

8. Denying the New Testament Pattern by Using the Old Testament for Binding Authority

We have studied *how innovators and change agents deny New Testament authority in matters of faith and practice*, relegating the New Testament to the status of advice to the early church—a love letter, as it were. They also *replace the New Testament authority with the assertions of their leaders*, following the path set by earlier apostasy where the priest's, preacher's or pastor's word supercedes the New Testament. Once the New Testament is minimized as God's pattern for the church, innovators justify their opinions by turning to the Old Testament for selective proof of their erroneous positions. Here is how it works.

Innovators and change agents appeal to the Old Testament for justification of their innovative practices. In their deceit they minimize New Testament teaching and use Old Testament examples to support their innovations, especially in worship. In this regard, they are exactly like the innovators of the nineteenth century. These people divided the church over instruments of music, destroying many congregations. In that day, after a futile appeal to the Greek as regards the meaning of PSALLO, which is to sing or make melody, the innovators fled quickly to the instruments of David for their support of the instruments of music in the worship. History is repeating itself as the innovators of today advocate the unauthorized acts of worship that make up what some call *praise worship*. Hand clapping, choral singing, arm waving, play acting, and shouting—all of these and more are without New Testament authority from either the Lord or his holy apostles and prophets.

What will they say? They will begin by admitting that most of their references come from the Old Testament. "Aren't we a New Testament Church," they might begin. "What did the New Testament church use for scripture? They used the Old Testament." They will say that 1 Tim 3:16, which teaches that all scripture is inspired of God, means the Old Testament. Another reason to use the Old Testament they will say is that when you're talking about worship, the New Testament is almost empty of specific rules. The New Testament only has 136 verses that remotely refer to worship. This is not unlike the sophistry of the preacher who said there were only two verses commanding us to sing.

They will say it is not the act; i.e., singing without accompaniment, observing the Lord's Supper, giving, preaching and teaching, and praying (See Acts 2:42). One preacher in support of hand clapping and arm waving began to denigrate the New Testament's authority on the subject of worship. He then asserted: "It is not the act that makes it worship." "It is the condition of our heart." "Doing the right things does not constitute worship." He overlooked the fate of Cain and laughed off Nadab and Abihu as being "zapped by God." Then he asserted God is more concerned with your heart than whether you do things the right way. To prove all this, he cited 2 Chronicles 29:30-31. Here King Hezekiah, in attempting to restore the temple worship, observed several exceptions to the instruction of the Law of Moses. They even "ate the Passover otherwise than prescribed (2 Chron 30:18)."

They will omit parts that do not suit their point. What is not pointed out by this innovative preacher is that the tolerance of God followed a prayer of repentance for the act which Hezekiah clearly understood as wrong:

For Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, 'May the good LORD pardon 19 everyone who prepares his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though not according to the purification rules of the sanctuary.' 20 So the LORD heard Hezekiah and healed the people (2 Chron 30:18-20).

What is also overlooked is that in the Old Testament era God suffered certain exceptions such as the Israelites' plea, "Give us a King to judge us." 1 Sam 8:6. Even the Lord Jesus spoke of God's tolerance when the Jews hardened their hearts in Matt 19:8: "He said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.'" In the same Old Testament setting Hezekiah also re-instituted the musical instruments of David (2 Chron 29:29) *Do you see where this sophistry leads? Hand clapping and arm waving are just the beginning to the real agenda. The real agenda is to move denominational practices into the church.* The floodgates holding back apostasy come completely down.

They will transfer the act in the Old Testament to an application for the church. Another preacher, in an effort to support the feel good, celebrative focus of *praise worship*, used Nehemiah 8 to make the point that the church's worship should be more celebrative. He concluded that Nehemiah turned the worship into a party. When reading, "Ezra blessed the Lord the great God," the preacher emphasized the New International Version's use of *praised* in the place of *blessed*. This is a clear abuse of the original language: *barak* (baw-rak'); a primitive root; to kneel; by implication to bless God (as an act of adoration) [Strong]. Ezra read the law from early morning to midday. The people listened attentively and were moved to weeping because they heard the law read. At the

conclusion after the people bowed low and worshiped God, their faces to the ground, Nehemiah encouraged them to stop weeping and to start feasting. "All the people went away . . . to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them (Neh 8:12)." The preacher used this Old Testament example to insist on a more festive, celebrative tone to worship in the church.

Not only does the preacher use the Old Testament to prove acts without New Testament precedent, but in his sophistry combines the worship (reading of the Law) and the festival which were clearly separate in purpose, tone, and act. Later in the sermon, he uses this example to play out his innovation under the misnomers of *joy* and *praise*. He commanded: stand up, clap your hands, and wave your arms as you sing, pressuring the congregation do it along with him.

What does the Bible say? To bind part of the law requires one to bind it all. When a former group of innovators and change agents tried to bind circumcision, Paul responded emphatically:

2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. 4 You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. Gal 5:2-4.

Can one not say today: "You who are seeking to justify the innovations of praise worship by the law are fallen from grace." Present day innovators and change agents who are justifying the antics of praise worship are following quickly with instruments of music, dedication of infants, and other acts of denominationalism. Previous teachers of circumcision, infant baptism, and instrumental music have paved the path that they are walking.

We must follow Paul's advice in 2 Tim 2:15: "15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth." This requires one to understand that the mission of the Old Testament is completed in Christ: "17 Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill." Matt 5:17. When the apostles suggested treating Christ as an equal to the Old Testament prophets, God answered, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!" Matt 17:5. This certain voice of Jesus is affirmed by the New Testament writers, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son . . ." Heb 1:1-2.

What of the Old Testament that the fathers wrote? Rom 10:4 tells us: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." For the Christian era, Col 2:14-15 teaches clearly: "having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross." The innovators and change agents must find New Testament authority for their new acts of worship and new occasions of worship. Their contention that the early church had no scripture except from the Old Testament is wrong. The Lord himself described the extent of their inspiration: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." John 14:26. The apostles were to know *all things* and remember *all*. This all-inclusive nature of the revelation came to them in the exact words of the spirit.

Paul described the effect of this verbal inspiration on the apostles and prophets: "Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words." 1 Cor 2:13. When Paul wrote, we were to understand his insight into the mystery of Christ:

By revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. 4 By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit. Eph 3:3-5.

Peter endorsed Paul's writings as wisdom given unto him and as scripture:

15 . . . just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction." 2 Peter 3:15-16.

Yes, the church then had the exact word of God in the inspired apostles and prophets. Yes, the church *now* has the exact word of God in the New Testament written by those inspired apostles and prophets. The church then and the church now have the same mission—to make known this manifold wisdom of God. "10 . . . so that the

manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places." Eph 3:10.

Change agents and innovators cannot deny the word of Christ in inspiration was available to the early church. It is in desperation and even in panic that they support their false teachings by scurrying back to the Old Testament. It is ironic that the Old Testament writers themselves searched and sought diligently for what the change agents and innovators reject so callously:

10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries . . . 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which *now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven* -- things into which angels long to look. 1 Peter 1:10-12

Please, do not tell Peter that he did not preach the gospel by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. And do not tell him that Paul did not write scripture.