

Believing a Lie!

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What one believes in religion is either the truth or a lie. There is no in-between! Before Christ was crucified, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth. God willed it; the Holy Spirit revealed it; and Christ was glorified (John 16:12-15). The apostle Paul wrote in a few words what was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit and said it could be understood. In fact, we are commanded to understand it (Eph. 3:1-5; 5:17).

Even so, there are millions of good-hearted souls in the world today who believe lies in their religion. For example, how many people really believe: (1) that God has given Christ all authority both in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18); (2) that Christ has built His church over which He is the Head and Savior (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23); and (3) that we must be baptized into Christ to be saved and live and be judged only by the word of God (Gal. 3:26-27; Matt. 4:4; John 12:48)? Not many.

It is only through complete obedience to the will of the Father that we will be granted entrance into the everlasting kingdom of heaven (Matt. 7:21). To believe anything else (whether by parents, preacher, prophet, apostle or angel) is to incur the wrath and curse of God (Gal. 1:6-8). This fact is vividly illustrated by an OT account found in 1 Kings 13:1-32. NOTE: Read this passage carefully and count the number of times the phrase, "by the word of the Lord," is found. I counted seven.

A man of God was sent by the word of the Lord from Judah to Bethel to curse the altar set up by King Jeroboam. The prophet was given three commands: (1) You shall eat no bread; (2) drink no water; (3) nor return by the way which you came. He understood and repeated God's commands verbatim to Jeroboam and turned down the king's invitation to go home with him (vs. 6-10).

After he cursed the altar and started back to Judah, an old prophet found him sitting under an oak tree and invited him to go home with him and eat bread and drink water. Again, the man of God remembered and repeated God's commands to him. But the old prophet claimed an angel spoke to him by the word of the Lord saying, "Bring him back with you to your house." BUT HE LIED TO HIM! So, the man of God relented, disobeying God's commands, and ended up being killed by a lion (vs 11-24).

Principle Application

When God gives a command, if that command is ever to be altered or changed in any way, God alone (not some preacher, prophet or angel) will make the change (Phil. 3:15). God may even test us and allow false prophets to do great signs to see if we

believe their claims rather than to believe and obey Him (Deut. 13:1-12; Rev. 13:13). During the destruction of Jerusalem, it was hard even for the very elect to resist the claims of the false Christs and false prophets (Matt. 24:24).

Conclusion

We must first study to learn and understand God's will through His word. Then we must be unrelenting and never allow ourselves to be drawn away by the words of some slick-tongued preacher or false prophet. We must always determine within ourselves to be completely obedient to the will of God, for only those who do the will of the Father will enter the eternal kingdom of heaven (Matt. 7:21).

Again, either what we believe is the truth for which we should be able to give book, chapter, and verse, or it is a lie! Ask your religious friends if they can find the name of any denomination in the Bible. If they ask you the same question about the church of Christ, will you be ready to sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart and give a defense for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence (1 Pet. 3:15)?