

Thus Says The Lord...

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Introduction

In this lesson, the elders of the Adoue Street congregation set forth guidelines for those men who desire to preach and teach the Word of God. The principles here discussed also apply to those women who teach Bible classes for children.

God has rules that govern individual conduct, family relationships, our duty to civil authority, and also the spiritual bond we share with one another through Christ Jesus. Elders are commanded to watch and oversee the local congregation of which they are members (Acts 20:28-32; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-5).

As newspapers and magazines follow certain guidelines in language and style, as diplomats observe rules of etiquette and protocol, as businesses have standardized practices, so also Holy Scripture contains guidelines for preaching. If we regularly or occasionally stand in the pulpit to preach and teach the Word of God, let us remember that there are Scriptural rules that must be obeyed, and Biblical principles that must be followed.

The expression, “*Thus saith the Lord...*” occurs 416x in the KJV in 414 Bible verses. Its equivalent, “*Thus says the Lord...*” occurs 420x in the NASB in 418 Bible verses. From the earliest occurrence of this phrase, we are impressed with the majesty of the Word of God, and the solemn responsibility that falls upon those who would proclaim it (Exod. 4:21-23; 5:1-2; 7:17-19; 8:1-4, 20-21; 9:1-3, 13-17; 10:3-6; 11:4-8).

Rules Out Error

“Thus saith the Lord...” rules out error (Gal. 1:6-9; 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 6:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3).

Requires Truth

“Thus saith the Lord...” requires truth (Jer. 23:25-32; 1 Thess. 2:1-8; 1 Tim. 4:6-16; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).

Restricts Opinion

“Thus saith the Lord...” restricts opinion (Mark 7:1-13; 1 Cor. 2:1-5; 2 Cor. 4:1-6; 1 Pet. 4:11).

Let us, therefore, not emphasize “I think...” (Gen. 20:8-13; 2 Sam. 7:1-7; Acts 26:9-11) but rather “God says...” (1 Kings 22:13-23; Isa. 28:14-18; Jer. 7:1-7).

We must not bind one method when various approaches are set forth in Scripture. Proper posture in prayer includes bowing, falling prostrate, kneeling, standing, etc. In like manner the oversight and education of children is entrusted to parents (Deut. 6:6-7; Eph. 6:4), and may also be delegated to schoolmasters/tutors, guardians and governors, managers and stewards (Gal. 3:22-25; 4:1-7).

What about the role of women/wives in the economic realm? Christian women are commanded to be workers/keepers at home (Titus 2:3-5; 1 Tim. 5:14-15). Nevertheless, this does not preclude activity outside the home. The worthy woman of Proverbs 31 considers a field and buys it; from her earnings she plants a vineyard; she makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies belts to the tradesmen (Prov. 31:16, 24). Lydia was a seller of purple fabrics (Acts 16:14-15). Aquila and his wife Priscilla were tent-makers by trade (Acts 18:1-4).

Conclusion

Respect the audience (Heb. 6:9-12; 2 Pet. 3:1-2).

Respect the time (Acts 26:24-29; Eph. 5:15-17).

Respect the Scriptures (Isa. 8:16-22; Luke 16:27-31).