

THE TACTFUL CHRISTIAN (II)

(The principle before the application)

INTRODUCTION:

A. The lesson from this series

1. The tactful Christian, God our model for discretion
2. **The principle before the application**
3. Examples of how to teach
4. Abigail's discretion

B. David and Nathan (2 Samuel 12:1-7)

1. Nathan tells David a parable (verses 1-4)
2. Notice in the objectivity (impartiality) of David (verse 5)
3. David realizes that it is his fault (culpability, verse 6)
4. The crisis of this event, David had to manifest a reaction, one to be honest or the other reaction, to justify himself. Can David be consequent and admit his own error, or will he be obstinate, adamant (unmoved) about it?

C. There is a lesson here in the method Nathan used to convince David. The same method will function today with any sincere man who we want to convince of their doctrinal error.

I. AN EXPLICATION OF THIS PRINCIPLE

A. The objective is for the other person to hear and to take an objective decision before he will get offended by the emotions.

1. Many times, pride will impede, hinder the reasoning of man
2. Illustration: the Biblical teaching of Marriage, divorce and re-marriage can be difficult for some to accept this teaching, especially for the person who is involved in a marriage which is not Biblical.
3. Our goal is to prepare the ground, "to plow" with wisdom and tactic, being tactful. It is to "sow" and or to the "reap" according to the seed (**Isa. 28:24-25**; see previous lesson)

B. First of all we need to teach the principles and then make the applications

1. Do not begin arguing! This could be like threshing the dill with a threshing sledge, or the cartwheel driven over the cumin (**Isa. 28:27**).
2. Many want to begin with the conclusion, "instrumental music is not allowed in worship...because..." Immediately the defense barriers are lifted, and will be difficult to penetrate with the word of God because now the individual is in a defensive mode.
3. Once the principle is understood and everyone is in agreement, then it is a matter of just being honest and consequent.

C. I am not presenting before you new information or new arguments. We are speaking of a better method. We are not learning the "sword of the Spirit" But rather, "how to use it" (tactfully)

D. What is the best approach to establish principles? Like Jesus and Nathan did, with parables, analogies and illustrations, etc.

II. EXAMPLES OF THE APPLICATION METHOD

A. The establishment of Biblical authority

1. Draw a line (or show a pen) and ask, "What is the measurement of the line or the length of the pen?" All may give sincere opinions. Now, measure the line or the pen with measuring stick or measuring tape. Everyone had their sincere opinions, but only the measuring tape gave the correct answer! There is also a rule for religion as well, yes there is and it is called the Bible!
2. It can also be illustrated with the game of baseball for it will be chaos, confusion if there were no rules, and it will be no fun at all to play. The same can be said for, a country without rules, it will be anarchy. There must be a set of rules, a model, a book of rules by which all need to abide by.
3. The application: in the same way, the Bible is this type or model by which all need to follow in the way we live our lives and religion. The Bible is the ultimate authority in my life for everything I do.
4. Consequently, we should not say, "We believe that...the church of Christ teaches...our preacher says..."
5. Rather, "Jesus says...the apostle Paul wrote...the Bible teaches..."

B. To teach the problem of denominationalism with Ecclesiastes 5:1

1. What is the difference between catholic, Methodist, Baptist and for example us, which we claim to be in the truth and not belonging to a denomination?
 - a. We all agree that there is only one God.
 - b. We do not agree on how to be reconciled to God, examples:
 - 1) "I believe in God. Now, what am I going to do with Him?" – Salvation is according to the choice of each individual that is to attend the church of your preference, etc.
 - 2) "I believe in God. Now, what does God want from me?" – Salvation according to God's conditions, to attend the church that God wants, etc.
2. (**Ecclesiastes 5:1**) NASV – "Guard your steps as you go to the house of God, and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil"

