

## ALL Scripture is God-Breathed and Profitable!

*“If we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8-9).*

These words should produce great concern within us to make certain that the gospel we proclaim is true. Hopefully, you already know that there are many people preaching false gospels in the world today. According to the verses above, Paul would rather these people be taken out of the way and cast into everlasting hell than be allowed to continue proclaiming a false gospel.

The point of this article is to call attention to one of these false gospels being spread throughout the earth by some of the people who call themselves “dispensationalists.” Not all dispensationalists teach the heresy discussed in this article. I am only addressing here a teaching held by some of them.

The heresy discussed here has been around for many years. I was confronted with it shortly after I began following Jesus. In 1975, a close relative told me that a friend of hers just “received Jesus as savior” but not as Lord. I asked her to clarify what she was talking about. She said that a person can receive Jesus as savior and be assured of heaven. She hoped that her friend would also accept Jesus as Lord but at least now her friend is heaven-bound because he accepted Jesus as savior. When I heard this, I thought something seemed wrong about it but because I was a new believer, I did not know what to do or say about it.

Having studied the Bible for many years, I now can easily demonstrate that such teaching is false. But I have also learned over the years that this false teaching is **still** being spread throughout the world and this bothers me greatly!

About the year 2010, I spent some time evaluating discipleship training material that could be used in our ministry. A friend told me about material called, “Firm Foundations” that is used by New Tribe Missions. I evaluated this material and found it to be excellent for the things it taught. But there were some important teachings not included in it. So, I emailed the man that created the material who lived in Australia. I told him that I really thought it was a valuable resource but I wondered why he did not include any material about counting the cost of becoming a disciple of Jesus and relating to Him as Lord. I listed a couple of Jesus’ teachings such as, “Unless a man takes up his cross and follows me, he cannot be my disciple.” I was shocked when I received this man’s response.

He said that we are no longer in the age of the law. We are in the age of grace. He proceeded to tell me that the teachings of Jesus were given to Israel during the law/old covenant dispensation and are not applicable in the same way to those living in the dispensation of grace. He said that we are in the Church age which began at Pentecost. This is the age of grace. He said that we must not teach the things that came before Pentecost, otherwise, we will be teaching salvation is through works rather than grace. Evidently, he thought that prior to Pentecost, people were saved by their works.

Since that email exchange, I discovered that there are millions of people who hold to this false teaching. This eye-opening knowledge causes me to realize the power of Satan to deceive and keep people bound in darkness. Because of this false teaching, there are millions of Christians who don’t pay much attention to many portions of the Bible. They assume that those portions were not written to Christians living in this age. For example, many Christians don’t read or study the Old Testament because they claim that those scriptures were written to the Jews who were under the law. They think that these scriptures do not apply to us in the same way.

Now there is a legitimate principle of hermeneutics that rightly teaches us to determine the audience of a passage in order to better understand how to interpret what the author was trying to communicate. But many people falsely think that unless a passage was written to people living after Pentecost, it does not have the same relevance or application to them because they live in the “age of grace.” Nothing could be further from the truth! Such a concept contradicts Paul’s teaching.

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

These words were written by Paul subsequent to Pentecost. Clearly Paul taught that ALL Scripture was profitable and a critical means of God's grace for the people living in this age. Just in case someone still objects suggesting that Paul was talking with Timothy about Scripture written in the church age, let me point out the following.

These verses were written at a time when all or most of Paul's writings had not yet been confirmed as scripture. So, we could legitimately paraphrase them as follows:

*All of the "Old Testament" is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

And in case you count this paraphrase as invalid, let me point you to the two verses that precede them:

<sup>14</sup> *But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, <sup>15</sup> and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

Here Paul notes that Timothy has known these scriptures since he was a child, long before any New Testament writings existed. So clearly, Paul had the "Old Testament" scriptures in mind when he wrote this passage to Timothy.

So, the next time you hear someone tell you that we only need to pay attention to writings written to people living since the Pentecost, tell them they are greatly mistaken and in contradiction to Paul's clear teaching on this subject. If they refuse to listen to you about this, I suggest that you avoid listening to their opinions about spiritual things. Because their foundation is distorted, they are prone to teach error. Put another way, they will likely teach as doctrine the traditions of men rather than the Word of God.

Let us consider more closely the things Paul said in verse sixteen to understand just how important ALL Scripture is in the mind of God. He said that ALL scripture is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. These words prove that the entire Bible has inherent authority. Unless the scripture has authority, there is no reason to pay attention to its reproof about something that we are thinking or doing wrong. There is no reason for us to "correct" a behavior or attitude if the scripture has no authority inherent in it. Clearly, God has invested authority in His scriptures, including the "Old Testament" scriptures. Otherwise, Paul would not have taught that it is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. He said that if a person lets the scriptures teach, reprove, correct and instruct him in righteousness, he will be equipped for every good work. Therefore, if he neglects any portions of the scriptures, it will be less likely that he will be properly equipped as God desires him to be equipped.

Having demonstrated that God intends Christians to pay heed to the teaching, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness we find in ALL of the scriptures, let me make some final applications of this to our lives. Rather than use the Old Testament as my basis, I will utilize some of the teachings of Jesus found in the New Testament.

First, let me address the false gospel which teaches that a person can be saved without embracing Jesus as Lord.

*Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. <sup>25</sup> "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. <sup>26</sup> "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:24-26).*

Since ALL scripture is God's authoritative Word and this passage is scripture, we can rebuke with authority any man who teaches that a person can go to heaven even if he does not embrace Jesus as his Lord. Clearly Jesus taught that to become His disciple, a person must give up ownership of his life to Him. He must be willing to die for Him. (See also Luke 14:27.) Below, we read Jesus' warning to anyone who fails to embrace Him as Lord.

*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. <sup>22</sup> "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' <sup>23</sup> "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' <sup>24</sup> " Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: <sup>25</sup> "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. <sup>26</sup> "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: <sup>27</sup> "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall" (Matthew 7:21-27).*

Our willingness to follow Jesus' direction even under threat of death must continue throughout our life, otherwise we have no assurance of heaven:

*" Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. <sup>17</sup> "But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. <sup>18</sup> "You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> "But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; <sup>20</sup> "for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. <sup>21</sup> "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. <sup>22</sup> "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved" (Matthew 10:16-22).*

Because of the importance of this, we must pay close attention to these words of Jesus and watch over our hearts aggressively so that we remain alert until that day.

*"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. <sup>35</sup> "For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. <sup>36</sup> "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:34-36).*