

Apostolic Exhortations (2)

Introduction

- A. The Apostles were men chosen by God to be His witnesses. He anointed them so that they would speak forth His Word, Some of the Apostles were also selected to write sections of the Bible.
- B. The exhortations of these men of God should be carefully studied and obeyed. To disobey these injunctions is to disobey God.

I. We are Exhorted to Cleave Unto the Lord, Acts 11:22,23.

Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem and they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

Observation: These verses record the salvation of Gentiles. Up to this time the ministry of the Church had largely been to the Jews. Now Gentiles were being saved and the Jewish leaders did not know what to do with them. The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas who recognized that the work was of God and exhorted them to "cleave unto the Lord". The word "cleave" means to loyally persist - to persevere. We can only imagine what an encouragement this must have been to these Gentiles.

II. We are Exhorted to Continue in the Faith, Acts 14:21,22.

And when they had preached the gospel to that city and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Observation: Here the reference is to Paul and Barnabas ministering to people who had already heard the Gospel. Many had become believers. The ministry of these leaders brought spiritual strength and stability to them. The exhortation was to emphasize personal responsibility in daily obedience to God. They were also reminded that being Christians may bring persecution.

III. We are Exhorted to Live Worthy of God, I Thess. 2:11,12.

As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk (live) worthy of God, Who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory.

Observation: The Christian is one whom God has called, made a member of His Kingdom and assured of eternal glory. On this basis we are exhorted to live worthy of Him. This refers to a life that does not contradict the moral attributes of God, namely, truth, love and holines

IV. We are Exhorted to Live so we may Please God, I Thess. 4:1.

Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk (live) and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

Observation: Here we are reminded that we can please God! He tells us in the Scripture that our daily obedience is pleasing to Him, I Samuel 15:22; as. is prayer, Prov. 15:8; sacrificing, Phil. 4:18; and thanksgiving, Hebrews 13:15,16.

V. We are Exhorted to Warn, Comfort and Support other Believers, I Thess. 5:14,15

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

Observation: This verse presents some responsibilities that are not often talked about in the church. We may not allow these needs in other believers to go unattended.

VI. We are Exhorted to live so We Make the Gospel Attractive, Titus 2:9,10.

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Observation: Since Christian slaves can live so they "adorn the doctrine of God" how much more should we, who are free, accept this as a daily responsibility. The next verse in this passage shows that the grace of God in our lives makes this possible*

VII. We are Exhorted to Exhort other Believers, Hebrews 3:13.

But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Observation: This verse instructs us in the obligation and dependence we share as Christians. We are to encourage one another and to counsel one another so that we are a protection from the deceitfulness of sin.

VIII. We are Exhorted to Maintain the Truth of the Gospel, Jude 3.

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Observation: Here Jude, under inspiration, instructs the Christian of his responsibility for the parity of the Gospel. We have a solemn obligation to be associated with only those churches which preach the Bible and to do our part to stand against all forms of Liberalism. We have received salvation through a knowledge of the Gospel and we must pass the message on to the next generation - in purity.

Conclusion: Now we must face our obligation to fulfill these exhortations.

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