

Glad Tidings

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

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Is Yours A Cut-and-Paste Religion?

(Joel Meier)

One of our greatest Founding Fathers in America was Thomas Jefferson. Looked upon by the world as a true Renaissance man, he was the American focal point in subjects as diverse as the importation of Italian rice into the Carolinas, the drafting of the Declaration of Independence, and the doubling of the country by the Louisiana Purchase.

But if you go back to one of your old National Geographics – February 1976 to be exact- you’ll find a picture of another item for which he was responsible. Thomas took his Bible and his scissors and extracted the verses that showed Jesus a wise and highly moral man, pasting them into a blank notebook, but abandoned in the Book the ones that proved His Deity through His miracles, including His final resurrection and ascension. His revised Bible left the world’s Savior buried in the tomb.

The end product was touted by eighteenth century rationalists on both sides of the Atlantic as one that they could accept – a religion that had high ideals for the edification of the moral man, without having to receive the “superstitiousness” of those men of Galilee that indeed God was with us. Thanks to Jefferson and others like him, they had in their hands quite literally, two hundred

years before Microsoft dreamed up the term, a “cut-and- paste” religion.

But dear Christian at Parkview, even though you indeed would disdain such a product, are you emulating such a concept? You would agree heartily that His word will judge us in the Last Day (*Jn. 12:48*), but do your life and actions betray a belief more along the line of Jefferson’s? The Hebrew writer gave us the command not to forsake assembling together (*Heb. 10:25*), but is your life taking old Tom’s scissors out to that verse? Brethren are concerned for your soul when they ask an elder or deacon if they’ve been able to contact you and find out why you no longer find it convenient to meet with the saints faithfully to remember the Lord’s death on the first day of the week (*Acts 20:7*), and to study His Holy Word with them on Wednesday nights to see that all of us grow stronger in the faith. It is as if your cut-and -paste life testifies louder than the excuses given when someone in the congregation truly worried about your destiny tries to persuade you to come back to faithful service.

Are we all on the same page or are some of us skipping over the passages that our lives don’t quite like? Do we complain in our hearts that the preaching we hear is too harsh and drastic as certainly the world would?

Surely you can determine objectively if the preaching we hear at Parkview compares favorably or not to the Word written in your hands, for the noble Bereans did such with Paul every day! (*Acts 17:11*). Do you uphold the brethren’s hands in the congregation that treasure the faith once delivered (*Jude 3*), or do you uphold the world’s hands by tearing down what is being taught from His Word?

Are we all on the same page in exemplifying pure and undefiled religion (*Jas. 1:27*) by applying the Word we hear to what we do? Are we joyfully bringing the gospel to the world by the various means available to twenty-first century Christians, and by doing this together, encouraging each other in a work well done? Or are you taking those old rusty scissors out of Tom’s drawer and pilaging the very Word that will judge us all by pursuing the things of the world? Is your life equal to the devotion shown to the Word by those willing to die for it nearly two millennia ago, or have you cut-and-pasted so much that there is very little resemblance between your life and theirs?

We encourage you to please consider and dedicate yourself to the whole counsel of God (*Acts 20:27*), and become a valuable servant of the Lord her at Parkview.