

# Do Not Adulterate the Word of God

by Zac Poonen

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*To be a useful member in the body of Christ, one must renounce craftiness and dishonesty, and stop adulterating the Word of God to suit personal convenience.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 1:5, Proverbs 11:3, Matthew 16:23, John 7:38, 1 Corinthians 3:19, 2 Corinthians 4:2, James 4:10

**Topics:** "Biblical Integrity", "Spiritual Honesty"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of renouncing craftiness, dishonesty, and hidden sins in our lives to truly experience God's rest and be useful members in the body of Christ. He warns against compromising God's standards to please others or twisting Scripture to fit personal beliefs, highlighting the need for honesty and humility in interpreting and applying God's Word.

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## Transcript

In 2 Cor. 4:2, we read Paul saying "We have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God."

We can never come into God's rest, if there is anything of dishonesty or craftiness in our lives. In the past, there were one or two brothers who joined us (they have fallen away now), who were very gifted and very intelligent. But they were very crafty too. God can use gifted and intelligent people if they are straightforward and honest and humble. But God will trap crafty people in their own craftiness (1 Cor. 3:19). And that is what He did to those brothers. Like Haman, they finally hung on the very gallows that they had prepared for others. Crafty brothers and sisters may survive for a long time in the church, because God being longsuffering and merciful gives them plenty of time to change. But if they don't cleanse themselves, they will not survive in a spiritual church. "Sinners cannot stand forever in the assembly of the righteous" (Psa. 1:5).

If you want to be a useful member in the body of Christ, then begin here: Renounce all craftiness and dishonesty, renounce the hidden things of shame, and stop adulterating the word of God to suit your convenience.

There are two ways in which people can adulterate the Word of God.

One way is by compromising the standards of God's Word, when it comes to their own life or when dealing with someone who is a close friend or a loyal supporter. Jesus would rebuke even someone as close to

Him as Peter saying, "Get behind Me, Satan", if Peter suggested a course of action that was contrary to God's will. We must not adulterate the standards of God's Word to cover-up the failures of our wives or to please some rich person or close friend. We must never have any friends who are closer to us than the Word of God itself - for such a friendship can never be a spiritual fellowship.

A second way in which people can adulterate the Word of God is by twisting the interpretation of a verse to suit their pre-conceived theology or ideas. Consider just one example: The doctrine of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This truth is emphasised very plainly and clearly at the very beginning of each of the first 5 books of the New Testament (See Matt. 3:11; Mark. 1:8; Luke. 3:16; John.1:33; and Acts 1:5) Yet it is almost impossible to get believers from Brethren and Baptist groups to believe that Jesus can baptize them in the Holy Spirit today - because they have been brainwashed from childhood into believing that "they got everything as soon as they were converted". If they are honest, they will have to admit that rivers of living water are not flowing out of their lives, as Jesus said it would out of the lives of those who are filled with the Holy Spirit. But they will not face up to reality. When they read the Scriptures relating to being baptized in the Holy Spirit, they will make it fit the shape of their denomination's theology. This is intellectual dishonesty and adulterating the Word of God.

An honest believer however would say, when he comes to a difficult verse, that it doesn't seem to fit with the doctrine that he has always believed, and that perhaps he needs to get more light from God on it. There is great hope for such honest believers.

Honesty and humility are like twins. They always go together in a person. They are like the two sides of a coin. You can't have one side without having the other. If you are really humble, you will be honest too. To acknowledge your craftiness is to humble yourself. When you renounce dishonesty you are actually renouncing a part of your pride.

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