

Let The Bible Speak Series

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Restoration

Today our lesson is entitled Restoring The Ancient Order. Our text is taken from the book of 1Chronicles 15:12-13 "He said to them, 'you are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. For because you did not do it the first time the Lord our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order." The problem here was a failure to observe and do things according to God's instructions. This always leads to digression which in turn necessitates restoration. Restorations are often necessary and desirable. No greater work or joy than restoring an object to its original condition. Examples: (1) statue of liberty (2) Colonial Wms.berg, VA etc. Such undertakings involve determined and careful effort to: (1) learn the original condition of the object to be restored (2) the work must be scrupulously carried out This was the task of good King Hezekiah (724-695 B.C.) who spear headed an effort to restore the ancient order of religious practices among the Jews. This good and righteous leader guided the effort to its successful completion. The entire project was necessary, in part, because of the apostasy of Hezekiah's father Ahaz. First of all let us notice:

I. The Importance of Restoring The Divine Order

Throughout the Old and New Testaments the divine order is given great importance.

1Chron. 15:13 "For because you did not do it the first time, the Lord our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about he proper order." 2Chron. 29:35 "Also the burnt offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings and with drink offerings for every burnt offering. So the service of the house of the Lord was set in order." 1Cor. 11:34 "But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come." 1Cor. 14:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order." Col. 2:5 "For though I am absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." Titus 1:5 "For this cause left I thee in Crete that you should set in order the things that are lacking and..." From these scriptures we learn (1) God has an order (2) Man can and must discern that order Examples of disapproved conduct help us understand the necessity of doing things in the right way. 1. Adam and Eve 2. Cain and Able's sacrifice 3. Nadab and Abihu.

II. Hezekiah's Restoration The restoration of Hezekiah was broad in its coverage and included all of God's order that had been disregarded by the people and their leaders.

A. Cleansing of the temple. Sanctified so it could be restored to divine use 2Chron. 29:3-19_v.3 repaired the doors_v.5 carried out the filthiness_v.15-16 clean the house_v.19 made ready for service. B. The Temple worship restored vv 20-36_v.23 Sin offering given right place_v.25 Levites stationed in right place_v.27 burnt offering re-instituted_v.28 all the congregation worshipped_v.35-36 "Also the burnt offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings and with the drink offerings for every burnt offering, So the

service of the house of the Lord was set in order. Then Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced that God and prepared the people since the events took place so suddenly.”

C. The Passover was resumed 2Chron. 30:5 D. Idolatry was removed--the tithe re-instituted. The result: 2Chron. 30:26 “So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem.”

III. The Success of Hezekiah 1. The success of any effort is insured when it is carried out in adherence to God’s will and standard. 2. The King’s prosperity consisted of divine blessing. 3. He exhibited great leadership 2Chron. 31:20-21 “Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he did what was good and right and true before the Lord, his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God in the law and in the commandment to seek his God, he did it with all his heart. So he prospered.”

IV. Our Present Situation Some two hundred years ago our fore-fathers in the faith, broke with the bonds of denominationalism and planted on this continent a church fashioned according to the divine pattern found in the New Testament. Our own history demonstrates the sad truth that second, third and following generations can forget the commitment of their fathers and eventually abandon the concept of restoration altogether. Hence, each generation must be taught anew: The need for restoration; The concept of restoration; The value of restoration; How to achieve restoration; How to maintain restoration. Why?

Reasons Why We Need To Be Reminded About The Commitment To Restore The Faith.

A. It is mans nature to forget great truths and events of the past. Judges 2:1-2 “...there arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work he had wrought for Israel...” 2Peter 1:9 “For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”

B. A natural tendency to compromise and mix truth with popular and attractive error. 2Kings 17:33 “They feared the Lord, yet served their own gods according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away. To this day they continue practicing the former rituals; they do not fear the Lord...”

C. It is easy to drift away from principles that are exclusive and unpopular.

1. apostasy never occurs in a night 2. like a glacier there are years of slow movement before danger is apparent. 3. Heb. 2:1 “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed...” “drift away from them”

D. Because the average man’s desire is to be pleasing to the world.

Ex. 23:2 “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil...” Weaker souls are tempted to love the world 1John 2:15 When they do the faith is compromised.

E. Because people, like moving water, seek the course of least resistance.

Many will not stand firm. They give in to the pressure of the moment. Rather than stand firm and pay the price of loyalty, he allowed the worldly current to flow through the church, thus undermining the truth and the divinely ordered way. Often brethren are tempted to give in and go along with unscriptural and dangerous changes, simply because they do not want to fight. They follow the path of least resistance.

F. Because there is a tendency for the familiar to become commonplace and even

contemptible. The value of the Old Paths must be constantly set forth.

The old paths, the good way yet they said "we will not walk therein." Often people seek the excitement of change for change sake. This leads to questionable practices.

We must remember that every change seemed simple and innocent at first.

G. Christian faith and conviction is not inherited from one's family.

Faith comes from hearing the word of God Romans 10:17

We need to teach our children WHY we serve God as we do so that they can have their own faith.

V. The Present Benefit.

What great lessons can we learn from the account of Hezekiah's attempts at restoration?

What principles from his experience, loudly proclaim themselves to us today?

1. We Cannot Improve On God's Way.

He has always sanctified those elements and items he wants man to accept. Only what he has sanctified has a place in His scheme. God allows only what he authorizes. We need to content ourselves to practice His will.

2. A Thing Is Not Obsolete Just Because It Is Ancient

It is a part of God's plan, it still serves God's purpose and meets man's need.

Everything that meets the test of God's will, must be restored to its place in our lives.

Every item failing to meet such a test of antiquity must be removed from our spiritual endeavors: 1. In worship 2. In winning the lost

3. Both Forms And Attitudes Are Important To God

The thing practiced is important (Lord's Supper) when, how, how often etc.

The spirit is just as important i.e. remember Jesus, examine self etc.

4. God Has Established An Inseparable Link Between Daily Life and Public Service or Worship.

because both are offered to God, each must be compatible with the other
Romans 12:1-2 and James 1:27 "Pure religion..." Daily life prepares us for worship and makes that worship acceptable. It is also worship that strengthens and equips us for daily life. Like Hezekiah 1. We need to restore whatever has fallen into disuse and disrepair through individual or collective neglect. 2. It may be: a. Admission to the kingdom b. worship/work of the local church. c. Individual consecration to Christ. Only when these and other like things are restored to the proper respect due them, will we be pleasing to God.