

Glad Tidings

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

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Platitudes

(Jerry Fite)

She told the preacher the scripture that said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...” was not in her Bible. The preacher feeling confident that such wording is found in Mark 16:16, reached to show her the passage in her Bible. To his surprise, she was right. Mark 16:16 was not in her Bible. She had taken scissors, and cut the verse out of her Bible.

Whether this actually took place, or is an engaging illustration of the lengths people go to avoid the impact of God’s word; it has precedence in Scripture. Jehovah revealed His word to Jeremiah to inform all the people of God’s wrath against their ways. The revealed truth was to make them aware of their sins so they would turn back to God, and receive forgiveness of their sins (*Jeremiah 36:1-3*). When King Jehoiakim heard the unflattering three or four leaves of testimony against him and the people, he “cut it with a penknife, and cast it into the fire” (*Jeremiah 36:23*).

Cut it out, cut it to pieces, or burn it up; people will do drastic things to God’s Word to avoid its clear teaching. Less drastic, but equally damaging to precious

souls is to acknowledge the Scripture as written, quote it, praise it, and then not practice it.

Our plea in restoring New Testament Christianity is for all to “speak as the oracles of God” (*1 Peter 4:11*). “We speak where the Bible speaks, and are silent where the Bible is silent” has been on our lips honoring revealed truth (*Revelation 22:19*). Has our plea and slogans become mere platitudes?

One Scripture that speaks where God speaks, and is literally the oracle of God reads, “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching hath both the Father and the Son” (*2 John 9*).

How should we react to such warning? First, we surely do not want to alter God’s word by adding our own words, or moving beyond what God has revealed. God in the same context gives us His directive: “If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works” (*2 John 10-11*).

Some will quote this passage, and teach its truth that we cannot receive those teachers who do not bring the doctrine of Christ to us. No, they do not take a knife and cut it out of their Bible, nor do they burn the two verses in a fire. Their action is subtle, no doubt admired by Satan, as they simply ignore specific application.

Men quote 2 John 9-11 in sermons, and refer to 2 John 9 in articles pleading for people to come back to the Bible. But when men do not bring the doctrine of Christ regarding divorce and re-marriage, teaching error, where are such men then? Are they practicing what the lady is exhorted to do by the inspired apostle of John? Are they, refusing to give such teachers God’s speed? History sadly reveals that many have not done so, but have recommended such men for fellowship, remained silent, or have criticized those who are applying 2 John 9-11 as written.

We may praise 2 John 9-11, giving it life or death importance. But God does not want empty praise or a form of godliness. Our plea takes on true meaning and avoids being a dull platitude when we do what the word teaches (*James 1:22*)!