

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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“If it were not so...”

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Today, in our tolerant, “just be positive” societal mindset, many do not want to hear about things that are “not so”. Some are naive in thinking that if we teach what things “are”, we will not have to be aware of what things “are not”.

Such thinking is not Scriptural, nor is it “Christ-like”. We are to “preach the word...reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:2). How do you reprove and rebuke without driving home the fact that something “is not so...”? We “exhort” by encouraging listeners to go the right way, but false ideas must be exposed through longsuffering and teaching that they are “not so”. Christ revealed He was this kind of a teacher. Jesus said, “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you...” (John 14:2).

Notice, Jesus was a teacher who would speak up if “it were not so”. Jesus was guarding his disciples from possible sorrow by telling them that there are many abiding places in the Father’s house. His ascension into Heaven was necessary to provide a place for each one of them. His promise

is to return and receive them unto Himself so they can be with Him. Therefore, they should not sorrow in the fact that He must die and be separated for awhile from them. To strengthen their faith, Jesus adds the fact that if there were not many abiding places in our Father’s house, He “would have told you”. When dealing with matters that affect our faith and eternal destiny, Jesus speaks out about matters that “are not so”.

Some believe that if one just claims Jesus as Lord they will be saved. But Jesus teaches that such belief is “not so”. “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:22-23). Claiming Jesus as Lord is not all there is, for one must do what the Lord says (Luke 6:46) if he or she is to be in an approved relationship with the Lord.

Some believe that most of mankind will go to heaven. Jesus teaches that such a concept is “not so”. “Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and

broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, an straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). Jesus not only refutes the popular idea that “many” will be saved by saying that “many will enter the broad way that leads to destruction, but He emphasizes the fact that “few” will find the narrow and restrictive way that leads to life.

Some believe that our God of love will not send people He has created to Hell. But Jesus teaches that such belief is “not so”. “And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in Hell” (Matthew 10:28). Reference for the Lord is not only based upon what He is “able” to do, but on what “He will do” on the judgment day to those who practice iniquity and cause stumbling “The Son of man...shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 13:41-42). May we follow Jesus’ example, and never shy away from speaking out on things that “are not so”.