

Scare Tactics

by Stephen T. Smith

Warning people of hell and judgment is a legitimate and biblical approach to motivating them to seek salvation.

Scripture: Genesis 6:7-8, Mark 16:15, Hebrews 10:31, Hebrews 11:7

Topics: "Judgment And Hell", "Evangelism Tactics"

Description

Stephen T. Smith discusses the importance of warning others about God's judgment and the reality of hell as legitimate scare tactics to lead people to salvation. He references Ray Comfort's response to objections about using scare tactics, comparing it to legitimate warnings like seat belt commercials. Smith highlights the biblical example of Noah, who out of fear of God's judgment, built the ark to save himself and his family, emphasizing the necessity of recognizing the impending judgment and fleeing to the Savior.

Transcript

In the episode of Way of the Master dealing with "conscience," an atheist said something to the effect that he wouldn't do anything out of fear. Some people who hear about the need to mention Law, judgment and hell believe that these are scare tactics to cause people to get saved.

In The Evidence Bible, the "Question & Objection" note for Hebrews 10:31 ("It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God") is "You are using scare tactics by talking about hell and Judgment Day." Ray Comfort's response is:

In the late 1980s, TV commercials in the U.S. asked, "What goes through the mind of a driver who is not wearing a seat belt in a head-on collision?" Then they showed a crash dummy having its head crushed by a steering wheel in a collision, and said, "The steering wheel!!" Those were scare tactics, but no one complained because they were legitimate scare tactics. That's what happens in a head-on collision if you are foolish enough to not put on a seat belt.

To warn of hell is fearful, but it is absolutely legitimate, because the Bible says that it is a fearful thing for a sinner to fall into the hands of the living God.

As a biblical example of someone fleeing to the Savior out of fear, look at the type of salvation that we find in Noah's story. Hebrews 11:7 says,

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by

faith.

Genesis 6:8 and 9 tells us that Noah "found grace in the eyes of the Lord," "was a just man" and that he "walked with God," yet upon hearing of God's coming judgment against the earth, he was afraid. It was his fear that caused him to build the ark. It wasn't his love for God or God's love for him that caused him to build it. It wasn't that he wanted to please God in building it, or even that he built it out of obedience. Instead, he wanted to save his skin. He didn't want to go through the judgment unprotected.

Another way to read Hebrews 11:7 would be, "By faith, Noah built an ark because he was scared of the coming judgment."

Shouldn't we, too, be scared of the coming judgment? Not only should we flee to the Savior because of the coming judgment, we should be warning others. Noah's belief that God would do what He had said - "I will destroy man" (Genesis 6:7) - caused him to act. When people in our generation realize that another, even harsher, judgment is coming, then they too will act.

Let us be faithful in declaring God's coming judgment. Don't let anyone persuade you to stop using this absolutely legitimate scare tactic.

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