

Correcting Error

By Mark Hatfield

All of us from time to time will use the word "error" as we might make a mistake in something that we do. Sometimes an error can be corrected with the eraser on the end of a pencil, or sometimes it may be a little more difficult. The Bible describes those who can stray from the truth and be found in error. We have warnings against living in error, and admonitions to follow the truth. Let us take a look at the Scriptures to see what the Bible says about error in our lives. Can I be in error before God? What do I do to make things right?

TO ERR SPIRITUALLY IS TO BE IN ERROR WITH GOD

God has always looked negatively upon those who are in error. When the psalmist penned, "Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandment", it is obvious that God is not pleased with these individuals. Jesus, during His earthly ministry, said to a group of people who were questioning Him, "Ye do err not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt. 22:29) This was a poor state to be in seeing that God chose through the Scriptures to save all of mankind (Rom. 1:16). We need to examine ourselves everyday to make sure we do not err from the truth of God's word. Let us heed the warning, "Do not err, my beloved brethren" (James 1:16).

THERE ARE STEPS THAT CAUSE US TO ERR

If we can examine the scriptures to see what causes error, we can also learn to avoid those things. Here we will share a couple examples:

LOVE OF MONEY- In I Timothy 6:10, Paul wrote Timothy and said, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." It is no wonder why Jesus said you cannot serve God and mammon in Matthew 6:24. Although we are to lay up treasure for ourselves, it is not here but in heaven (Matthew 6:20). This we can do by being faithful, not erring from the faith. So many people would put an investment of time in at the workplace, before ever taking even a moment in devotion to God. Some would even put off becoming a Christian, because they have "other" priorities. We need to be cautious in this money hungry world not to get caught up in error.

FALSE AND VAIN TEACHING- Paul told Timothy, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith" (I Timothy 6:21) There are so many contradictory doctrines taught in the world today, and unless we study God's word to avoid them, we can be caught up in error. Perhaps that is why we are told to, "study to shew thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15) So many profess to be wise and when they open their mouth only foolishness comes out. It is even written by John that to heed the word of God is truth and to turn from it is error (I John 4:6) Let us all ask ourselves if we are following truth or error. There are many causes of error, but these are only a few.

THERE ARE CONSEQUENCES TO ERROR

James taught that when one is in error and then is turned back (converted) from the error of his way his soul is saved from death (James 5:19-20). Since death is the consequence of error, we ought to be diligent in putting it away from our lives. Even Peter said, in warning the brethren, "Ye therefore beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (II Peter 3:17). To be steadfast is to continue in the doctrine, not to turn from it (Acts 2:42). The Bible over and over again, reminds us of the consequence of error and encourages us to avoid getting involved. In Romans 1:27, Paul wrote of those who received the recompense of their error, and it was God giving them up to walk in that error. The consequences of error can be avoided. The Bible tells us of a sacrifice that was paid for the error of the people; the sins of the world (Hebrews 9:7). In Hebrews 9:11-12, the writer recorded, "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us." Jesus is the answer for finding our way out of error (John 14:6). We need to listen to his words (John 8:31) being set free from sin (8:32). If you are in error, and you want to be set free, consider the gospel of Jesus Christ, and obey the word of God today! (Heb. 5:9)