

Glad Tidings

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

Vol. XXVIII

July 1, 2018

No.26

As Written

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God 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 the Word as God revealed it. He will heed God’s warning and not “*add to*,” or “*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*,” while refusing to put man’s thoughts above that which God has revealed (*2 Timothy 4:2, I Corinthians 4:6*).

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

Neglecting these Divine demands for the use of 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, who believes, is 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, in the New Testament, does the sinner pray “the sinners” prayer when he or she initially hears the saving Gospel message?

A Denominational preacher, seeking Biblical authorization for his practice, will say there is a sinner’s prayer in Luke 18:9-14. A “sinner” is 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*,” we must take into consideration the “*context*” of a passage. Luke 18:9-14 is an account of a parable Jesus offered for condemning the attitude of many “*who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at*

naught.” It was not Jesus’ specific instructions on how to be initially 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 of Christ was preached to the alien sinner in the New Testament, the apostles instructed the unsaved to *believe* on the Lord, *repent* of his or her sins, *confess* Jesus as Lord and *be baptized* for the remission of his or her sins (*Acts 16:30, Romans 10:9-10, Acts 2:38*). The hearers, who obeyed these specific conditions, were saved (*Acts 2:41, Acts 16:33-34, 8:37-38*).

Nowhere is it written that the alien sinner was commanded to, or even encouraged to pray the “sinner’s prayer.” This is man’s law, not God’s. This is the product of man not applying the Scriptures as they are written, and not honoring the context in which they are contained.