

BE ALERT & RESIST

"But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned." (Galatians 1:8)

There are two parts to this story so bear with me.

For Christmas we received an interesting gift. I have a close relative who is a Mormon so, along with a picture of his children, he sent us a Book of Mormon. In the front of it, he wrote out his testimony of faith and why he believes the way he does. (Maybe this was in response to us sending him and his family a Bible a few years ago. I don't know.) To be honest, it gives me the creeps having it lying on my desk even though it's covered with papers and books. He called me not too long ago asking about relatives who have been long dead and I gave him as much information as I could, which wasn't much. Genealogies are very important to Mormons because of a practice they have of "baptizing for the dead" which simply means they believe that if they are baptized for people who have died (no matter how long ago) those people will be "saved" to live with the rest of the family for eternity. There are many more details to that belief but you get the picture.

Okay, part 2: Just this morning I received word that another relative had died. This was a woman dear to me for many years even though I've not been in contact with her much. This part of the family has Mormon roots, too. One of my first thoughts on receiving that news was that I didn't want the others (part 1) to know that she had died because they would want to baptize her into their kingdom and that creeped me out. I was glad it wasn't my place to inform anyone but I started thinking about how someone could be convinced that there is no validity in that practice and, at the same time, how they could believe it in the first place.

It really doesn't work to tell someone that what they believe is ridiculous or just plain silly so what do we say? Since it isn't *my* words that have authority or are the absolute truth, what do I say? John 14:6 says, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* Jesus said it Himself: There *isn't any way* to get to God except through declaring belief and faith in Him and accepting what He did at Calvary. Not through being "good", not by going to church your whole life, not by giving money, and certainly not by having someone be baptized for after you're dead. No matter how much some would like to have that as a "catch-all" option, it's not going to happen. We choose now. We don't get to choose later and we don't get to have someone else choose for us to be "saved". *Psalm 115:17 "It is not the dead who praise the Lord, those who go down to silence; it is we who extol the Lord, both now and forevermore."*

Right on the cover page of this little blue book (part 1) are the words: "The Book of Mormon", *Another Testament of Jesus Christ*. This is how there can be a belief that there can be baptism for the dead. If a person can believe that what we hold dear as God's written word, the Bible, isn't complete or enough, then they can add to or take away as they please. The book of Revelation ends with these words, *"I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book."* It seems pretty clear to me that there can't be "another testament of Jesus Christ" and there certainly isn't any way that anyone is baptized into the Kingdom. Pastor Dave said on Sunday that *"the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."* (1 Cor. 4:4) Some people think they are believers but their minds have been blinded so that they believe the lies the enemy sows. We can be easily deceived especially if what we're being asked to swallow is something we want to believe, something that tastes good: Something that is in reality poison to our souls. *"Be self controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings."* (1 Peter 5:8)

Have a wonderful, truth-filled week,

Georgia