

leave and a man come in who led the people astray, and destroy the witness of the church. And I resolved years ago that if a man stands for the Word of God no matter what faults he has, I am not going to say things that will cut down his influence or hinder his opportunity of service. I'm not going to make critical statements about a man who truly stands for the entire Word of God.

And the converse of that, if a man is ~~x~~ tearing down the Word of God, I am not going to praise him in ways that will increase his influence or give him opportunities that otherwise might no

Some years ago I got on a train going to California. On the way I stopped off at New Mexico. When I got on again I found a man on the train also going to California, who was known as one of the great defenders of the faith in the U.S.A., a man who had a tremendous influence for good. I had known him before, and I told him what I was planning to do. I was going to get off at ARIZONA and take a couple of days and go up to the top of a mountain that overlooked the Grand Canyon. As I told him about it he decided he'd like to go with me. We stopped in Flagstaff and we rented a ~~car~~ there and got somebody to drive us to the foot of the mountain, and we we went up the mountain, got caught in a rain storm and had to go into a hogan to get out of it. But going up there and coming back we had great opportunity to talk about a great many subjects. He mentioned to me that out in Pasadena there was a church where the people were greatly dissatisfied because their minister was not really standing for the Word of God and ~~h~~ they came to him and said, "What do you think of such a man?" And he said to me, "I couldn't say something against that man. He's a close friend of my brother. He used to be entertained in our family a great deal. I couldn't say anything critical about him to these people who came to me, so I just said, Oh, he's a very find man. And there was a woman there who gave a great deal of money to that church in order ~~in~~ that it should be a big witness for the Lord in that area. They called this man there, But the man said to me ~~actually~~ actually I don't think he believes much about the Scriptures." And this man took that church and completely ruined it.

After about 10 years people were so completely disgusted that they got rid of him, but there was very little left of the church. And "thought here was a man who stood for the Word of God in a public way marvellously, but when it came to offending somebody who was a friend of the family, he let the fear of offending prevent him from an out and out stand for the Lord.

We may make mistakes. We may end up like the prophet did that came from Judah. We may make greater mistakes. We may end up like the old prophet did. But God looks at the heart, and He will use us if we truly look to Him. May He enable us each one to follow Him and make our lives count for him. Let us pray.

Our Father help us to understand your Word and follow it. Help us not to build on one or two verses, a word here and there, but to build on the great central truths taught so clearly in your Word. Help us to work with those who stand for the truth of God. Help us not to let our influence be used in any way that will hurt the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ. We ask these things in the name of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.