

Christogram

Why God Permits Heresies

JESUS IS THE DELIVERER

The below article comes from Pat Holliday at www.patholliday.com.

Book of the month:

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GIVE IT TO YOUR PASTOR

Are Christians Safe from Satan's Seduction?

"God's greatest concern is not what Christians are falling into but what they are falling away from! Multitudes of Christians - including pastors, deacons, ministry people of all kinds are losing their faith and confidence in the power of Jesus' name! They are turning away from Christ as the answer to everything. They are falling away from a childlike faith in Him alone as the solution to all life's problems. There is a wholesale turning to methods, to psychology, to human expertise, to the philosophies and doctrines of men." ¹

David Wilkerson, *The Great Apostasy!*

NEO EVANGELISM

Recently a garish, young evangelist came to town and said, "I am believing that someone will

¹ David Wilkerson, *The Great Apostasy!*, Newsletter, N.Y. N.Y.

give me a new car. I don't want to take the money from my ministry to buy one." The car that he named was a \$250,000 dollar car! Here are some of the extreme doctrines that were taught to the gullible Christians. Adam is a god, so that makes us a little god! God wants you to be rich. Jesus gave me the keys to bless "whoever sacrificially blesses me. Another words, when you bountifully give to me, I will bountifully bless you! I use the money that I collect from Christians, to warn people that Russians are going to attack America with bombs from submarines off the eastern coastline. I saw this happening in a vision. Jesus has visited with me many times. He took me to heaven and Jesus told me that I will be the next Bennie Hinn, blah, blah, blah.

How can these claims be? I thought the Bible says that Jesus is not a respecter of a person. This certainly does make this individual a particular person in Jesus doesn't it? Anytime someone treats Jesus as a familiar spirit, you should be discerning and skeptical of such claims.

Actually, this loggerheaded evangelist is just another sensationalistic man that ministers' his lies to you of what I've named the "I, you and me the gospel of self esteem." The people who are under the powers of bewitchments, shout and cheer while these self-centered buffoons stand before them strutting like proud peacocks in their expensive designer clothes and \$1,000.00 shoes to display that "God is blessing them." Jesus is not the center of the gospel of these unscrupulous ministers and they will steal, Him from being the center of your life.

Heresy usually abounds in these kinds of ministries because they do not know the Word of God and usually just copy each other's false gospel. Unfortunately the blind lead the blind and THE DOGS (Christian leaders) THAT ARE SUPPOSED TO BARK THAT THE WOLVES ARE IN THE SHEEP PEN ARE SILENT. Many in the church are falling into the ditch. When someone is brave enough to tell the truth of these wretched people, they are told, "Don't touch God's anointed." My friends, these self-appointed, mammon driven ministers are not anointed by Jesus but they are clearly being anointed by the Devil to drain money from the church that should be used for the harvest of lost souls. While they sit on their thrones as queens and kings in their multimillion dollar mansions, multitudes are in the valley of decision awaiting for a Godly minister to come to tell them about Jesus. The money is sucked off the Church for cheap worldly trinkets instead of souls. The gospel of self worth and greed are in and Jesus is out! As the end time approaches, Satan is attempting to consolidate his most effective lies into one massive movement against Christ and His Church.

These are the supercilious, cockamamy, demonically - called ministers are bringing great reproaches on the Body of Christ. Their feel-good gospels of self esteem, materialism, and spiritual blindness will be a dreadful testimony against them at the Judgement Seat of Jesus. People are spiritually dying and dropping into hell. Clearly, Jesus will tell them, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you." Jesus told us, Don't let many of you become teachers because you

will give a greater account of your work before His throne.

Jesus is calling His true Christians to repent and turn away from these wicked lies and He will give you a true revival for your soul.

THE CHURCH IS IMPORTANT

Jesus instituted a unique church. It is different from every other institution or organization in the world because the church belongs to Jesus Christ. His church is powerful. The relevance of the church is not based primarily on what it does, but upon what it is. Christ is the foundation of the church, (I Corinthians 3:11). *“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”* The Apostle Paul discloses in (Ephesians 2:19), that the church is the household of God.

