

Error? Always the Other Guy

Have you ever noticed that error always comes from “the other guy”? None of us like to be misleading, mislead, in error, or wrong about anything, much less spiritual matters. In many cases it is not what the scriptures say that are of debate, but the consequences associated with what is said. If it doesn't matter *what* we believe, it doesn't matter *if* we believe, and therefore, should be of little or no consequence: just a personal preference. If such were true, why do individuals get upset over some doctrine contrary to their own?

Doctrine, in the scriptures, was important. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, saying, “Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people honoreth me with their lips; But their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, Teaching [as their] doctrines the precepts of men” (Matthew 15:7-9). Doctrine meant a great deal to the Lord. When the Apostle Paul was warning Timothy, he said, “But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth” (1 Timothy 4:1-3). As we consider this admonition we see a contrast between “doctrines of demons” and “them that believe and know the truth.” How do we avoid falling for the one, and being secured in the other?

When the Apostle Paul wrote Timothy, he said, “But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power therefore. From these also turn away” (2 Timothy 3:1-5). How does the man of God avoid falling for error? By heeding the words of the Apostle Paul, saying, “But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God [is] also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

I encourage you to remember the words of the Apostle Paul to Timothy, saying, “These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth; but

be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all. Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee” (1 Timothy 4:11-16).