

Untrained, Charismatic Preachers: A Disturbing Trend in Today's Church

Today, we are dealing with a significant problem in theology. Much of the theology is being taught to believers by preaching media stars and church leaders whom I would call low-information preachers. They may have charisma, and they can hold a crowd well, but sometimes they say outlandish and even heretical things. Some of the most glaring examples are statements claiming that the Old Testament no longer applies to us or that it is irrelevant for New Covenant Christians. One such preacher even said that he put a sword through the Old Testament to be free from it. The error is even more glaring in the light of the numerous assertions in the New Testament of the authority and value of the Hebrew Bible. One has to ask if these preachers ever had one course helping them to understand the Hebrew Bible and its application to the New Covenant era. I doubt it. Of course, gaining insight into the Torah and the ritual system of the tabernacle is much more challenging than gaining insight into the love chapter of 1 Corinthians 13. Yet these writings can be understood and applied. It is important to do so.

The New Testament's Teaching on the Authority of the Hebrew Bible

The Teaching of Yeshua

In Matthew 5:17-18 (NIV), we read, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter or the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." Yeshua then goes on in

the rest of the chapter to show how the Torah is applied in the New Covenant.

The Teaching of Paul

Speaking of the Hebrew Scriptures, Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 that all Scripture is “God breathed,” and is “profitable for doctrine, reproof and for training in righteousness.” He urges Timothy (and us) to study these Scriptures in order to demonstrate that we are proper workmen who can rightly handle the word of God (2:15). What sort of a workman starts by throwing more than two-thirds of the materials away? I wouldn’t want to live in a house built by such a workman!

In Romans 15:4, Paul tells us that the Hebrew Bible was written to “teach us so that through endurance and encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope.” In 16:26, we read that what has been revealed to us now has been “made known by the prophetic writings by the eternal command of God so that all nations might believe in him.”

Peter’s Statement

Peter echoes this and says that the Scriptures came not by the will of men, but that men spoke as they were carried along by the Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20).

Summary

And we can go on and on. We really cannot understand the New Testament without the Hebrew Scriptures. Indeed, much of the New Testament is interpretation and re-application of the Hebrew Bible. So much of God’s future plan for world redemption and peace is in the Hebrew Bible. When the apostles were teaching, there was no New Testament; they relied on the Hebrew Bible. In fact, the entire early church was made up of “Old Testament only” Christians!

The current statements against the Old Testament are reminiscent of a false teaching in the 2nd century A.D. called Marcionism which was condemned in Church History. It is again time to correct this false teaching and restore the authority of the Hebrew Bible. {eoa}

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