A right understanding of the nature of the church will give an honest Christian good reason to support the local church. It is a divine foundation and Jesus Christ is the cornerstone. Martin Luther said it well in the great hymn, “The Church’s One Foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.” It is extremely vital that you keep Jesus at the center of your life and find a Word balanced church that teaches sound Doctrine. Don’t stay in a church that teaches about worldly things or sidelines to the Bible. Find a church that is spiritually anchored. A pastor that teaches foundations and doctrines of the Bible, a pastor that reveals Jesus at the heart of the Word, your church should be important to you since it is important to Christ.

Christ loves the church sacrificially, giving His life for it, (Ephesians 5:25). He gave all that He had for the church, (Matthew 13:44). He wants you to be aware of the gravity of assuming your responsibility, commitment and care for His church. Jesus asked, “how much do you love me?” Then He said, “I love you this much,” and lifted up his arms and died!

THE GATES OF HELL

The Apostle John forewarns, *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know we the Spirit of God, every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God and this is that spirit of antichrist whereof you have heard that it should come and even now, already is in the world,”* (I John 4).

Certainly, as we look at this text, we see that Christians should be discerning the times and seasons. Numerous Believers provide understanding to the involvement of the occult, cults. However they choose ignore the stunning fact that Satan is busily infiltrating many churches through supernatural New Age methods. These bewitching seeds of seduction have been etching themselves into the landscape of the American Christian Church for many years. The Church has ignored the subtlety of Satan tactics because the discerning of Christian doctrines and ministers has not been at the forefront of Christian teaching and preaching. The sideline of a great deal of preaching consists of teachings concerning materialism, emotionalism and intellectualism. When biblical foundations

are weakened, the church loses its purposes and becomes religious instead of being powerful and faithful guardians of the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

An excellent example of the sleeping church is shown in the book, *Trojan Horse, How the New Age Movement Infiltrates the Church*. Authors Brenda Scott and Samantha Smith expose ' of New Age/occult concepts and techniques that are being introduced into all major denominations should be read by every Christian.² Their research concerns the popular Author Madeleine L 'Engle and this prolific writer's introducing New Age/occult concepts and techniques into the Church. Scott and Smith write, "L'Engle's influence has deeply penetrated mainstream Christianity under the guise of "Christian literature." They ask the Church these important questions. "How could it be that the Church, the Body of Christ, would be put into the position of having to debate the merits of practices and teachings condemned by God Himself? Through what door has this heresy entered the church, and how widespread is it?"³

We are looking at an end-time phenomenon within the Church. In light of all this activity, Apostle Paul says in (2 Timothy 4:1-5), "*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and . . . What? . . doctrine.*" "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound . . . what? . . . doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist make full proof of thy ministry.*" Notice verse one says, "*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ . . .*" You've got to remember Paul is talking to a preacher!⁴

Church leadership has been unwilling to challenge doctrines of devils and have ignored the power of these teachings. Seminaries have neglected to criticize the significance of the rise of New Age acceptance by Church leaders. Consequently, many are ignorant of New Age theories. We find mixtures of New Age ideologies into the isolated Scriptures twisting them to say things that are not true. Religious spirits sweep into numerous churches spawning multitudes of false doctrines and false teachers. Countless are flourishing inasmuch as they offer a nearly perfect counterfeit of Jesus, His salvation, His church and His gospel. The Apostle Paul forewarned the Church to watch out for Satan's infiltrating agent's when he wrote, "*For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel,*

² *Trojan Horse, How the New Age Movement Infiltrates the Church*. Authors Brenda Scott and Samantha Smith, Huntington House Publishers, P. O. Box 53788, Lafayette, Louisiana 70505.

³ *ibid*

⁴ Rick Renner, *Seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Demons, Last Day Supernatural Confrontation*, Pillar Books, P.O. Box 471692, Tulsa, Ok. 74147-1692.

which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him,” (2 Corinthians 11:4).

