

# GLAD TIDINGS

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

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## AS IT IS WRITTEN

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**G**od revealed his word to us so we could know His will for us (I Corinthians 2:12-13). He also demands His word be used appropriately. Those approved of God will be those “*handling aright the word of truth*” (2 Timothy 2:15). God’s unashamed worker will therefore “*cut it straight*”, applying it as God revealed it. He will heed God’s warning and not “*add to*”, nor “*subtract from*” the commanding words of God (Deuteronomy 4:2, Revelation 22:18-19). The one approved of God will “*preach the word*” and not “*go beyond the things which are written*”, refusing to put man’s thoughts above that which God has revealed (2 Timothy 4:2, I Cor. 4:6).

Man, therefore does not have God’s approval to use His Word as he pleases, but the approved man must believe, apply, teach and preach the Word as it is written, making sure he is handling it aright.

Neglecting these Divine demands for using God’s word leads to confusion and division among people who claim to follow the Lord. For example have

you ever wondered why many denominational churches teach in word and in print that the alien sinner can be saved by simply saying the “sinner’s prayer”? Where is such a prayer commanded by the apostles when they preached the gospel to the alien sinner? Where does the sinner pray “the sinners” prayer when he or she first heard the saving gospel message?

A denominational preacher seeking biblical authorization for his practice will say that there is a sinner’s prayer in Luke 18:9-14. You definitely have a “sinner” there, and for certain he is “praying”, and beseeching God for “mercy”.

This is true, but appealing to God’s word is not the end of our responsibility in the use of His word. We must also be diligent in “handling aright the word of truth”. “Cutting it straight”, must take into consideration the “context” of a passage. Luke 18:9-14 is an account of a parable Jesus offered for the purpose of condemning the attitude of many who “*trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought*”. It was not Jesus’ specific instructions on how to

be saved in Christ.

Context is essential to proper understanding. For example, have we **disobeyed** the city ordinance when we walk on the fairways of a city golf course when the sign in the zoo says, “Keep off the grass”? Are we **obeying** the city ordinance when we refuse to feed our dogs and cats because we site the sign in the zoo, “Don’t feed the animals”?

When the gospel was preached to the alien sinner in the New Testament, the apostles instructed the unsaved to *believe* on the Lord, *repent* of their sins, *confess* Jesus to be Lord, and *be baptized* for the remission of their sins (Acts 16:30, Romans 10:9-10, Acts 2:38). And those who were then saved, obeyed these specific conditions (Acts 2:41, Acts 16:33-34, 8:37-38).

But, nowhere is it written that the alien sinner was commanded to pray the “sinners’ prayer”. This is man’s law, not God’s. This is the product of man not applying the scriptures as they are written.