

Words of Truth

“Grab Some Coffee If You Like”

By: Brian A. Yeager

The following quote is from the “Abundant Living Faith Center (ALFC)” here in El Paso: “We have ministries for the whole family. We offer services and state of the art facilities for young adults, teens, kids and babies. Enjoy live praise and worship, practical life teaching and grab some coffee if you like. Come and see for yourself, and while you're at it, bring your family and make some new friends. We'd love to see you soon” (http://alfc.com/alfc/our_church/welcome/tabid/388/Default.aspx).

Sadly, the quote above would seem perfectly normal for most so-called “churches” today. Even though it may be very obvious to us true Bible students that these things are error, others are falsely convinced that they're doing God a good service (Matthew 7:21-23). You see, people miss obvious statements like, “grab some coffee if YOU like”. They never have the sense to step back and ask: “But, what would God like me to do” (Luke 6:46)?

False teachers are very wise to the fact that most people are ignorant. Thus, false teachers (such as Charles Nieman of the Abundant Living Faith Center) use fleshly desires to lure in the ignorant (II Peter 2:18). Like a whore, false teachers like Nieman can see naïve people from afar and they begin to lay traps to seduce them (Proverbs 7:7-23; cf. Mark 13:22, Romans 16:17-18, and II Timothy 3:13). The “if you like” mentality is what ALFC uses to seduce the ignorant, carnally minded people that come into their fold. Just consider how it starts with the word “enjoy”.

Enjoy

In the quote above, you read, “Enjoy live praise and worship”. Another page on the website of the ALFC says the following: “We have a wide variety of activities and ministries, for all age groups and interests, where people can connect and discover friends and support within our church... We offer six weekly services, with ongoing activities and ministries on a regular basis. Don't miss out! Get involved in what ALFC has to offer you” (http://www.alfc.com/alfc/our_church/ourstorypurpose/tabid/80/Default.aspx)! False churches, like ALFC, always have an abundance of “ministries” that fit every lifestyle. From addiction recovery, baby arrival, and back to school ministries to turkey giveaways, weddings, and women's ministry; there are at least 27 “ministries” listed on the ALFC website (as of 2/14/2011). All of these “ministries” are things foreign to the word of God. Why doesn't anyone there realize that? The answer is simple. Those who are part of these types of churches are there to enjoy themselves.

So, what's wrong with enjoying worship? There is certainly a joy that comes through worshipping God (Psalms 67:4, Luke 24:52, Philippians 4:4, and James 5:13). Yet, though there may be a joy that we receive from worship to God, it is not supposed to be what we enjoy that decides how we worship God (John 4:23-24). Those who join the false religious groups are not enjoying Scriptural worship. These people are enjoying self-worship. They pick the songs THEY like. They attend the service that fits THEIR wants. They hear the so-called sermons that TICKLE their ears.

Anyone who honestly studies the Bible will see that they cannot look for the type of worship that pleases them. For one, honest Bible students know that what seems right to them is not necessarily right to God (Proverbs 14:12, Proverbs 16:25, and Proverbs 21:2). Honest Bible students know that God reveals exactly how He wants to be served and worshipped in His inspired word (II Timothy 3:16-17). Thus, we all realize that any changes to His instructions causes that worship to be of men rather than of God (Mark 7:1-9 and Galatians 1:6-12). Secondly, honest Bible students know that preaching which tickles one's ears is not the preaching of truth (Isaiah 30:9-11, I Corinthians 2:1-5, and II Timothy 4:1-5). Real Christians want to be part of congregations wherein needful truth is always preached rather than sermons that seek to please people (I Thessalonians 2:3-12). That means corrective preaching, textual preaching, uplifting preaching, etc. is what they hear as needed (cf. Acts 20:26-27). Groups like ALFC use preaching to entice the ignorant.

Salesmen Rather Than Preachers

A sales pitch like this is what is used in false churches today: "It is God's will that believers prosper and be in health" (http://www.alfc.com/alfc/our_church/whatwebelieve/tabid/81/Default.aspx). Let's just check a few verses and find out if this promise is true or false. Compare the word of God here, with the quote above: *"The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions... And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me... Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him"* (Matthew 19:20-22, II Corinthians 12:7-9, and James 2:5)?

Brethren, Charles Nieman forgot to tell Jesus that God wants believers to prosper and be in good health (Luke 9:57-58 and II Corinthians 8:9). Charles Nieman forgot to tell John the Baptizer that he was supposed to be wealthy as well (Matthew 3:4-6). The same could be said of the Apostle Paul (Philippians 4:12). Why don't people see these things? Again, they don't want to. False teachers have always promised things they cannot deliver (II Peter 2:14-22). The word of God also tells us that MANY will follow them even though these false teachers treat them like merchandise (II Peter 2:1-3). Today, the "Prosperity Gospel" has packed auditoriums. People love to think that God will fatten their bank accounts and cause them to have easy lives. Though many believe these lies, the truth is that real Christians will never have easy lives (Matthew 5:10-12, II Corinthians 1:5-7, II Timothy 3:12, I Peter 4:1-2, and I Peter 4:13-19).

Conclusion

You can go ahead and grab some coffee if you like. God gives us all the choice as to whether or not we will serve him (Deuteronomy 30:15-20 and Revelation 22:14). There is not one Scripture that tells us to be part of a worship service that places the emphasis on the worshipper rather than God. In fact, the Scriptures instruct just the opposite (Colossians 2:8 and Colossians 2:18-23). For those who choose the coffee, they better enjoy it while they can. The day is coming wherein the Lord will take vengeance on those who chose their way rather than His way (John 12:48 and II Thessalonians 1:7-9).