

“God Files Defamation of Character Lawsuit Against Church”

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Ok... this really didn't happen, but I think there is plenty of evidence today for God to do such a thing. What do I mean by this? Defamation has the idea of misrepresenting or slandering someone's character or words through publication or some other form of communication. Also, when I speak of the church, I speak of the church in general throughout all of America. How has the church defamed God's Character? In answering this question it is absolutely essential to understand accurately what the character of God is. God has revealed to us in the Bible exactly what His character or attributes are and when the church, which bears the full responsibility for proclaiming this to the world, begins to depart from what He has revealed, we defame Him.

The Bible tells us that in the last days, the church “will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” (2 Timothy 4:3-4). I think we are seeing this fulfilled in our present time. We live in a time when the “church” in general has departed from the authoritative teaching of God's Word and instead turned aside to a style of preaching that is not meant to proclaim sound doctrine. In fact, “doctrine” has become a dirty word in many churches and the Bible tells us that people will not endure sound doctrine, but will turn away from the truth. John MacArthur comments on this trend when he says, “There are plenty of gifted communicators in the modern evangelical movement, but today's sermons tend to be short, shallow, topical homilies that massage people's egos and focus on fairly insipid subjects like human relationships, "successful" living, emotional issues, and other practical but worldly—and not definitively biblical—themes. These messages are lightweight and without substance, cheap and synthetic, leaving little more than an ephemeral impression on the minds of the hearers.” God's answer to all this is found in 2 Timothy 4:2, where we are commanded to preach the Word and nothing else.

Well... how does this work for those who aren't pastors? Let me encourage you to be bold in sharing the truth of the Gospel personally. I don't believe this applies only to pastors, because the word “preach” means to proclaim. How are you doing in your proclamation of the gospel to those around you? Let me give you a concrete example. I was listening to a Christian radio station the other day and they were proclaiming the gospel. Yet what I heard was a misrepresentation or distortion of who God is. They spoke rightly of the love of God and also that God has a plan for our lives, but the person stopped there. That is not the gospel. I felt cheated. There was no proclamation of God's holiness, our sinfulness, and God's wrath to come. No call for repentance on the part of the sinner to avoid God's punishment. The church is misrepresenting God and the gospel when we take away those things that are deemed offensive. The gospel is offensive (Matt 10:34; Gal 5:11) and we need to share about who God is. Have you noticed that people spend more time talking about God's love than His holiness or

justice? The Bible never proclaims that God is loving, loving, loving, but instead holy, holy, holy (Isaiah 6:3; Rev 4:8). Is God loving? Of course He is (1 John 4:8), but Jesus spoke more of repentance and fear of God (Matt 4:17; 10:27-28) than of the love of God. Let's get back to the Biblical example and model. When Jesus presented the gospel to people, He did not focus on God's love, but instead on the person's sin and need for repentance. The fact that they get a chance to repent is evidence of God's love. Examine the book of Acts when Peter or Paul present the gospel and you will not find a reference to God's love, but instead a command to repent (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; 26:20). This is a biblical call to the church, both leaders and lay people (myself included), to make sure we don't defame God, by proclaiming all of who He is, the good and the severe (Romans 11:22). Have a blessed week!

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