

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

The past two weeks, we have noticed some names by which that portion of the Word of God under which we live is called. We live under, and are subject to, the New Testament. The Hebrew writer, in 4:13, uses the term "*word of God.*" Notice that the "*word*" is "*powerful.*" We learn, from Romans 1:16, that the "*gospel*" is the power of God. We can understand, then, that "*word of God*" and "*gospel*" are one and the same thing. As the "*gospel of Christ*" (Romans 1:16) is the power of God unto salvation, so is the "*word of God.*" If you recall, last week we also learned the Word is called "*the faith*" in Jude 3. Some today say that "the gospel" and "the faith" are not the same thing. But God's Word clearly shows they are. In the "New Testament," the "gospel," is included all that which we are to believe and obey, which is "the faith."

Does man have the right to change what is written in the New Testament, in order to reflect his own liking? During the Old Testament time, could man change it to suit himself? Do you remember Achan? In Joshua 6:17-19, the children of Israel, after being in the wilderness for 40 years because of unbelief, have now come to Jericho and are ready to take the city. All are given instruction to not take anything for themselves from the city. But Achan did not heed the warning. He took a Babylonianish garment, 200 shekels of silver, and a 50-shekel wedge of gold. This transgression cost him and his family their lives. The Bible is clear: when God gives a command, man must obey, or he will suffer eternal death if he dies in rebellion to God.

What about the "gospel," the "New Testament"? It is necessary to affirm that, just as surely as disobedience to any of the Old Testament commands by those living under them resulted in death, so will disobedience by us today of any of the New Testament's commands cause the loss of one's soul. *"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed"* (Galatians 1:7-9; emphasis mine - HL). As Achan of old was accursed by taking of the forbidden spoils of Jericho, so will the person today be accursed who teaches, believes, and obeys any gospel different from what had been preached by the apostles and prophets when the New Testament was revealed to man.

For instance, homosexuality was wrong then (Romans 1:26-32 lists homosexuality along with other sins), and it is wrong today - even though some religious groups have voted, in their conventions, to not consider it a sin. We need to encourage the congressmen and senators who stand up and say homosexuality is wrong. The gospel of Christ says, homosexuality is sin. Could we not have thousands of letters, even from our county, voicing our support for those lawmakers brave enough to say, "It is a sin"? Senators will receive letters at: Senate Office Bldg., Washington DC 20510; the address for House of Representative members is: House Office Bldg., DC 20515.