The Lord promised us that the gates of Hell will not prevail against His Church. Praise God for His revelation knowledge, many pastors and teachers and members of the Body of Christ are becoming aware that they are in a war zone and they are awakening to the reality of the need of intense spiritual warfare. The Bible warns us that Satan can get an advantage of us if we remain ignorant of his devices, (2 Corinthians 2:11).

Satan’s strategy to rob the church of her authority and take the glory from Jesus Christ is breaking down. Many church leaders are becoming alive to the issue of spiritual authority and their right through the Word of God to take back the ground that Satan has stolen. They are attacking the devil and defending the faith that was once delivered unto the saints.

It is a misconception amongst Christians to think that a great revival is happening, in fact the Bible is very clear that the falling away must come first before the Anti-Christ is revealed and this is what we are seeing today! “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition,” (2 Thess. 2:3).

THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

The Second World War drove true Christianity underground in Poland but then made it more necessary than ever. The clergy were given special attention by Hitler's National Socialist Party. "Priests will preach what we tell them to preach and if any priest acts differently, we will make short work of him; the task of a priest acts to keep the Poles quiet, stupid and dull-witted," said an order from Hitler to Hans Frank, his Governor General in Poland, on October 2, 1939. The appearance of the "New Age Socialism" will again eventually demand an underground church that refuses to serve narrow political ends.⁵

Although the above statement may seem outlandish to the typical prosperous, confident, materialistic American Christian who has the inclination to brush aside talk of crisis, the truth is that a large branch of the Body of Christ in the world is being tortured, martyred and worships underground. Christians must understand there is an attack on nationalism and religion which in combination, are significant influences that are alive and viable.

Why do we feel so secure and protected from these controlling evil forces? Are we God's unchallengeable Christians who do not have to be troubled because of our birthright of freedom? Is the Church of America asleep about the important question of the government orchestrating a possible campaign to persuade our people to embrace socialism of the New Age?

Born again Christians are supposed to be children of the light and not in the dark! We must

⁵ Metcalfe, J. C, There Must Be Heresies, The Overcomer Trust, Dorset England, p. 5.

reaffirm our faith, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"* (Gal. 2:20). Prayerfully, we must grasp this text until it becomes alive to us. For the Jesus who lives within us is the victorious Lord. As Paul writes about the cross in (Col. 2:15), *"And, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."* Jesus Christ is the victorious Lord. He has defeated all the forces of darkness. Inasmuch as He is the victorious Lord, He can therefore declare, *"I have overcome the world"* (John 16:33). Jesus can truly assert *"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth"* (Matt.28:18). Therefore Paul makes a statement which has the earsplitting accompaniment of tens of thousands of Jesus' followers: *"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living"* (Romans 14:8).

Our starting point is the bedrock truth, believers are eternally bound to Christ and we rest with Paul's triumphant certainty in (Rom. 8:38,39); *"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Jesus Christ desires to return to find us not in states of confusion, fearful and unaware. The triumph of the Church, The Bride of Christ, is certain! Day by day as the end-time advances to draw nearer, the scriptures tell us that the "Church Age" will close with great apostasies and many so-called "Christians" will depart from the Truth of Jesus Christ and His Word, to follow the doctrines of the devil's lies. They will seek man-made, state-controlled methods instead of The Master's direction. Deceptions and supernatural heresies incited by false religious teachers will abound. Religions of mind transformation without spiritual regeneration will prosper. The infidels, hypocrites, deceivers and charlatans will see a season when their own "glory" will be enshrined.

Fear not Beloved Saints, the Bible declares, *"It is not possible to deceive the elect!"* Glory! *"For there shall arise false Christ, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that IF IT WERE POSSIBLE, they shall deceive the very elect,"* (Matt. 24:24). A most important point is the truth that the cause of Christ has never depended on human patronage, authority, means, wealth, knowledge, expression, or wisdom. The cause of Jesus Christ depends only upon the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit calls out workers (Acts 13). He qualifies them (1 Cor. 12:8). He insures the Church's success (Dan. 4:34). He gives all the glory to Jesus Christ. However, the Church has three enemies:

1. The world, (1 Jn. 5:4).
2. The flesh, (Gal. 5:16).
3. The Devil, (Jam. 4:7), but Divine presence of God and His Word guarantee our triumph!

