and be a pure example to others.

4. He may give in because of weariness. Such men give up their reward (cf. Gal. 6:9;

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## “Why I Don’t Want To Go To Heaven”

Why would anyone not want to go to heaven? To Christians, there cannot possibly be a good answer. Yet, there are billions of people in this world who do not want to go to heaven—at least as evidenced by their life.

Here are some reasons one may have for not wanting to go to heaven.

I don’t want to give up sin:

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Sexual immorality
- Lying
- Gambling

The above sins often bring with them physical and financial troubles, if not outright ruin (Prov. 23:29-31; 5:1-11; 21:6). Giving them up never hurts—it only helps. So, why would anyone not want to give them up?

Additionally, people may say they don’t want to go to heaven because they don’t want to serve God in:

- Prayer
- Study
- Worship
- Helping others
- Teaching the soul-saving gospel

Service to God has the consequence of peace, happiness, and contentment into the lives of men and women (Jn. 15:11). Prayer and study give people confidence to face the trials and tribulations of life (Phil. 4:1-7). So, why would anyone not want to serve God?

The fact is, people who do not want to go to heaven are deceived by the devil. He has blinded them to the truth (2 Cor. 4:4). He has convinced them, as he did Eve, that what God says is not so. The joy and peace that come from serving God is a lie to them. The pain and suffering of sin is merely a happenstance or due to some other force or factor, not the sin itself.

Do you want to go to heaven? Is there something in this world worth holding on to—and forfeiting heaven for it?

- Steven F. Deaton

## “I Will Not Leave You Nor Forsake You”

Joshua was given the duty to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land. No doubt, the days ahead would be hard. He would not only have to deal with the Israelites and their penchant for being a pain, but also with the pagan inhabitants of the land who would seek to kill them all. To encourage Joshua in his task, Moses promised him that the Lord would not abandon him (Deut. 31:6, 8). The Lord repeated this promise. He said, “No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you” (Josh. 1:5).

It is safe to say that we have not faced the trials and troubles experienced by Joshua. Nevertheless, we do go through our share of hard times. We have enemies who fight against us as we strive to advance on the Lord’s commands. There are members of the holy nation of Israel, the church, who hinder and harm our efforts by their sinful deeds, like Achan with ancient Israel. Still, the promise of the Lord is, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Heb. 13:5).

The Lord’s promise stands good no matter the situation. He is with the man who loses his job. He is with the woman whose husband commits adultery. He is with the parents who lose a child. He is with the elders who face rebellion among some members. He is with the preacher who is wrongfully attacked by former friends.

Joshua was not to fear any man and neither are we. “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear, What can man do to me?” (Heb. 13:6). Joshua’s boldness, and ours, can only be enjoyed when we obey the Lord. He was commanded to “observe and to do according to all the law” and “not to turn from it” either to the right or left (Josh. 1:7). Our confidence comes from observing the law of Christ, the gospel. If we turn to the left or right, the Lord will not be with us—NOT because He has forsaken us, but because we have forsaken Him.

Trust in God and savor His promise not to leave nor forsake you.

- Steven F. Deaton

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And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

- Matt. 10:28