

One day we will give an account to God

— by Miki Hardy

Jesus is coming back soon! He is coming back for His Church, and we need to be sure that He will find faith in our hearts on that day.

The Church needs the Truth of the Gospel, now, more than ever. Sadly, between now and His glorious return, many Christians will turn away from the faith. They will have followed false teachings, and so be living in deception, discouragement, etc, despite having known Him and experienced His love.

As Christians, and especially as preachers we should consider carefully what we say and preach to others, because one day we will have to give an account to God. What did we do with the truth? As Apostle James warns us in Chapter 3:1 of his epistle, preachers will be held responsible for what they preach. Therefore we must keep sound doctrine. This is a warning to all preachers, pastors, teachers of the word of God, and to all believers.

Teach no other doctrine

This verse talks about a Day coming, when those who have preached will receive a stricter judgment than the rest. In 1 Timothy 1:3, Paul urges him to remain in Ephesus to ensure that the leaders there, *“teach no other doctrine.”* Clearly, some preachers had strayed from sound doctrine. Paul’s charge to Timothy is to stand firm in the truth that he has received. He encourages him to teach no other doctrine than the true Gospel of Jesus. Preachers carry a greater responsibility. Sadly, many today use the Bible out of context to back their own arguments and doctrines.

Christianity and money

Paul gives Timothy another warning in 1 Timothy 6:3-10, stating that godliness, which is a pure and holy life, is not a source of gain. Unfortunately Christians are being led to believe that to be godly and victorious you need to prosper materially, i.e. be rich and have material possessions. They are mixing up Christianity and money. Godliness is not a means for you and I to profit... however godliness, with contentment in your heart, is great gain. Here the word contentment means joy and happiness, whether having plenty, or having nothing. If you equate godliness with gaining something from God you are quite simply on the wrong foundation. This is reflected in what Apostle Paul says in Phillipians 4:11-13. For many, finances and money have taken over as their principal focus; consequently it becomes the backbone of their message. In their greed, they have departed from sound doctrine... A very dangerous thing to do!

Fulfilling the law

Why is preaching sound doctrine so important? Because it is our only hope of achieving the goal of our Christian life, i.e. to live a holy life, to fulfill the requirements of the law, while serving Jesus. The message of Jesus Christ – identifying our lives with Him in His sufferings, His death, and His resurrection – enables us, by the Spirit, to accomplish the same law that He Himself fulfilled. Those who preach the Gospel must not add or remove anything from it.

In Matthew 5:17, Jesus says, *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”* The Ten Commandments reveal that the purpose and plan of God is for mankind to please Him and have fellowship with Him, living a pure and holy life. It is impossible to have fellowship with God if you keep walking in sin and enjoying it. But If you are struggling with sin in your life, yet you are sincerely ready to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus, God will set you free.

Becoming spiritual people

Sound doctrine is the message of the cross... with the result that we impart life and the fragrance of the knowledge of God! The responsibility of preachers is to enable Christians to become spiritual people, able to serve the Lord; not intellectuals with money, filled with head knowledge about God and Scripture. That’s the true calling of those who preach the Gospel.

The believers of the early Church were prepared to sacrifice their lives for the sake of Christ. The result of laying down our lives is expressed in Paul words: *“It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me”*. Today, far from striving for the life of Christ in Christians, many preachers are drawing them away from the truth, feeding them a ‘bless me’ gospel. Jeremiah 23 describes such false prophets as speaking visions of their own hearts. The goal of Paul’s ministry was, as he explained in

Colossians 1:28, and in Galatians 4:19: *“to present every man perfect in Christ”*. He cared about the hearts and souls of Christians. He had nothing to gain from his ministry. Actually, he had absolutely everything to lose. Why is it that so many preachers today appear to care more about the Christian’s material well-being than anything else?

The right Gospel

We desperately need to come back to the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; to allow our lives to be broken and worked by God, desiring to serve Him with a contrite heart and a humble spirit. Christians must rise up and know that there is another gospel - one that can set them free, and that will feed them spiritually. The gospel of the Cross is the only one that will challenge your life, and show you exactly who you

are, and what God wants you to become, so that you can serve Him in freedom. The Church needs the revelation of the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ – Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

A way of life

Let us be careful not to accept something just because many pastors and preachers are saying it. Even the fact that several preachers are preaching the same thing, does not make their message sound doctrine! Paul defended the Gospel by his way of life, and by confronting those who deviated from sound doctrine. Consequently, his preaching and way of life were a threat and challenge to others. One day, we will all sit before Jesus Christ and give an account of what we have preached, and how we exhorted and encouraged people. ■

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