

~Other Speakers M-R: Derek Melton:**1st Timothy 4:1 (KJV)**

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

We will be very hard pressed to find scriptural inference whereby the Holy Spirit is equally warning the church of the Lord Jesus Christ with such emphasis as found here in this epistle. There is an urgent prophetic breath found here directing our thought towards the cancerous apostasy of souls that is imminent before the second advent of the Lion of Judah's tribe.

This 'departure from the faith' being addressed by the Apostle is not an exodus from a physical edifice, nor is it a withdraw from formal religion or religious assembly. These aforementioned maladies are merely shallow and surface symptoms that identify a much deeper and more horrific crisis. The latter times will be marked by an increase in hyper-religious activity; a frenzy of pseudo-spiritual pilgrimages.

These abnormal and unscriptural spiritual affiliations all have one thing in common. They are void of the fundamental scriptural patterns suggesting the bearing of the cross, the denying of self, the mortification of sin and the glorification of Christ. The dangers of this condition are very deceptive because its followers never cease in religious activity; they only abandon scriptural standards.

These blinded pilgrims soon find themselves giving heed to spirits of seduction, which allure them into doctrinal apostasy. The seduction begins when itching ears meet together with fleshly fables disguised as newly discovered religious blessings. These fables insinuate that temporal materialistic bounties have equal value with eternal scriptural truths. These seductive heresies shift the focus of Gods people away from life-giving eternal significances and towards temporal and materialistic insignificances.

Beloved, these disease-ridden doctrines have crept into the church contaminating and defiling the garments of purity and cleanliness, which once made her beautiful and attractive to Christ. These seductive spirits have taught lies to the church, insulting the Spirit of grace.

These lying spirits have portrayed the sovereign Lord as a supernatural means to attain a materialistic end. This false identification misleads its followers into error by misrepresenting the God of sovereign authority and majestic power as a mere materialistic Provider who pleases Himself by gratifying our recreational desires.

Soon these beguiled believers begin to devalue the necessity of glorifying, honoring, and worshipping the Ancient of days, yielding their all to His every command and desire. As this process of devaluing is transpiring another law is at work: the law of human gratification and hyper self-exaltation. This simply infers that as the commitment and loyalty towards God diminishes inwardly, the gratification and deification of self increases in direct proportion retrospectively.

Soon doctrines are being taught and practiced all in the name of religious correctness that place the comforts and blessedness of materialism at the pinnacle of our religious experience. Hence the age-old tenants of the Christian faith which place the exaltation of God through Jesus Christ and the costly but voluntary submission to His will at the pinnacle of true religious experience are kept locked up in the ancient vaults of yesteryear's theology.

The inward focus of the church is clear and convicting evidence that our illness is wide-spread and of epidemic proportion. The church has tragically fallen in love with itself as well as temporal pleasures thereby aborting her love for God. Paul warned of this citing: "...men shall be lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." He continued by saying: "having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof."

The church is perceiving itself through glasses stained by wantonness, hindering our ability to rightfully discern our own condition. This demonic dart of doctrinal debasement has pierced the very liver of the church as we have followed its seductive spirit straightway. Solomon warned of these dangers: "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death."

What must we do? Beloved we must be awakened from our slumber and repent! The chief purpose of man is not to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin or to satisfy the desires of pleasure. Our purpose is to exalt and worship the Lord our God and to serve Him with a faithful and obedient heart. Anything less is born of that seductive spirit which allures the children of God away from truth and into fables. It would do us good to

Inward Apostasy

ascertain whom our doctrine gratifies.