

The Terre Haute

SPEAKER

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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COMFORTERS

John Edwards

In Ecclesiastes 4:1, Solomon beheld the tears of those who had no comforter. There may be times when we can say with the Psalmist, *“I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears”* (Ps. 6:6). Yet, we are not without comfort today.

WE HAVE GOD. Paul wrote, *“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort”* (2 Cor. 1:3-4). He is *“nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit”* (Ps. 34:18). He said concerning His people which were in Egypt, *“I have surely seen the affliction of my people...and have heard their cry...I know their sorrows”* (Ex. 3:7). God surely sees our affliction, hears our cry, and knows our sorrows. He cares! Peter penned, *“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you”* (1 Pet. 5:7).

WE HAVE THE SCRIPTURES. *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God...”* (2 Tim. 3:16). Since God is the God of all comfort, it comes as no surprise that His word contained in the Scriptures provides comfort. Paul spoke of the *“comfort of the*

scriptures” (Rom. 15:4). The Psalmist said, *“This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me”* (Ps. 119:50). Again, *“Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant”* (Ps. 119:76). Paul wrote the Thessalonians about the hope we have for those who have fallen asleep in Christ and said, *“Wherefore comfort one another with these words”* (1 Th. 4:18).

WE HAVE ONE ANOTHER. Paul said to the brethren at Thessalonica, *“...comfort one another...”* (1 Th. 4:18). When the sons of Ephraim were slain by the men of Gath, *“Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him”* (1 Chr. 7:20-22). That’s what brethren do — come to comfort. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 says, *“Wherefore comfort yourselves together; and edify one another, even as also ye do.”*

It is my prayer that God through the Scriptures and the help of brethren will bring comfort to troubled hearts.

“SEEING SCRIPTURE WITH NEW EYES”

John Edwards

One would have to have new eyes to see in Scripture what many in the religious world are seeing these days. The cry is made for a new hermeneutic, a new way of looking at the Scriptures, as many want to get away from plain, old-fashioned book, chapter and verse Bible teaching. Here are some new things folks are seeing:

WOMEN PREACHERS. Read your New Testament from Matthew to Revelation, and write down all the names of women preachers. You will read of *“Philip the evangelist”* (Acts 21:8), but do you read of Philis the evangelist? For a woman to be a preacher, as many are doing these days, is to violate 1 Timothy 2:12 teaching. We hear talk about “sisterhood” today. This is something new, for the Scriptures speak of *“the brotherhood”* (1 Pet. 2:17).

EXPANDED FELLOWSHIP. New eyes have allowed some to see fellowship in a whole new way. In the Scriptures, fellowship has reference to joint participation in spiritual activities (Acts 2:42; Phil. 1:5; 1 Jn. 1:6-7). Today, when some hear the word “fellowship” they think of coffee and donuts, chicken dinners and ice cream socials! Many religious bodies have built kitchens, “fellowship” halls, multi-purpose rooms and the like, all

in the name of fellowship. There is not an ounce of Scriptural authority for such. If so, where is the Scripture? Inspired teaching places these activities in the realm of the home (1 Cor. 11:22, 34).

UNITY IN DOCTRINAL DIVERSITY. A new look at the Scriptures has caused some to change their thinking about unity. The spirit of unity in doctrinal diversity has swept through the land. The idea is that you can teach what you want and we will teach what we want, and all agree to disagree, will not work! We are commanded, "...that ye all speak the same thing..." (1 Cor. 1:10). New concepts of unity have caused some to "plow with an ox and an ass together" (Dt. 22:10) in that they have teamed the church up with other religious bodies in campaigns, crusades, and joint services. If one were to attend and ask, "What must I do to be saved?", what answer would be given? What would be said about the church, its nature, name, doctrine, work and worship? These new eyes seem to have caused many to become blind to the seven one's of Ephesians 4:4-6 — "There is one body,

and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all..." — as they have been tossed out the window!

Perhaps, we could use a spiritual eye exam.

WHAT SHALL WE CALL THE PREACHER?

John Edwards

Our attention is being called to Scripture to learn what we shall call the preacher.

NOT REVEREND. Are you aware the word "reverend" only appears one time in the Bible, and is used in reference to God? The Psalmist said of God, "holy and reverend is his name" (Ps. 111:9). None of the apostles were ever called "Reverend" — just "Peter, and James, and John" (Acts 1:13). Ask your preacher by what authority he is called, "Reverend."

NOT RABBI, FATHER, OR MASTER. The Lord denounced such among the scribes and Pharisees. "But be not ye called

Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ" (Mt. 23:8-10). To make a clergy-laity distinction is to make a distinction the Bible does not make, and one which the Lord condemned.

NOT PASTOR. The word "pastor" is applied to one who serves as a bishop and elder in the church (Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:1-2). As bishop, elder and pastor are descriptive of those who rule over the local church, evangelist, minister and preacher are descriptive of those who bring good tidings of Christ and publish salvation (Is. 52:7; Rom. 10:15; Col. 1:23; Acts 21:8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).

Job 32:22 records, "For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away." Why not just call the preacher by his name, as in New Testament days, and use Scriptural terms in describing him and his work?

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