

A. Janse “God's Word is more than gold.”

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We received the Bible, the Divine Word written in the language of mankind – in order that we might be assured of His grace in Christ and of His judgement over unbelievers, including those within the church.

But where shall the church obtain certainty if doubt is cast on that Word? Certainty of faith is directly related to that Word. And whoever believes... shall eat the Book, according to Ezekiel 3 and Revelation 10. He will discover its sweetness. God's word is more than gold, sweeter than honey, wrote the Old Testament poet. But afterwards it also became bitter to Ezekiel, John and Jeremiah (15:16-21).

Whoever confesses God's Word, while living among apostate people who place their trust in false assumptions or who seek salvation through their own pious works, and whoever glories in that Word as source of the certainty of faith and calls for obedience to its teachings will be as Jeremiah. Or he will be like John against whom the Gnostics and Antinomians warred, seducing many.

May God grant that His faithful church, the remnant, remain true to His Word. May He also keep her according to His promise in the hour of temptation that will come upon the whole world (Revelation 3:10).

Because “of the Word of God” and their own steadfast, courageous testimony, many were killed – and now dwell “under the altar.” As John watched the fifth seal being broken, these martyrs cried for their blood to be avenged. But they were to wait beyond the fifth seal until their fellow servants had suffered the same fate.

The judgement will then come. Such knowledge, disclosed by Scripture, is certain to the believer. Where else can such certainties be found? Which prophecy other than that of God's prophets was fulfilled with such unerring consistency?

It behooves us to read that Word with fear and trembling. It behooves us to ensure diligently the true proclamation of that Word in our churches. May God grant us and preserve for us the true, reliable administration of His Word. May He also strengthen the faithful followers of the truth of His Word against all liars and dissemblers in order that they may not weaken. May He spare them the judgement the Teacher pronounced on Ephesus: “I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested (in church life) those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. You have persevered (in that struggle) and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary (in that fight against false teachers). Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love (you no longer fight faithfully and have forgotten the first things). If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your

lampstand from its place. But you have this in your favour: you hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”

In our time we must persevere steadfastly in our testimony of God’s Word. Those who, armed with biblical assurance of faith, struggle against the unbiblical, fundamentally insecure rationale of “Christian activism” must endure and may not falter. And if they falter, they must repent in order that they may resume and persevere in their pursuit of this “first love.”