



April 10, 2005

Ever Learning And Never Able ...

Paul, in his writing to Timothy, described the nature of false teachers and their work. One of those characteristics was that they were “***Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.***” (2 Tim 3.7). The gospel had been preached and even before the end of Paul’s life, and the work of the other apostles and inspired men, the evil of apostasy had already begun (2 Thess 2.7). For those who are Christians, those who have obeyed in accordance with the instructions and pattern found in the New Testament, this sometimes is difficult to understand. There are many reasons for this and most, if not all, boil down to a love of self and reliance on one’s own opinion. This past week we watched as millions mourned the loss of a great pinnacle of error, mislead and yet accepting the error as truth.

The false teachers of the first century are not unlike those who live today. The error however began within the ranks of those who not only professed to be Christians, but who should have known better. In his address to the Ephesian elders, Paul warned them of this when he stated, “***Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*** (Acts 20.30). The wish to lead others in those who would fall away was based on their desire to have preeminence. Unfortunately, when human will is exercised over the doctrine that has been delivered by divine inspiration, the result is the expression of hatred toward God and Christ. If one does not desire to abide in the commands of the Lord, God will not prevent us from accepting and believing that which is false.

A similar situation existed and troubled the Colossians. “***Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind...***” (Col 2.18). There are those today who will claim to have knowledge and experiences for which there are no examples or commands to support them in the New Testament. These individuals promote such ideas being deceived themselves and leading others to damnation in the same. The Galatians had also been troubled by those who sought to pervert the gospel message. Paul states, “***O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?***” (Gal 3.1). At the beginning of his letter Paul had warned them about this when he states, “***I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.***” (Gal 1.6-8). Many false teachers are convincing in their arguments against truth. Christ states, “***For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*** (Matt 24.24). Our aim as Christians is to teach the word and nothing more, holding to those things that are found in the New Testament. This is too simple for most, but for the few who will accept it and live by it is the power of God unto salvation (Rom 1.16). The only way to not be deceived is to accept the word of God and it only.

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