

GLAD TIDINGS

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

Vol. XII

May 4, 2003

No. 18

HE PREACHES FROM THE WORD

By: Jerry Fite

The Baptist preacher was preaching through the book of Hebrews. I was interested to hear what he would say as he came to Hebrews 6:5-6 speaking of those who were once enlightened: “and tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”. How would he deal with this plain passage of once enlightened people falling away from God, and still uphold the doctrine advocated by most Baptists that once saved always saved?

The preacher focused upon the phrase describing the fallen people as being those who “tasted the good word of God”. He said they merely, “tasted” the good word of God. They had not really experienced the saving word of God totally. They had not wholly absorbed the saving power of the gospel of Christ. They had just taken a taste.

While the Baptist preacher was preaching **from** the word, preaching directly from the in-

spired text of Hebrews, he was not **preaching the word** (2 Timothy 4:2). He was forcing a meaning of a word which does not harmonize with its use in God’s Word.

While “tasting” of something is used figuratively of an “experience” (I Peter 2:3), it does not mean that one has not truly experienced all that is to be experienced. For example, in the same book of Hebrews we notice “... even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He should taste of death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9). Did Jesus merely “taste” of death without fully experiencing death? Did Jesus not really die? As He truly “tasted” or “experienced” death, the enlightened had truly “tasted” or “experienced” fully what the saving word of God. Yet, they had fallen away.

It could be said that the Devil was preaching from the word when he quoted Psm. 91:11-12 to establish Scriptural authority for Jesus to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple. The Devil said, “it is written, ‘He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and on their hands they shall bear

thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone” (Matthew 4:6).

Jesus confronted the Devil’s use of Scripture by emphasizing the principle that Scripture must harmonize with other Scripture. He countered, “**Again it is written**, ‘Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God’ (Matthew 4:7). For Jesus to willingly cast himself down for the temple, defying God’s natural law of gravity with its consequences, it would be contradicting other clear admonition of Scripture to not make trial of God, testing His protection of the righteous.

Men may quote Scripture emphasizing grace and faith as essential to salvation (Ephesians 2:5,8), but ignore the principle Jesus emphasized, “again it is written”. For it is also written that “repentance”, “confessing Jesus as Lord”, and being “baptized in the name of the Lord” are also essential to salvation, being part of being saved by grace through faith (Acts 2:38, Romans 10:9-10). We must preach all the Word, not just preach from the Word.