WHAT IS HERESY?

Why is God silent in the face of widespread heresy?

Why do the wicked prosper while many godly are oppressed? When is God going to step on the scene and set it all right? We must take heart though it may seem that God's enemies are in control and He is doing nothing. We must remember these things were foretold in the scriptures. God is still in control! Everything must be fulfilled and like children in the wilderness led by the hand of God, we shall see the majestic glory of the risen Lord!

God desires a people who will trust Him and His Word. When men cast aside God's laws, they do what is right in their own eyes. Despite how ungodly the world becomes, His people will see His deliverance! Man's will for rebellion will continue until he brings the world to the brink of utter destruction. We, Christians may have to spend time in God's waiting room, having faith in God and abiding, and contending with the wiles of Satan till the day of deliverance, but it will surely come. The Bible tells us so.

THE SPIRIT OF ERROR

The Apostle Paul tells us in (1 Cor.11:19), why God allows heresy to dwell in the midst of His Church. Paul says, "*There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.*" God's Word and His anointing are standards that places our faith on firm foundations. It is by means of iniquity (self will) that the root of error takes control.

The Greek word, heresy, according to Liddell and Scott, means taking for oneself, choosing, or choice. The things chosen, and so plan, purpose a course of action or thought. From this we get a philosophic principle, a sect, a heresy.¹

Webster's International Dictionary defines Heresy:

1. Adherence to a religious opinion that contrary to an established dogma of a church. Dissent from a dominant theory or opinion in any field group or school of thought centering around a particular heresy.²

Therefore, **heresy is not so much rejecting as selecting**. The heretic simply selects the part of the scriptures he or she wants to stress, and lets the rest go. How prone we are to take to ourselves those parts of the truth that please us and ignore the other parts. This is heresy! Heresies are a direct result of an intellectual concept becoming crystallized into a religious system of teaching that is not Scriptural. This is the case with the multifarious sects which divide Christendom today.³

¹ Metcalfe, J.C, *There Must Be Heresies*, The Overcomer Literature Trust, Dorset England p. 5.

² Webster's International Dictionary

³ Metcalfe, There must be., cit., op

The book of Jude supplies us with a simple, straightforward summary of such sects, *"These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit"* (Jude 19). Their philosophies are built, not on the full and glorious work of the Holy Spirit of God, that exalts Jesus Christ, making His person the grand, central theme of their witness, but on some sideline doctrine, which divides instead of uniting.⁴

What are the *"doctrines of devils?"* What is the result of a spirit of error? Can a spirit of whoredom rule over a church? The Apostle Paul warned Christians to beware of deceivers but also to take heed that he would not deceive himself (1 Cor. 3:18). Jesus also cautioned Believers to beware of self deception in (Lk. 21:8). From the beginning of the Church throughout its history, Satan has attacked by using evil deceivers. *"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse, deceiving and being deceived,"* (2 Tim. 3:13).⁵

WHY ARE HERESIES PERMITTED BY GOD?

But why does God permit such things? Confusion and delusion prevail when another gospel is preached. Division and strife are present where unscriptural ways are taught. Why does God permit heresy when the issue of man's salvation and spiritual health are at stake?

The answers to these puzzling queries are supplied in the scriptures, *"That they which are approved may be made manifest among you,"* (1 Cor. 11:19). The Church shines the brightest when its ministers are full of the Holy Spirit, lifting a Biblical standard against the darkness of the world.⁶ The Bible is full of testimonies of true as well as false teachers.

The test of God's prophet was not because of the popularity. The majority did not appreciate Jeremiah's prophecies though he spoke God's Words. Jeremiah's condemnation of the sins of the people aroused much hostility, both in his hometown of Anathoth also Jerusalem (Jer. 11:18-23).

He spoke out fearlessly and drew upon himself the anger of the court by predicting the capture and ultimate destruction of Jerusalem. He was forced into hiding during the reign of the tyrannical Jehoiakim who showed their contempt not only for him but for the word of the Lord by cutting up and burning the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies. They chose the things they wanted to hear and became enraged with Jeremiah, even putting him into a pit. The ear-tickling false prophets of Jeremiah's day have passed away into obscurity while everyone remembers God's prophet, Jeremiah.

