

# ***Teaching Sound Doctrine***

## ***Speaking As The Oracles of God***

The Scriptures contain many admonitions respecting the principle in the above title. In I Peter 4:11 we find our key passage, "If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God; if any ministereth, ministering as of the strength which God supplieth that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen." This passage points out what should be the goal of our speaking and ministering. "That in all things God may be glorified." In Matt. 5:16 Jesus said, "Even so let your light shine before men: that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Many of the religious problems of men will be solved if in everything our ultimate goal is God's glory rather than our own.

In order to accomplish this goal we must be submissive to the Father's will even as was Jesus. "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38) Jesus said in Matt. 7:21 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." The doing of God's will is expressive of love (I Jn. 5:3) and of faith (Jas. 2:18), and submission to the will of God.

Because of the importance of speaking as the oracles of God we must thoroughly understand the meaning of this. In the Greek text (I Pet. 14: 11) The word for oracle is "logia", defined by Thayer as words or utterances of God, With this in mind let us examine Heb. 1:1, 2, "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds." This declares that now God's oracles come through His Son. This is the prophet of whom Moses prophesied and whom Peter declared as the fulfilment of his prophecy in Acts 3:20-23. But Jesus taught his apostles, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (Matt. 10:40) and "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me"; (Lk. 10:16) In order to assure that this would be absolutely true, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide these men. "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you." (Jn. 14:26; See also Jn. 16:13)

The seriousness of strict adherence to these oracles of God as spoken through Jesus and his apostles is expressed by John, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house and give him no greeting; for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works. (2 Jn. 9-11) Paul expresses it, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached, let him be anathema." (Gal. 1:8) These oracles had already been granted in Peter's day (See 11 Pet. 1:3, 4), and to the writings by inspiration in the New Testament we must go for life in Christ Jesus.

This lesson has dealt thus far in generalities, but we need to be specific as well. Desiring to learn how to be delivered from sin and its penalty we must go to the teaching of Christ and his apostles. It is here we learn that faith in God and Christ is essential (Heb. 11:6, Jn. 8:24), that one must repent of his sins (Lk. 13:3, Acts 17:30). that one must confess his faith in Jesus as God's Son (Matt. 10:2, Acts 8:36-3, Rom. 10:9, 10), and that one must be baptized in water into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for the remission of sins. (See Mk. 16:16;. Matt. 28:19, Acts 8:36-39, Acts 2:38) That we may know what is meant by baptism we observe that when Jesus was baptized, he "went up straightway from the water" (Matt. :16), that both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water where the eunuch was baptized, then both came out of the water (Acts 8:36-39). Paul describes the action which took place in the water in the following scripture, "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the (lead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:3, 4. See also Col. 2:12) In view of this we know baptism is not a sprinkling or a pouring, but is an immersion; a burial in water. In a like manner, by comparing Mk. 16:16, Acts 2:38 and related passages we know baptism is administered to penitent believers and not to infants. When one has been baptized into Christ he then begins to walk in the new life and must be faithful unto death to be saved eternally. See Matt. 24:t3; Rev. 2:10; 11 Pet. 1:5-11).

Keeping in mind that we speak as God's oracles, we seek information upon our worship unto God and learn it must be "in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:24) or "with the spirit and the understanding." (I Cor. 14:15). To be in spirit it must be earnest, sincere, humble, from the heart. To be in truth and with the understanding it must be as God taught. We learn that this worship includes: singing (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16 Notice that no mechanical instrument is mentioned), praying (I Thess. 5:17), apostles' teaching or preaching (Acts 2:42), fellowship including contribution for the Lord's work (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2;

11 Cor. 9:6-11), and breaking bread or observing the Lord's Supper each first day of the week. (See Acts 20:7, 2:42; 1 Cor. 1:23-29)

These same principles must be observed in learning how to please God in church organization and government, in Christian living, and every other realm under God's direction. Let each of us ask himself the question, "Am I speaking as the oracles of God?" In teaching truth, nothing else matters.