

On Penknives and the Bible – No. 5

Dub McClish

At the end of the 7th century BC, Jehoiakim was the king of Judah in the waning days of that nation. On one occasion, Jeremiah's inspired doom of the king and his nation was read to him, and he was not pleased. In bold arrogance, Jehoiakim casually took his penknife to God's Word, supposing he could thereby expunge the Divine judgment (Jer. 36:20–24).

Men never seem to learn from history or the mistakes of their predecessors. In the conceited mold of Jehoiakim, modern civil and religious leaders have figuratively taken their "penknives" to God's Word. Some have cut away all of it, denying that the Bible is God's Word. Others have selectively excised portions of it they find distasteful, too challenging, too restrictive, or even unnecessary.

Consider the following examples of the "pen knife" treatment of the Bible:

- **Jesus' teaching on divorce and remarriage:** The one cause He honors for divorce and remarriage is fornication on the part of one's spouse (Mat. 5:32; 19:9). Civil law still reflected this Divine law to a great extent until human legislators took their "penknives" to it and began enacting "no-fault divorce" laws 50 years ago.
- **Jesus' teaching on sexual morals:** The word *fornication* in the New Testament (as employed by Jesus and other inspired writers) includes all illicit sexual behavior (although in some passages, various sexual sins are listed separately for emphasis [e.g., adultery, homosexuality, bestiality (Rom. 1:26–27; 1 Cor. 6:9)]). The Son of God restricts sexual behavior to marriage between a man and a woman who are Scriptural candidates for marriage. Thus sexual intimacy before or apart from marriage is sinful. Civil and religious authorities have so emasculated this doctrine as to produce a "free sex" culture since the 1960s.
- **Jesus' teaching on baptism:** Jesus declared, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16a), forever making baptism (i.e., immersion in water) a condition of saving grace. His declaration has simply been too narrow and restrictive for several generations of religious leaders, so they have used their "penknives" to delete Jesus' words. Thus multiplied millions face the Judgment unprepared.

The instances are endless in which men, exalting themselves above God, have mutilated His Word by ignoring and/or altering its message. Jehoiakim learned that He could not destroy the Divine Counsel with his puny little knife. All who follow his example will learn the same—sooner or later.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it appeared in the *Denton Record-Chronicle*, Denton, TX, August 17, 2012].

Attribution: From *thescripturecache.com*; Dub McClish, owner and administrator.