

Simply Christ
Gospel Newsletter
Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

December 10, 2021

Preach the Word

I regularly receive emails asking for, and sometimes demanding, our statement of faith. Some want to be assured that we adhere to a specific established doctrine. What camp do we fit into? What denomination are we associated with? Are we Oneness or Trinitarian? Are we Calvinist or Arminian? What doctrinal box do we fit into? The only statement of faith I ever give is the same as the Apostle Peter's. *"Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Matthew 16:16.

I am reminded of the angel's words to Joshua shortly before the battle of Jericho. When Joshua saw him standing with his sword drawn, Joshua approached him and said, *"Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?"* Joshua 5:13. The angel's answer was strange yet simple. He said, *"Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come."* Joshua 5:14. He was not sent to be for or against Joshua. He was sent to do the will of God.

I'm not interested in defending a formulated doctrine (Something the scripture does not explicitly say, but men have reasoned to be true.). Every major formulated doctrine of the church, whether based in truth or not, can be traced back to a group of people who decided to

establish what “truth” is, whether a denomination, a reformation, or a council of men. Almost all Christian “doctrines” were established hundreds of years after the early apostles passed off the scene. Some may be very good and sound, but some are not. When a minister becomes a defender of formulated doctrines, they may be defending a truth which others saw, but they may also be defending error because of what others did not see. My point is this: We do not have to take their word for it. We can go back to the same source they had, which is word of God.

The Apostle Paul told Timothy to ***“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”*** II Timothy 4:2. The Greek word translated *“doctrine”* simply means instruction. Timothy was to instruct the people by preaching the word. We have that *“word.”* It’s called the Bible.

If we preach church “doctrines” instead of the word of God, we are using second-hand interpretations as the basis for truth. It does not matter that those who formulated these “truths” were great men who lived fifty, five-hundred, or even fifteen-hundred years ago. If what these men said was true, the word of God will still declare it. It is both dangerous and foolish to use second-hand interpretations when we can go directly to the word of God?

A few years ago, I invited a minister friend to share at Calvary Outreach Church. He presented

a very popular and accepted doctrine of how God sees the believer. I saw him a few weeks later and in conversation asked where this teaching was found in the Bible. His drawn-out answer started with Adam and ended with Christ, but did not offer a single verse to support what he was saying. “But what scripture is this based upon?” I asked. He again began to explain all the reasons this was true without referencing any basis in God’s word. When he finished, I asked, “So there is not a single verse of scripture to support this?” His countenance changed and he almost shouted, “I don’t know! I’m not a walking Bible!” My answer to such a statement is this: “If you are going to stand and present something to be the truth of God, you should be a walking Bible. **Preach the word!**”