

## The Pattern Of Sound Words

*"Hold the pattern of sound words which thou has heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:13).*

We are told that the word "*pattern*" here "comes from *hupotuposis* which signifies to draw or sketch a first draught of a thing, as painters do when they begin a picture" (Macknight on the Epistles, p. 472). The importance of a pattern dares not be overlooked. The holy things which were in the tabernacle; yea, even the structure of the building itself, was to be crafted carefully "*according to the pattern which was shown thee in the mount*" (Ex. 25:40). To Moses' credit he followed the Lord's pattern just as it is written of Noah: "*Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so did he*" (Gen. 6:22).

More important than the tabernacle (which was just a type or shadow of the church), is it that the church should likewise be built according to the pattern determined by God. As seen in 1 Corinthians 3:10f, Paul, according to grace given him, was a wise master builder who laid in Corinth the only true foundation which could be laid, Jesus Christ. Paul did not draw or design the church: that had been done by God before the world was. He simply took the design the Holy Spirit revealed to him and built according to that revelation. In so doing, he practiced what he taught Timothy to follow.

The pattern of "*sound*" words begins with one careful to teach the unadulterated gospel. This necessarily requires that one teach sound words about what one must do to be saved. To those who are pricked in their hearts, seeking to know what they must do to be saved, Peter's words on Pentecost compose the pattern: "*Repent ye therefore and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins*" (Acts 2:38). To tell inquiring sinners that baptism is not important and that all one must do to be saved is "just believe" perverts the pattern of sound words and while admittedly the Philippian jailor who asked, "*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*" was told, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,*" it is undeniably true that "*believe only and you will be saved*" is NOT WHAT the jailor was told (Acts 16:30f). The text shows that the jailor had not believed until he had both repented and been baptized (Acts 16:32-34).

The pattern of sound words requires that one who respects the church will never say that the church is unimportant; that one could be saved outside it as well as in it. The fact that the "*Lord added to the church daily those that were saved*" and that Jesus is the "*savior of the body*" shows such a notion to be false (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23).

Long ago brethren urged, *"Let us speak where the Bible speaks and let us be silent where it is silent. Let us call Bible things by Bible names, and do Bible things in Bible ways."* This is still a worthy appeal and it is based upon Bible precepts. *"God's divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness"* (2 Pet. 1:3). *"Every scripture is inspired of God and is profitably for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instructions which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, furnished completely unto every good work"* (2 Tim. 3:17). Peter wrote, *"If any man speak, speaking as it were oracles of God"* (1 Pet. 4:11).

It is significant that following his charge that Timothy hold the pattern of sound words Paul added, *"That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us"* (2 Tim. 1:14). Let the gospel which God has committed to us, be guarded as closely as that which we have committed to God (our soul) is guarded. There is no doubt God securely guards what we commit to him. Let us not be careless to guard through sound words, that which He has committed to us!

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