

Grace to You :: *esp Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Making It Practical

Scripture: Ezra 7:10; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Titus 1:16

Code: A202

If we really believe the objective, rationally-understood truth of Scripture is both authoritative and incompatible with error — since the Bible is the singular Word of the living God — we must not only study and teach it; we must live it, too. It is not enough to give lip service. If we genuinely believe the Bible is divine truth, we must allow it to permeate our life and ministry. To live otherwise is tantamount to denying the truth. People who think otherwise may “profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work” (Titus 1:16).

Ezra, the high priest in Nehemiah’s time, is the prototype of what every godly minister ought to be. “Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, *and to do it*, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel” (Ezra 7:10, emphasis added).

I learned this lesson from my father, who as a lifelong pastor has been my model of integrity, as was his father before him. I first began to appreciate how difficult the struggle can be when I began in the ministry as a young man in my twenties. I had been in the pastorate for barely a month when I was asked to perform a wedding for a girl in our church who was planning to marry an unbeliever. In a meeting of the church board, some of the leaders urged me to do the wedding because the girl’s father was an influential man. A lot was at stake, they said. We might lose this family from the church if I declined.

I said, “But I can’t do that. I can’t do what the Scripture clearly forbids. Believers are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. Second Corinthians 6:14.”

They were already prepared for that. They replied, “Well okay. We understand your feelings. We know a minister from somewhere else who will come in and do it, so that this girl can be married in the church.”

I asked them: “But whose church is this? Is this your church to be used at your discretion, or is this Christ’s church?”

They replied to their great credit, “You’re right; we can’t do it. This is Christ’s church.”

That was the Rubicon for Grace Community Church. That was the moment when the future of our congregation was decided. Yes, an entire family left, and several other people withdrew their membership over that incident as well. But we decided as elders that day that we would not only preach the word of God; we would expect it to be lived out in the corporate life of the church.

That same expectation is laid on all who would claim the name of Christ, both within the church and outside of it. We are those who have been commanded to walk in a manner worthy. This means that

the authority of Scripture must be more than something we proclaim. It must be something we live.

Related Resources:

- [The Truth War](#) - Book
- [Why Fight for Truth?](#) - Article
- [Why We Believe the Bible is True](#) - DVD
- [Making a Case for the Bible](#) - Audio Series

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