

THE "ORACLES OF GOD"

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First Peter 4:11 says, "If any man speak, [let him speak] as the **oracles** of God; if any man minister, [let him do it] as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

The word "oracles" in this verse appears three other times in the New Testament. In Acts 7:38, "the lively (living) oracles" refers to the Mosaic law. "The oracles of God" in Romans 3:2 speaks of all the written utterances of God through Old Testament writers. "The first principles of the oracles of God" is used to indicate the entire substance of Bible doctrine in Hebrews 5:12. The thought in 1 Peter 4:11 is that if any man (neuter: anyone, whomsoever) speaks, let him speak as the oracles (utterances, word) of God.

The most powerful influence in all the world is the Word of God. It is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). Therefore, when we speak, we are commanded to speak the Word of God. We read in Titus 2:1, "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." The Old Testament prophet Micaiah said, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak" (1 Kings 22:14). Paul instructed Timothy to "preach the word; be instant in season out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort..." (2 Tim. 4:2). We have no authority but the word of God and when we speak, it must be from the

Scriptures which are inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Even in the common daily conversation of any and all Christians (men and women), we are to be governed by what God has said and as He has commanded.

To "speak as the oracles of God" also means that we respect what God did not say, i.e. the *silence* of the Scriptures. What God has not said is very important. Nadab and Abihu were destroyed by fire for their disrespect of the silence of God's Word (Lev. 10:1-2). God instructed them as to which fire to use, thus eliminating any other fire (Lev. 6:1-2). When God says something, it is final. And, when God does not say something, that is final! Everything else is eliminated! We cannot speak where God has not spoken.

We respect silence every day of our lives. For example: When we go out to eat we tell the waiter what we want, not what we do not want. By specifying what we want, we eliminate everything we do not want. The Bible is no different, God has given us exactly what He wants, no more and no less. That is why God's people say: "**We will do only what the Bible authorizes**" (commands), while denominations say: "**We will do everything the Bible does not specifically condemn.**" There's a world of difference between the two!

God said to Jeremiah, "Whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak" (Jer. 1:7). He commands the same of us in 1 Peter 4:11.