He was vindicated when his prophecies came true! *"The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps,"* (Jer. 10:23). Jeremiah's statement is just as valid today as it was when he wrote it. Unfortunately people looking for material success in this world do not necessarily understand spiritual success in the spirit world.

⁴ ibid

⁵ ibid

⁶ ibid

Jesus must be the dominant part of us, so that we become known in the world as men and women of God. As we learn obedience and dependence upon the teaching of the Holy Spirit, we are able to see the works of Satan and detect the true works of God. Heresies exist but The Holy Spirit exposes them in His word . . . *that they which are approved may be made manifest among you,*" (1 Cor. 11:19). You supposed to discern the difference between God's true servants and the false servants.

HERESY - FLESH

The Apostle Paul exposed heresy as a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:20). This evil self-life, the terrifying result of man's fall, is responsible for the arbitrary choices of pet teachings, as surely as it is the promoter of drunken orgies, or dastardly murders. A man governed by his natural mind does not understand the working of the Spirit of God. He may throw himself or herself wholeheartedly into 'religion', becoming so obsessed with the tenets of some particular church or organization that he can see nothing else. Often such a man is so zealous for the cause he has adopted that he becomes militant and aggressive to the point of unbending hardness.⁷

Real faith is having confidence in God that He is working on our behalf. Unbelief will not wait for God to work, but must rush ahead to help itself. Thus, he fails to receive from God; for "*He worketh for him that waiteth for Him,*" (Isa. 64:4). It is not faith plus something besides; faith stands alone!

(Gal. 5:24), provide an answer to the problem of heresy. "*They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts,*" God, in the Cross of Christ, condemned and visited judgment on the fallen self-life the flesh. In this way He has supplied the means of slaying the flesh, and it is our part to accept this means as our own choice. When soberly and quietly we count ourselves to be "*dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord,*" (Rom. 6:11), we find our affection for, and desires for, fascinating theories, and the sponsors of them, are dealt with.

In his autobiography there is a sad passage in which Charles Darwin says that he was "very unwilling to give up his belief in Christianity, but disbelief crept over me at a very slow rate, but was so complete." He adds this sentence: "I can hardly see how anyone should wish Christianity to be true; for, if so, the plain language of the text seems to show that the men who do not believe-and this would include my father, brother, and almost all my best friends - will be everlastingly punished. And this is a damnable doctrine."⁸

Can we know anything for sure, and if so, how do we reach certainty? Is Christianity still relevant for our day? October 31, 1517 was the day that Martin Luther nailed to the church door his 95 theses with a sound which would ring round the world. The great principles by which he lived and died which brought to life the Reformation were these:

1. The sole authority of scriptures.

⁷ ibid

⁸ Barlow, Nora, ed *Charles Darwin*, pp. 86, (Collins, 1958).

2. Salvation by faith alone.
3. The Priesthood of all believers.

Luther came under the attack of the Roman Catholic Church for preaching these radical principles. He directed the people to receive the authority of the scriptures as their foundation, and to receive salvation through faith so that they, as priests, could step boldly before the throne of God through the blood of Jesus. This great light was Luther's gift to the very dark world of his day. It allowed men and women to have direct fellowship with their God freed at last from their religious system and its priesthood. The entire weight of the Roman Church authority was raised against Luther and his three great principles. But God's light prevailed and the Reformation raised up a great bulwark of Christian faith and religious freedom in the western world.

Talmage Wilson in his book, *The Freeway to Babylon* writes, "The Reformation took aim on superstitious belief in the Roman Church and her rites, which kept masses of people in spiritual bondage, and proclaimed, the liberty of the Christian man, and the priesthood of all believers."⁹ Thus, the Reformation was the really spiritual foundation of the Republic.

