

ALTERING AND PERVERTING THE WORD OF GOD

PROBABLY THE GREATEST PREACHER OF MODERN TIMES WAS CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON OF ENGLAND. Spurgeon, writing in his publication, **The Sword and the Trowel, September 1888**, warned against those who would alter and pervert the Word of God. What he wrote in 1888 is urgently needed today; Listen to this man of God:

Every motive that could move men to alter the Word of God has been fully delineated in various portions of the Bible. It shows that God was aware from the first of the reception that would be given to His truth; and it is as instructing to the humble believer as it is humiliating to the modern lover of penknife criticism.

The tendency to alter the Word of God is **HUMAN**. It is manifested in the first religious conversation on record. The Divine voice had asserted "Thou shalt not eat of it"; the human voice added "neither shall ye touch it." The addition was the precursor of the fall.

The desire to alter the Word of God is **DANGEROUS**. In the wilderness God Himself points this out. "Ye shall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it" (Deuteronomy 4:2). The nations they were advancing to conquer had long cast aside their allegiance to their Maker, and the least tendency to question or alter God's Word might result in the same downfall for Israel. "Thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it." That idolatry does result from such daring rebellion is proved by the state of the Roman Catholic community today.

The act of altering the Word of God is **SINFUL**. "Add not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30: 5,6) "Every word of God is pure"; and he who essays to improve upon it imputes error to the All-wise. Only unholy minds could attempt it.

The desire to alter the Word of God is **WEAKNESS**. Jeremiah's was a terrible message, and even he might yield to feelings of pity for his race. God saw this, and in words that could not be misunderstood, He said to the prophet, "Diminish not a word" (Jer. 26:2). If God's message is diminished its power is lessened, and its results are consequently less certain. The authority, the power, the meaning, the terror of God's truth must be preserved in all their fulness if God's purposes are to be carried out.

The ambition to alter the Word of God is **PHARISAIC**. To break the perfection of the law and teach our own alterations or additions as if they were of God is vile indeed (Matthew 5: 19,20) . Our Lord reproved this spirit in scathing and unmistakable language. Why is it His Words are forgotten? "Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your

tradition," He says. "They teach for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:6-9). The Pharisaic spirit thus renders impossible obedience to God the Supreme Teacher.

The craving to alter the Word of God is **ACCURSED**. Revelation 2:18-19 should be read with fear and trembling. Thus all down the ages God has warned men against this crime. He is a jealous God, and has determined to visit with the direst punishment all who dare to alter His completed and full revelation.

This is the crime of the present day: the Lord preserve us from it