

A New Year's Resolution Heeding My Critics

I have decided to listen to my critics. At various times I have been told to stop attacking denominations in our newspaper articles, quit naming them from the pulpit and use fewer scriptures in my sermons.

Even though the Lord and His apostles and prophets sought to destroy everything that exalted itself against God, I can no longer do it (2 Cor. 10:3-5). I cannot follow the example of Jesus when He publicly and privately castigated the religious sects of His day (Matt. 23; 16:5-12). It was once acceptable to do this, but now we are beyond such. We are too polite and people are too delicate to bear attacks on their religious beliefs. When we identify Baptist or Methodist as sinful churches engaged in sinful practices and promoting sinful doctrines, we needlessly offend people and turn them away from the Lord (Matt. 15:1-14). We lose opportunities to add them to our numbers (Jn. 6:60-66). Hence, I will no longer attack denominations in the our newspaper articles nor identify them by name in the pulpit.

Further, I am going to use fewer scriptures in my sermons (Bible classes and articles too). One or two should be sufficient for a lesson. If too many are used, people cannot keep track of them all. This will help on our budget. I will need fewer transparencies for the screen and we will not need to replace pew Bibles as often. Besides this, we should get out earlier and feel better when we leave! (Notice there are no scriptural references in this paragraph!)

Our regular readers will know that I am not serious about the above. I am being sarcastic--yes, purposely and rightly so (cf. 1 Kgs. 18:27). If we are not to follow the example of the Lord and His apostles and prophets, then who are we supposed to follow (1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 4:9)? Too, the Bible tells us to "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). If we try to teach a lesson devoid or lightly sprinkled with scripture, can we say we have spoken as the oracles of God? We cannot. It is nauseating to hear lukewarm Christians say we need to quit attacking error and cease filling our lessons with God's word (cf. Rev. 3:15-16). If that attitude is the correct one, why be a Christian? There is plenty of mediocrity and apathy in the denominations and the world. True Christianity is an aggressive cause, one that seeks to overthrow the enemy (Eph. 6:10-12). If this is not what you believe, then you need to read your Bible to correct your thinking.

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