It has not changed. Christianity is a way of life, not a theological system wherewith one must be in intellectual agreement. It is choosing a relationship with God and His Holy Word! Every leaf of the Gospels contains precious treasures and the statements of Jesus about Himself. *"I am the door"; "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"; "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."* These three claims give the wonderful promises of the New Birth, the abundant life and the Blessed Lordship and personal relationship with the Good Shepherd. The Bible scholar W. B. Riley penned these encouraging words: "With earthly shepherds, one might lose his life for the sheep, and yet the sheep perish, but not so with the Lord who is our Shepherd. When He gives His life for us, it is that ours might be saved. We are saved by His death, for in death He is with us and for us, and in death He is conquering our enemy."¹⁰

GOD IS DEAD

There are still many great Christian men and women of God, pastors, evangelists and workers who tend the fields, giving their lives for the sheep. Praise God for them! *"The gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church,"* (Matthew 16: 18). God is getting His Church ready for the greatest events that will ever happen in the universe, the Rapture and Second Coming of the Lord Jesus to establish His Millennium Kingdom upon this earth. Nonetheless, the days are evil and many would rob the world of its true God and Savior.

If one could pinpoint the exact time when overt Christian heresy began to emerge in America publicly

⁹ Wilson, Talmage *Freeway To Babylon*, 2nd ed. Published by Author, 100 West Florentia Seattle, Washington 98119. p.16.

¹⁰ The Bible scholar W. B. Riley

on a large scale, one's finger would point to the time in the sixties when on national TV Emory University students snake-danced across the campus chanting, "God is Dead!" These students were only reflecting their professor, Dr. Thomas J. J. Altizer's, of Emory University, vile philosophy contained in an article in "Christian Century," July 7, 1965, that began by stating categorically that "God is dead!"⁹ Though he tries, man can never kill God!¹¹

Rev. Wilson, goes on writing, "Dr. Altizer later wrote a book, *The Gospel of Christian Atheism*, where he calls upon all Christians to "will the death of God, and with the passion of faith." He mentions those who say that contemporary man is unable to believe in God and others who say that our culture is fleeing from the presence of God. Then there are those who feel God has decided to say nothing in our time, and more who argue that the real God is above anything that can be worked out in metaphysics or religion. He rejects these views as inadequate. God is dead, and there is an end of the matter. He believes Christians must not only accept this fact but must look upon the death of God as a "great liberation." Moreover, they must rejoice in the death of God and proclaim this "good news" enthusiastically."¹²

Rev. Wilson concludes, "Altizer can sweep grandly over the entire body of Christian Theology, discarding God, the law of God, and the Old Testament with equal abandon. Surprisingly, he is just as free to get rid of embarrassments about Jesus, including the Resurrection of Christ, The Second Coming, or anything that smacks of the supernatural. Jesus has become flesh, so all attention, honor, and glory must now be riveted on flesh in whatever state it manifests itself. Immorality, idolatry and drunkenness are just as valid expressions of Christ as joy, peace and long-suffering, perhaps better, since they qualify for the new code word "authentic"¹³ . . . **Flesh is the new god.**

After Altizer selected one 'word' of the Bible, and falsely interpreting it, he is blithely able to discard all other words of the Bible. See also that this is no freakish doctrine. It is exactly what is to be expected. It is the predictable result of what must come when we divorce the written Word of God from the living Word of God which embodies it. Grasping the central truth of the Bible, the Incarnation, he so perverts that truth as to be brought to reject the God of the Bible, in the name of Christ. What is this but antichrist?"¹⁴

The spirit of the Antichrist has been in and at work in the world since the Resurrection of Christ. Its main purpose is to work to defame, destroy the purity, power and purpose of Jesus Christ. According to Jesus Christ Himself, Satan works through his ministers of darkness, the wolves in sheep's clothing!

If Altizer were alone in his strange faith, there would not be a need for alarm but it reaches into the

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 19.

