***“Faltering Between Two Opinions”***

*I Kings 18:21*

21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word. How many spiritual “choices” are present today? How many different opinions on the way God directs us to salvation are there? How many different ways does He want to be worshiped? How many are acceptable? Is there a right and wrong way? Are we faltering between two opinions? A plurality of “options” when it comes to serving God is not unique to us in the post twentieth century. Since the time of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:3), God has always given humans a choice as free moral agents to either follow him as prescribed or not. God also is very explicit in explaining which path He wishes His people to take. Often times, left to our own devices, we have managed to change and discard the very direction God has given us. In I Kings 18:17-19 we learn Ahab continued to support idolatry started by previous generations. Baal was the prominent denomination of the day. Many times when stories in the Old Testament are read and idol worship is referenced, do we make the correlation to denominational worship today? Just as there are no level or degrees of sin there are no degrees of adding or taking away from God’s word; additions and subtractions at any level are wrong (Rev. 22:18-19). Elijah called for the prophets to come for a challenge on Mt. Carmel so all the people could be reminded of who the true God was (I Kings 18:20-21). Elijah not only recognized the false teaching that was present, but also brought it to the attention of those who were being led astray. Do we stand up for our faith when it is challenged? Are we the spiritual leaders we should be in our families and communities? Elijah also stated in verse 22 that he was alone, the last prophet of God. He was outnumbered by 850 to 1. Jesus teaches in Matt 7:13-15 the popular way is often not the right way. We find man has devised many different plans today for salvation and worshiping God. Why do we think we can come up with a better plan than God; God warns us about following blind guides (Matt. 15:13-14)?

When we change God’s plan we are putting our wisdom above His (Isaiah 55:8-9). Elijah continued the contest by setting out the rules (I Kings 18:23-24). Elijah then gives the prophets of Baal the first try (I Kings 18:25-29). One take away from their attempt is how devout these people were. Anyone willing to work all day and even go as far as self-inflicted harm is serious for his or her cause. Finally, Elijah calls on the name of the Lord and is answered by fire from heaven; an awe inspiring sight to be sure (I Kings 18:30-39). At the conclusion of the contest, God showed His power and turned the people’s hearts back to Him. God through Elijah also dealt with those prophets who changed His word (I Kings 18:40), they were killed! God has not changed His opinion of sin today and we are fortunate for the opportunity He affords us to seek forgiveness.

Are we faltering between two opinions? Any other opinion other than God’s is wrong. Any addition or subtraction from the word or steps of salvation is wrong. The steps of salvation are clear, not up to interpretation. This isn’t my opinion or my words, it’s the truth – God’s word.

***-JW***