

DO YOU WANT AN ITCHY EARED TEACHER?

Most will agree that we like to feel good about ourselves. Everyone likes a compliment from time to time. Good reports of our current status is comforting in most every realm. It's great to get a clean report from our doctor. We are pleased when the boss tells us we are doing a great job. Hearing our spouse tell us what a great spouse we are is uplifting. And, when the preacher praises us for our dedication to the Lord, we gain comfort.

The apostle charged his young protégé, Timothy, to "Preach the word" (II Tim. 4:2). The reason for this charge was pronounced in the next verse which says, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (II Tim. 4:3). Without going into the original language and interpretation, let us just point out the meaning of this "teachers, having itching ears". It is speaking of teachers that will tickle the ears of the hearers. In other words, teachers that will speak things that make them feel good about themselves, even if what they are told is not true. Isaiah spoke of the nation of Israel saying, "Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Isa. 30:10). Israel wanted "teachers, having itching ears".

However, as Paul prophesied of those who did so, the end result was that they would "turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:4). It is the truth that will make man free (John 8:32), not fables. God's word is truth (John 17:17). The truth and only the truth is that which we should desire to hear from our teachers. Who wants to pay a doctor to lie to them about how they are doing? Who wants to pay a financial consultant to lie to them about how much money they are going to have when retirement time comes? Who wants a boss to lie to them about how they are doing such a great job, when in fact they intend to fire them before long if they do not improve? And certainly, who wants a preacher or teacher to tell them lies about their spiritual state which will result in eternal damnation instead of eternal life?

It is indeed true that preachers and Bible teachers should promote a sense of self worth. After all, we need to understand how we are made in the image of God and that if we are faithfully serving the Lord, we are heirs with Christ. But, don't seek out itchy eared teachers. *Tilis*

PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD

The apostle Paul tells the Christians of Ephesus to "Put on the whole armour of God..." and to "take unto you the whole armour of God" (Eph. 6:11, 13). The armour of God is presented in the following verses (Eph. 6:14-18), however we will not have space here to get into describing the whole armour of God. What we wish to do here is to consider just why it is that we need to put on the whole armour of God.

Paul also gives us the answer to this question. He tells us that is so that we "may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil...to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:11, 13).

There is no doubt that the devil desires our souls. Peter wrote, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8). However, the devil is not powerful enough to take our souls against our will. Just as we have free will to obey God or disobey God, we have free will to resist the devil or not to resist him (James 4:7). But, the devil is sly. He does not meet us face to face and with an honest approach. Notice Paul spoke of "the wiles of the devil". But, Paul told the Corinthian brethren, "we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Cor. 2:11). Paul said that our fight is "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12).

The world in which we live is full of temptations and influences that we must fight against, using the whole armour of God. For many years now, evolution has been pushed upon us, taught in our public schools as true science, beginning at a very early age and tooted in colleges as the only horn of the intelligent. Multitudes have fallen as a result. "Alternate lifestyles" (what the devil has called fornication in this age) is taught from the earliest years of public education as being only fair and a matter of each individual's own desires and views with no true standard of right or wrong. Those in high places have jumped on board to pass laws that change the entire family structure from the standard of God's word to the lust and desires of the spiritually retarded and to be honest, just plain common sense. Again, multitudes are falling rapidly to the devil's devices.

We have available a suite of armour that will protect us from all these fiery darts. It's the whole armour of God. PUT IN ON!!! *Tilis*