

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by

Donald E. Martin, Sr.

He that Hath an Ear, Let Him Hear

Dear Brethren, it never ceases to amaze me how folks can go to an Old Baptist meeting where there is a combination of doctrinal positions expressed from the preaching stand, and yet there are AMENs expressed from the same folks on what is being preached, even though the doctrine be opposing positions.

I attended an annual meeting some years back where two brethren were invited to preach. The one stood with a strong declaration of God’s almighty character and absolute determined purpose in ALL things that come to pass with blessed liberty. As the brother was magnifying the Almighty’s unlimited attributes, the house was sounded with AMENs around about.

The second preacher stood and quoted from the book of Isaiah “If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat of the good of the land” (Isa. 1:19), and proceeded to express how that duty obedience was the key to the blessings of God in this time world, if we don’t walk in obedience we shall loose the blessings of God, and we are under “obligation” to walk in good work. The SAME individuals who AMEN’d the first preacher’s message of an Almighty God who CAUSED his children to walk in obedience, was AMENing this “conditionalist” heresy as well.

Now, all the scripture that was used in both discourses were true, yet the manner in which they were set forth was where the problem is. The one brother was supporting his “conditionalist” view from an Old Testament exhortation to Israel under the laws stringent curse of DUTY; attempting to load down the child of grace with “duty works” to achieve God’s divine favor, while the other was proclaiming the deliverance from the law’s unachievable burdens in the New Testament, New Covenant promises, expressing that God has written his laws upon the hearts and minds of his New Covenant elect children and works in them “to will and to do” of his good pleasure.

As I reiterate, all scripture that was set forth is true for it’s designated application to whom it was written. Isaiah was exhorting Israel to walk in obedience, this exhortation was under the old covenant, for those under the Old Testament commandments and ordinances. When you take the “types and shadows” and “Examples” of the Old

Testament and JAM them into the NEW COVENANT, NEW TESTAMENT that the child of grace is obligated to fulfill the demands of the “OLD PROMISES”, it is in TOTAL and ABSOLUTE conflict with one another.

Now, I am not going any further with doctrinal aspect of the text here, because to whom I am writing (for the most part) understand the difference between the “conditionalist” and the “absolute” positions of scriptural teachings.

What I am trying to emphasize is, that folks sit under these two opposing sermons and “AMEN” the preacher’s comments NOT EVEN UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS BEING SAID.

I had an Elder who was very influential among a large association which pastored three well-attended “conditional” churches come up to me after the morning preaching session and said, “Brother Martin, did you notice anything strange about that morning meeting?” I replied, “well, one was preaching “duty works” while the former was preaching grace CAUSED obedience in the believer.” He said, “Yes, and did you notice that in both sermons the same folks were saying AMEN to BOTH messages?” He further stated, “what does that tell you? Doesn’t it tell you that they sat there and did not know the difference between the two sermons?” I said, “yes, you are absolutely correct, and it is a sad commentary of many that attend the old church, as they have been brought up in the old church and continue under religious duty and routine and have never experienced a genuine work of grace upon the heart; therefore, they CANNOT discern the difference.”

We wonder why there is so much division and discord among the churches, what else can you have with unregenerate leadership in the assemblies that CANNOT discern the truth when they hear it? I am convinced that much of the disharmony among the Old Baptist is stemmed from non-spiritual minded men ordained as Deacons and Elders that have nothing but their depraved attitudes and hardheadedness to direct their business.

It is getting to the point that in many areas where churches are closing down and disbanding, that folks are grabbing any man that gives an appearance of a gift and setting him up as an Elder. Is it any wonder why we hear all the heresy and “hodgepodge” teachings coming out of the Old church houses?

God help us to not be blown about by every wind of doctrine that blows our way, but to search the scriptures that these things heard would be the TRUTH as it is in Jesus; knowing that the Wheat & Tares shall grow up together, may we be spared from discord, disharmony, bitterness and seek grace to love the brethren as we never have before.

It is my earnest prayer that God would visit his gathered people as they assemble to worship and purge us from anything that would keep us from walking in sweet

fellowship with those who love the Lord's church and desire to care for HER needs in this pilgrim way. "Oh God, shall we ever in this time world be brought into "the unity of the faith?"

Shall thy remnant church, thy Bride in preparation, be blessed with a latter-day rain of an abundance of thy sovereign grace? Oh, God have mercy upon those who have called upon thy name through the means of thy elective grace, that we would see even more of the evidence of our Lord Jesus in one another.

*Humbly submitted for the love of Zion,
January 28, 2006*