C. To use the Old Testament for teaching key principles in the New Testament (Galatians 3:24)

1. The lessons about the grace and obedience of Jericho (**Joshua 6**)
 - a. A "gift" from God, ("I have given Jericho into your hand...", **6:2, 16**), but it required obedience, "And you shall march around the city..." – (**Joshua 6:3**), examples:
 - 1) "Salvation is a gift from God therefore, there is nothing man have to do in order to obtain it" Some may wrongly say.
 - 2) "Because salvation is a gift, it can never be taken away" Notice that Jericho and the promise land were lost by the Jews because of their idolatry and disobedience to God.
 - b. It required great faith to march the walls of Jericho (**Hebrews 11:30**)
 - c. There was no logic connection between the required action and the received promise. (The same we can say with baptism and the forgiveness of sins)
2. Noah and the law of exclusion (**Genesis 6:13-16**)
 - a. Pine wood? What about cedar wood? "Don't you know God that it will look nicer?" By God saying to make the ark out of gopher wood, He has excluded all types of wood.
 - b. How long was the ark supposed to be, 301 cubits? What about any other length? No, God had specified the length of the ark to be 300 cubits; therefore any other length was excluded.
3. The problem with sentimentalism (exaggerated sensibility; to be carry away by feelings) from the history of Jacob and Joseph
 - a. (**Genesis 37:34**) Jacob listens to a lie and reacts with great emotion

- b. Jacob latter hears the truth about his son Joseph and does not believe it, there is no reaction in Jacob's emotions or feelings (**Genesis 45:26**).
 - c. The conclusion: how we feel has nothing to do with
 - 1) Please understand, I am not denying our emotions and feelings. The question is the following, "What do feelings prove?"
 - 2) The point is this, we need to join our feelings with the facts (**Genesis 45:27**)
4. The necessity of baptism from the crossing of the red sea (**Exodus 14:13, 30-31** and **1 Cor. 10:2**)
- a. It was told to Israel, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today..." (**Genesis 14:13**). Latter he said, "Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians..." (**Genesis 14:30**). When was this salvation taken place, after or before crossing the red sea?
 - b. The apostle Paul compares this event with the Christian baptism (**1 Cor. 10:2**; illustrate with a drawing).
 - c. It was a great act, event (**Exodus 14:32**), but it was the work and the power of God! It is the same thing with us as well (**Colossians 2:12**).
5. An abuse mentioned to justify what is not authorized (**1 Samuel 8:4-5**).
- a. The wicked sons of Samuel were mentioned as an excuse to ask for a terrestrial king. The people of Israel took advantage of an error, to justify another (see verse 7; **Hosea 13:10-11**).
 - b. Applications of this error:
 - 1) "I do not want to become a Christian because there are many hypocrites in church"
 - 2) "The Christian as individual do nothing to take care of the orphans, therefore the church has to establish an asylum for orphans."
 - 3) "The brethren do not offer as they should, therefore we should acquire money by some other means (bingo, sales, carwash, some show)"
6. Justifying disobedience with a religious reason (**1 Samuel 15:20-22**). "The end justify the means"
- a. The king Saul wanted to justify his disobedience towards God on the base of religion (**1 Samuel 15:15**) **NASV** – "And Saul said, 'They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen, **to sacrifice to the LORD** your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed.'"
 - b. (**1 Samuel 15:22**) **NASV** – "And Samuel said, 'Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, **to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams**'"
 - c. The applications:
 - 1) "The sponsoring church must be doing God's will, because their system saves many people"
 - 2) "The music organ, or instruments are acceptable for worship to God, because with the instruments it sounds just better, and besides we want to give the best music to God in our worship"

CONCLUSION:

- A. The point is to establish principles first and all the consequent teaching will come out easier. To agree on the principle first, then make the application.**
- B. To maintain the objectivity throughout the conversation**
 - 1. That way it will more difficult to Satan to deceive the person on whom we are teaching.
 - 2. This method is not new. It is an old method; Nathan used this method and perhaps even others before him. It worked for him, and it will work for us as well!