

GLAD TIDINGS

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

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“We’ve Left Scripture Before...”

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Several articles have appeared in Newsweek these last couple of months pertaining to a “worldwide revolution” in the Anglican Communion. Regarding the issue of consecrating women and gay bishops, a spokesman for the conservative faction of the group argues, and rightfully so, that due to our treatment of Scripture these types of consecrations, or elections could lead to the end of the unified Anglican Church. When asked about the Anglican’s previous departure from Scripture on divorce issues, realizing that the women and gay bishops’ question could be described by the same type of departure, the answer was a simple and prophetic; *we’ve left scripture before and that’s a problem.*

We don’t need to be entangled in their dilemmas; we’ll leave that to them and the Lord. But this insight allows us an excellent opportunity to reason again upon the age old principle of the necessity of doing Bible things in Bible ways. Leaving Scripture or the natural conclusions of Biblical teachings to further man’s wishes and desires, has always led to difficulties and compromises in the major reli-

gious bodies of today.

Man-created, instead of God -created institutions always have a way of becoming undone. Our Lord knowing the tendency of man to corrupt things when trying to adapt to current times and a changing world, anchored man’s mind in the incorruptible and unchanging Word.

In our attempt not to add to or to take away from Biblical instruction we have set our selves apart from the religious world today. The Greek word “*ecclesia*” which is translated in our Bibles, “church”, refers literally to “the called out,” which can easily be understood as “the set apart” people of God. We are not talking about a building, or a higher governing body, but are talking about the saints that comprise the one church in its universal sense, or those faithful Christians that gather regularly at a particular location to worship God.

In *Deuteronomy 4:2* we find this statement: “*do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.*” And then again, in *Proverbs 30: 5* and *6* it says:

“every word of God is flawless; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words, or He will rebuke you and prove you a liar.” Every word of God is flawless - what powerful and meaningful scripture! We need to remember that our use of the Bible as our sole source for guidance and direction is phenomenal in this day and age. It sets us apart from all other religious bodies. There are no creeds, or secularly written books explaining the things we are to do, the acts of worship we are to perform, or the beliefs we must have.

Viewing the Bible as the written instructions of God for all time, we should live confidently as we base our lives upon the reliable Word, not as something we can take or leave. Although this can be a little uncomfortable for us from time to time, as we strive to rise up to the standard of living required by God, the feelings of well-being knowing that we are being faithful and not willing to depart from Scripture far exceed the ridicule of being out of step with popular thought. May we never look at our so-called “justifications” and say, “*we’ve left scripture before...*” For it is sad apostasy, not just a problem !