

NOTHING ADDED

Many years ago, a missionary we supported came to tell me that he was going to write a correct Spanish version of the Bible. He said there was no translation that lined up with the King James Bible. Now, my opinion of Spanish is of little worth, as I can just barely order food at Taco Bell. But I recognized some elements in his plan that triggered a warning.

First, I went to college with this young preacher. He barely made it through Bible college, and Greek was something he knew little about; he was still learning Spanish and knew nothing of Hebrew. Right away, I knew he was academically, intellectually, and culturally unqualified. In addition, several long-term veteran preachers such as Elmer Fernandez, Tommy Ashcraft, Ezekiel Salazar, and fairly new-on-the-field, Kevin Wynne all felt happy with the Bible they had. Thus, this man who was unqualified in every way decided to go against the wisdom of trusted men of the faith. He wanted me to help finance his “rewriting” of a Spanish version of the KJV. I suggested he meditate on the warnings of Proverbs and Revelation about messing with the Bible.

Proverbs 30:6 “Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”
Revelation 22:18 “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:”

vs. 19 “And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

Let us fast-forward a couple decades...

This past year, I heard a young pastor talk about “redefining fundamentalism.” He had enjoyed a measure of success for which I was glad. If someone is getting folks saved, baptized, and into their Bibles, I am in favor of him as much as possible. But success can mess with a guy’s thinking as it did with Uzziah.

2 Chronicles 26:16 “But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God...”

The idea of redefining what Fundamental Baptists have believed for generations has several flaws:

Firstly, it is not his to redefine. He did not invent it; neither did he define it in the beginning.

Secondly, redefining fundamentalism is like me redefining a football or a dog. It is what it is by the very nature of the beast. To redefine Fundamentalism would be to invent something new and it would not be Fundamentalism. Fundamental by strict definition is to stay with the most root and base elements of the religion, philosophy, or belief. One can be a fundamental Lutheran, even though no one uses that term. When speaking of our Constitution, a similar term to use is *originalist*. We are not going to change or interpret the Constitution to fit our society.

Thirdly, redefinition has been tried in the past. This young pastor acted as though it was a brilliant idea, but had he asked some older preachers, we could have pointed out a dozen who

had the same idea over the past decades, some even before he was born. The idea did not work then, and it will not work now.

Southern Baptists came to Dr. Jack Hyles, who was very prestigious in the SBC at the time, and suggested he calm down a little, stop naming sin, and back off a little on running with rabid, old-fashioned men like John Rice, J. Frank Norris, and Lee Roberson. When Dr. Hyles refused and threw a fit, they canceled every speaking engagement he had, contacted his church members and suggested they all join another church and carried out countless other intrusive wrongs just as though their group was the most commanding dictators and demagogues of all time.

Many people have tried to invent new religious movements: Neo-Orthodoxy, Evangelicalism, Neo-Evangelicalism, Charismatic Movement, Tongues movement, Purpose Driven movement, Emergent Church movement, and more.

Each of these movements had the same founder and common ideas. They wanted to draw back on separation from the world, wanted men to be teachers, not preachers, and wanted to make the church more attractive rather than convicting to the lost person. They took no stand on one Bible being the Word of God, and they had no use for soul winning. Oh, and the same founder? Yes, he smelled of sulfur and had a pointed tail.

Lastly, this young missionary had an issue with experience.

Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men who advised his father. The book of Proverbs repeats the word *hearken* over and over, and uses similar words urging the youth to listen to the elder men in his life.

1 Kings 12:8 "But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him."

Surrounded by godly, successful, older men, and enjoying the technology that allows us to hear the very greatest church builders and soul winners on the internet, why would any wise, young man want to redefine that for which the great men of yesterday stood and loved? Using wisdom would lead a preacher to examine who influences him, which veterans have stood true through the years, and which friends have invented new ideas.

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