
Words of Truth

Hebrews 13:9

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“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein” (Hebrews 13:9). The previous verse that we studied in our last article dealt with the fact that Jesus was not going to change (Hebrews 13:8). We live under the “law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). These are the words that will outlast the world and from which we shall all be judged (Matthew 24:35-36 and John 12:48). So, any new doctrine from any source is not to be followed (Galatians 1:8-9).

The term that is translated “carried about” is the Greek term περιφέρω which is defined as: “To convey around, i.e. transport hither and thither: — bear (carry) about. To carry round, to bear about everywhere with one; to carry here and thereto be driven; in doubt and hesitation; to be led away now to this opinion, now to that” (Strong’s # 4064). Notice what was written to the saints in Ephesus: *“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.). And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love”* (Ephesians 4:7-16).

Each Christian is expected by our Lord not to follow any sort of false doctrine (Proverbs 19:27, Matthew 24:4, Acts 17:10-11, Romans 16:17-18, Ephesians 5:6-11, Colossians 2:4-23, I Thessalonians 5:21, II Thessalonians 2:3, I Timothy 6:3-5, etc.). Jewish Christians should have known this. Their history had examples of people being led astray by false prophets (Isaiah 9:8-16, Jeremiah 23:14-15, Ezekiel 13:1-16, etc.).

Notice something Jesus said: *“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (John 8:31-32). So, one comes to know the truth. Then, something strange [foreign] is taught. It has been taught that Jesus doesn’t change. You should know the doctrine is false. Isn’t that a simple point to realize?

Jesus did not teach any disciple of His that their hearts were to be established by meats. So, reason says that such a doctrine is false if it was taught. Well, there is a problem. Saints who converted to Christ from being under the Law of Moses often were conflicted between the two laws (i.e. Acts 15:1-35). In regard to the matter of what to eat and not eat, the Law of Moses had specific instructions (Leviticus 11:1-47). In Christ however, we read: *“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer”* (I Timothy 4:1-5).

The church in Rome had a problem with this matter. This was addressed in Romans 14:1-15:9. Notice something written from within that context: *“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost”* (Romans 14:17). When you study that context you find that meat does not matter one way or another to God. The Corinthians were taught this: *“But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse”* (I Corinthians 8:8).

Some of the Jews wanted to put laws in place even beyond what God had said in the past (Matthew 15:1-14). It is not that we are not under a law now, as noted earlier in this article. However, the law we are now under is one of liberty (James 1:25; 2:9-12). When one seeks to impose restriction after restriction they are missing part of what grace is. Remember what was written: *“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”* (John 1:17). Now, we are not under the Law of Moses, but under grace (Romans 6:14-15).

When the writers of this letter wrote, *“which have not profited them that have been occupied therein”* we can know they were referring to the ordinances under the Law of Moses. This epistle has already covered this (Hebrews 9:1-10). Whether them then or us now, we cannot be justified by things written under the Law of Moses (Galatians 5:1-4). Yet, sincere first century Jewish Christians struggled with this and like matters (Acts 10:9-17). Learn from them. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ needs to be in our hearts. We are liberated. Why seek to be in a self-made bondage? Beware of such doctrines that would impose such! It is through the grace [not grace alone] of our Lord we [Christians] shall be saved (Acts 15:11). Thus, grace and peace (I Corinthians 1:3) rather than meats confirms our hearts!