

## ATTACKS ON HERMENEUTICS, #3

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> writing in reviewing a preaching brother who has decided that the way we have long understood God's will for us through commands, approved examples and implication is a system of man, and should be rejected. He advocates that we are to simply look at the "principles" of the Bible and go from there. However, to look at such is to recognize that those principles involve the commands, examples and implication that stand out as we study those principles. Actually, we find absolutely **no** passage that actually states, "Thou shall only learn God's will by studying the principles of scripture," so to maintain that specifically could well be called an "addition" to God's will.

Our brother maintains that the early church did not have the written New Testament in written form so as to be bound by its teaching. However, he admits that they had "doctrines" that were given after the church began that "show what we can and should do" in our Christian lives. Bear in mind that the first century church **did** have the written form of the New Testament, scattered throughout the brotherhood as they circulated the writings of the apostles and prophets. Plus the fact, there were still the living apostles who were circulating in the brotherhood, teaching and indoctrinating the saints, along with the other inspired teachers. Much of the New Testament teaching was made known orally for a period of time until the completed form of the New Testament was made. Nonetheless, we need not concern ourselves about what they had or did not have, but what we **do** have today. Let us then adhere to the permanent record God has made available for all alike in our day.

Our brother contends that Jude 3 is a passage that has been perverted in the church today. Here Jude wrote that we are to "contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." He maintains that they did not have the written doctrines that are found later in the scripture, so "the faith" **must** of necessity refer only to the incarnation of Jesus, and not to other teaching. Question: Where did they **learn** of the "death, burial and resurrection" of Jesus to consider that such was the only thing that made up "the faith?" Evidently, they learned that from the same source they learned everything else—from the inspired apostles who preached orally, and who write all the contents of our New Testament record we have today. Even the epistles gave "doctrine" that was to be observed in the first century. They had everything then that we have today, but their knowledge was not found in one scroll or book as we have now. Note: Jude said "the faith" had been "**once**" (KJV), or "**once for all**" (ASV) **delivered** to the saints. They had access to the new testament of Jesus. Our brother contends that since they the doctrines, they could unite only on "the faith" (that of Jesus' incarnation—His coming in the flesh). Where did they learn **that**? I contend that they learned that from the same source that they could learn the "doctrine" the apostles gave. Therefore, they were accountable to both. Yet, it seems to be a good point to our brother that since they did not have all the written record **then**, that we don't have to abide by it **now**. Strange reasoning.

Our brother makes the following statement in the sermon we are analyzing. He states:

Some people will distort this verse by convincing church members that "the faith" we're supposed to contend for is everything from A to Z in the entire collection of the new covenant scriptures, and these scriptures are made into a written code or legal system, and yet 2 Cor. 3 and verse 6 says the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life. Rom. 7 and verse 6 says we have been released from the law in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of a written code. So we are not saved by a code or legal system. We are saved by faith in Jesus.

Paul was **not** condemning of having a written record of the law of Christ, but was

contrasting the work of the Spirit in the giving of the gospel with the giving of the old law of Moses written upon stones, that brought death (in the sense that it could not as a body of law give life or provide a method of salvation. This a real stretch of the truth to attempt to make reference here to the written New Testament. Yet, this is what our brother is doing. He states that Rom. 7:6 declares that we are released from the written code, and therefore have no written code or legal system today. A careful study of Rom. 7 shows that Paul was talking bout being released from the law of Moses by the death of Jesus. We maintain that whatever first century Christians were bound by regarding *1) The life, death and resurrection of Jesus, 2) They were also bound by that same source of information to do both*. Both areas were covered by the apostles orally and in written form.

The term “the faith” is not limited to the fleshing coming of Jesus **only**, but is used in the written record to include **all** God has delivered. In the book of Galatians, Paul uses the term to refer to the **gospel** or new covenant that replaced the law of Moses, or the old covenant. In Gal. 2:16 and 3:22 he uses the term “the faith”, and explained that it was that which **came**, was **revealed**—to replace “the law” of Moses. Read Gal. 3:22-25.

Our brother contends that those who do not teach the scripture as he does, are savage wolves. He also states that just as old wicked Haman built gallows upon which Haman was to be hanged (and then ended up being hanged there himself), typifies those today who maintain we should adhere to the written code of the New Testament now—who are going end up being hanged on the gallows we are building.

It is our desire that our brother will see error of his recent teaching and return to the right way of the Lord.

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