

The Red Letters by Ben Nelson

If you have read our literature for any length of time, you probably have noticed Kim's emphasis on the "red letters" (Jesus' own words). We have received comments from readers noting that since the entire Bible is the Word of God, why do we put more emphasis on the words that Jesus spoke while He was here on earth.

Let me start by saying that Jesus is the Word of God made flesh. Every word of the Bible is most certainly His word. As Kim likes to say, "we believe the Bible, cover to cover, including the cover - Holy Bible!"

So why does Kim put such an emphasis on the red letters? This is actually a huge issue and it runs to the heart of the problem with the Church at large today. The book of Jude warns of "certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude vs 4) There is a lot of doctrine that is preached from pulpits across the nation today that denies the Lord Jesus Christ.

The problem is not with the Scriptures quoted, but rather, with the fact that the preachers have pulled the scriptures out of context. Many ministers today teach doctrines from the writings of Paul that are in stark contrast to the words of Jesus. Paul does not contradict Jesus, but rather amplifies and agrees, and restates what Jesus says. But if you are not willing to take the whole counsel of God, you can get carried away into dangerous doctrines, "doctrines of devils."

The standard must be Jesus. The words He spoke are critical to the interpretation of all other scripture. They are the clearest declaration of God's heart. There are a number of places in scripture that point us to this fact.

Hebrews 1: 1,2 *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;"*

John 6:63 *"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."*

1Timothy 6:3 *"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;"*

Do you remember the scene on what we call the mount of transfiguration when Jesus took Peter, James and John up on the mountain alone. Who should appear but Moses and Elijah. Peter was so excited, he said "Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." (Mark 9:5) Bring it forward 2000 years, and what Peter was saying is, "Lets have a Conference. Moses can do the morning sessions, Elijah after lunch, and Jesus, you can preach in the evening services."

But God the Father had something to say about the matter. In fact, this is one of the few times that the Father speaks to man in an audible voice. And this is what God had to say: *"This is my beloved Son: hear him."* (Mark 9:8)

So the issue is not whether the whole Bible is or is not the Word of God, it most certainly is. The issue is simply that the Bible itself points to the words and life of Jesus as the clearest picture we can get of God, and **His words are those by which we should measure all doctrine and teachings.**