

Reverence for God's Word

Octavius Winslow

"And Micaiah said, As the Lord lives, even what my God says, that will I speak." 2 Chron. 18:13

Micaiah was a God-fearing prophet. His fidelity to the Lord stands in striking and instructive contrast with the worldly policy of Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, who joined affinity with Ahab, King of Israel--an alliance which proved, as all alliances of the holy with the unholy ever will, a source of discomfort and sorrow to the king. The good prophet Micaiah was charged by the Lord with an especial and solemn message to Ahab. It contained a prohibition and forewarned a danger. The message was distasteful and annoying to the ungodly, self-willed monarch. Other prophets, anxious to conciliate Ahab, had prophesied good, urging the adoption of a course at once contradictory to the divine injunction, and ruinous to the monarch. The moment was a critical one. Micaiah, the true prophet of the Lord, urged to join the false prophets in speaking what the Lord had not spoken to Ahab, refused to disobey God, replying in the noble language which suggests our present reflection--"As the Lord lives, even what my God says, that will I speak." What to him was the favor of Ahab? What the earthly and temporary reward of a time-serving, man-pleasing policy, weighed with reverence for, and obedience to, the word and command of the living God? How replete with spiritual and solemn instruction are the words of the prophet? May the Holy Spirit open and apply them to our minds!

Am I a minister of Christ? Then, as the Lord lives, what my God says, that must I speak, nothing more and nothing less. In this point of light how tremendous the responsibility of my ministerial office! I am under the most solemn obligation to preach the Gospel, the whole Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel, as God has spoken it in His Word. I must not dilute, nor pervert, nor withhold it. I must not preach it with reservation, either to exalt myself or to please man. I must preach Christ's obedience as the sinner's free

justification; Christ's death as the sinner's full pardon; Christ's example as the believer's rule of life--in a word, Christ must be the all and in all of my ministry--even what my God says, that will I speak. Woe is unto me, if I preach not the pure, simple, unadulterated Gospel of Christ! The blood of souls will God require at my hands! Am I a disciple of Christ? Then I must believe and accept nothing but what the Lord my God has spoken. Guarded against human additions, man's teaching, and those who would seduce me from the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus, I must have a "Thus says the Lord" for what I believe and accept.

To the law and to the testimony. By this divine rule I must weigh and examine, taking heed, not only how I hear, but also, what I hear. An inspired Apostle has told me that, "The anointing which I have received abides in me, and that I need not that any man should teach me;" let me therefore believe and speak only that which my God has spoken. O Lord! deepen my reverence for Your word! Confirm my faith in its divinity, increase my experience of its power, and deepen my sense of its preciousness. May I stand in awe of its solemn revelations, walk in the holiness of its precepts, live more simply upon its promises, and increasingly find it sweeter than honey, yes, than the honeycomb, to my taste. As the Lord lives, even what my Lord says, that will I believe, that will I accept, and that will I speak. In all my trials, sorrows, and needs, may Your Word be my comfort and support. May it sweeten the bitter waters of affliction, pencil the rainbow of hope upon the dark clouds of my pilgrimage; and, when I die, may its gracious invitations and precious promises bring Jesus near to my soul. "How well Your blessed truths agree! How wise and holy Your commands! Your promises, how sweet they be! How firm our hope and comfort stands! "Should all the forms that men devise Assault my faith with treacherous art, I'd call them vanity and lies, And bind the Gospel to my heart."

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