

PLAIN SPEECH

Volume 2 – Issue 47 – 6 September 2009

“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

By Scott Parker

THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS WERE UNTIL JOHN

From time to time, someone comes along and promotes the idea that the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are not part of the New Testament. Almost always this theory is put forth to dodge the force of the Lord’s teaching on divorce and remarriage (Mt. 19:3-12, et al). The following quotation is but one example of said mindset:

“As a young preacher I supported our brotherhood ‘traditions’ for a number of years. However, as I diligently studied the differences in the Old and New Testaments, I soon realized that Matthew 19 (as well as all of his teaching in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – before the cross) was in reality Christ’s teaching of the Old Testament law of Moses, and not New Testament doctrine as our ‘traditions’ have taught” (Dan Billingsly – The Devil and Mt. 19).

Did you catch the assertion that all of Christ’s teaching prior to the cross was not part of the New Testament? Rubbish! It is true that Jesus did, on occasion, teach lessons relative to the Old Testament (cf. Mt. 5:17-18; 8:1-4; 23:23; Mk. 12:18-27). However, to suggest that “*all of his teaching in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – before the cross was in reality Christ’s teaching of the Old Testament law of Moses*” is just plain nonsense. Once again, it’s rubbish!

One simple verse demonstrates that the noted “logic” CANNOT be true. The verse reads this way: “*The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it*” (Lk. 16:16).

Now it’s obvious that the Old Testament was still in force while John lived because he died before Jesus was crucified (Mt. 14:1-10; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14; Heb. 9:16-17). What then was Jesus getting at in Lk. 16:16? Simple. Jesus was teaching in the plainest way possible that once John arrived on the scene the emphasis of preaching would be upon things relative to the kingdom of God; i.e. the then coming church (cf. Mt. 13:31-32; 16:18-19; Mk. 4:30-32). This exegesis is scripturally proven to be true as we will see in just a moment. But first, think about this: in that the emphasis of preaching from John onward would be the then coming kingdom (i.e. the church) it just simply CANNOT be that “... *all of his teaching in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – before the cross was in reality Christ’s teaching of the Old Testament law of Moses.*” Billingsly is at odds with the words of our Lord and two inspired writers, Luke and Matthew. The record of inspiration (Lk. 16:16; Mt. 11:13) makes the teaching of Billingsly, and the others like him, damnable false doctrine (Rom. 16:17-18). Folks, let’s not be fooled.

Now here is some specific proof that NOT ALL of Jesus’ teaching was on the Law of Moses.

- ♣ “*From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt. 4:17).*
- ♣ “*And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people” (Mt. 4:23).*
- ♣ “*...he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 5:1-3).*
- ♣ “*And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Mt. 9:35).*
- ♣ “*And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent” (Lk. 4:42-43).*

The above verses make ZERO sense if, indeed, “...*all of his teaching in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – before the cross was in reality Christ’s teaching of the Old Testament law of Moses.*” More evidence could be given; i.e. Christ’s teaching on the Lord’s Supper, how kingdom citizens are to handle personal grievances, the many parables that focus on the kingdom, etc.

The faithful must avoid the likes of Dan Billingsly lest their souls be compromised by error.