

GOD'S TESTED, PURE, COMPLETE WORD

Joe Slater

“Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar” (Prov. 30:4-5).

Ever since the Garden of Eden, people have shown an unwillingness to take God at His word and leave it at that. Satan added one little word: “*You will not surely die . . .*” (Gen. 3:4), and Eve believed him.

Agur, the son of Jakeh, wisely warned his contemporaries (and, by extension, warned us) not to tamper with God’s word. Why? First, because “*every word of God is pure.*” Some translations read “tried” or “tested.” The point is that God’s word, like silver or gold, has been tested and found to be pure. With this the psalmist agrees: “*Your word is very pure; therefore Your servant loves it*” (119:140).

God’s pure, tested word serves as “*a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*” When a tornado is coming, where do you flee? Wise are those who enter a tornado shelter! Why? Because you trust that it will keep you from harm. Following God’s word keep us from being harmed by Satan and his minions.

Agur then cautioned, “*Do not add to His words.*” This was nothing new. Through Moses, God warned Israel, “*You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you*” (Deut. 4:2). What happens when you add something else to pure gold? It isn’t pure gold anymore! How arrogant would we be to presume we can improve on the pure, proven word of God!

We have our plates full to believe and obey the word of God. We need nothing else.

A Tale of Two Preachers

Two preachers preached, though both with a flaw,
Concerning our spiritual race;

One stated that Christians are under no law,
The other was blinded to grace.

The first man proclaimed, with voice loud and bold,
That God’s children today are not bound;
That laws and commandments are relics of old,
And God’s love is all He wrote down.

“The word is a love letter – nothing but grace,”
So said the preacher again.

Now while this is partially right, we must face
The truth about Christians and sin.

The grace of God teaches us how we must live,
How to worship and teach and obey;
And though we are free, we still must all give
Earnest heed to all God has to say.

The second man preached at the opposite pole,
A message devoid of God’s love;
He seemed to be saying, “God gave you a soul,
A Bible, a brain – that’s enough!”

He ranted and raved of how guilty we are,
How hopeless, how hapless our plight,
But never made mention of grace from afar,
That brings life, assurance, and light.

Two preachers preached on, both filled the hour,
But both missed God’s message that night.
How needed are men who proclaim heaven’s power
And won’t quit ‘til they’ve got it right!

--Dalton Key (Tulsa, OK) via Old Paths

A Hermeneutical Principle

(Editor’s note: Hermeneutics is the science of Biblical interpretation. And interpretation is not a bad word. When Jesus said, “I am the door” [John 10:9], we don’t think of Him as a slab of wood with two or three hinges and a knob. We interpret “door” to be a metaphor. Now read about another principle of hermeneutics)

Hermeneutically, in some circumstances, there is a hierarchy of commands; that is, when two commands conflict, one must be given priority. A Scriptural example is the ox in the ditch on the Sabbath (Luke 14:5). “Save the ox” takes precedence over “Keep the Sabbath.”

The “Good Samaritan” parable implies that “Helping someone in urgent need” takes precedence over “Getting to worship,” even if you are the one conducting worship.

Prophets of the Old Testament, and Jesus and James (among others) in the New Testament, show that, while worship is to be done as God directs, even correct worship is nullified if we do not concern ourselves with the less-fortunate. Helping the needy is “weightier” than worship.

We have, I believe, done well at restoring New Testament worship. Some of us may need to give attention to restoring Biblical concern for the poor. At judgment, Jesus says we will be assigned to Heaven or Hell based on whether we have fed, clothed, and cared for Jesus. What is done or not done to “the least of these” is done or not done to Him.

--Cecil My, Jr. (via *Preacher Talk*)