¹² *ibid*

¹³ *ibid.*,

¹⁴ *ibid.*

highest halls of Christendom and encompasses every denomination. An article appeared in The London Times August 8, 1964, that expresses the dilemma of modern Christianity. "It is not a sign of wickedness or even of the irreligious for a man to confess that he does not believe in the Virgin Birth or the Resurrection? But there must appear something fundamentally false about such a man who will recite the Nicene Creed at the head of his congregation. The ordinary layman properly feels that if a man does not believe in the creed he should give up saying it. The modern churchman cannot expect ordinary men to respond to the patent insincerity of reciting the words regularly and then maintaining that they do not mean what they say."¹⁵

There are many "*wolves in sheep's clothing*" these days whose chief purpose is to defame the name of Jesus Christ. They work to lead people to doubt the Bible and depart from the true mission of the Church. They use philosophy of men, mysticism, liberal cults, atheism and agnosticism to nullify and discredit the teaching of the Word of God. They work diligently to get rid of Bible Doctrine. These so-called "Christians," by questioning the authority of the scriptures and the claims of the Savior are great signs of the eminent return of Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL MERCHANTISERS

The Church of Jesus Christ does not have ministers called "faith healers." Katherine's Kuhlman said, "I am not a faith healer, I am a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." The Church does have true men and women who have the true gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Church does have the power of Jesus, His Name and His Word. Unfortunately, where there is truth you will have those who are wolves in sheep's clothing. There are many so-called "faith healers" who camouflage themselves as Christians and use God's hurting people as merchandise to enhance their so-called ministries. The Church must begin to see the real from the false and cleanse itself. Otherwise, the humanist will use the false to convict the entire church as false as it did recently with the case of Rev. Peter Popoff.

On April 22, 1986, James Randi, known as "The Amazing Randi," who is a magician-debunker, appeared on NBC-TV's, "The Tonight Show" starring Johnny Carson. Randi showed a televised excerpt from one of Rev. Peter Popoff's crusades of Upland, California. Evangelist Popoff, who, supposedly received it from the Holy Spirit, gave a man and his wife information about themselves and their eye troubles. Then the excerpt was replayed again, but plus a tape showing that Elizabeth Popoff's voice had moments earlier fed the information to her husband's hearing device in his ear through electronic equipment!¹⁶

Rev. Popoff, like many faith healers, calls out the names and illnesses of people at his crusades, then "lays hands" on them and prays for their healing. The impression given at such services is that the

¹⁵ The London Times August 8, 1964

¹⁶ April 22, 1986, James Randi, known as "The Amazing Randi," who is a magician-debunker, appeared on NBC-TV's, "The Tonight Show" starring Johnny Carson.

information comes from divine sources.

Shock waves riveted through the Christian Communities as the NBC's overloaded switchboards lit up in protest. But to no avail because "The Amazing Randi" had the goods to uncover the deception that had been perpetrated by Rev. Popoff upon the unsuspecting couple. Randi's Task force, a project of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Religion, a group associated with the humanist-oriented Free Inquiry Magazine had used a scanning receiver and recording equipment. The tapes and transcriptions show Elizabeth repeatedly cuing Rev. Popoff with names, afflictions, addresses, and occasionally making joking comments about those seeking healing.¹⁷

"Hello, Petey. I love you. I'm talking to you. Can you hear me? If you can't, you're in trouble . . . " Unknown to the Popoffs, in another section of the auditorium complex, an electronics surveillance expert was giving the thumbs-up sign to a colleague as he began a series of surreptitious recordings designed to expose how the evangelist could recite details about the audience members and their afflictions.¹⁸

According to an article from the *L. A. Times Washington Post News Service*, a spokesman for Rev. Popoff first contested the committee's allegation that Popoff gets his information in a very secular manner. However, the evangelist acknowledged in a recent interview that he uses the radio method. Rev. Popoff said that his wife supplies him with only about half the names. " The other half, I would pray and wait on the Lord," he said. "I'm not denying the divine." Rev. Popoff is seen on 51 television outlets, heard on 40 radio stations and has an average gross income of \$550,000 a month, according to his business manager.¹⁹

In a report in Charisma Magazine, Popoff's office in Upland, California, issued a statement: "Everything Amazing Randi has said is not true. Peter Popoff Evangelistic Association is being attacked but we are not alone. This group has also targeted Jerry Falwell, Oral Roberts and Jimmy Swaggart . . . This man is a magician and is using these tactics to get publicity for a book that he is writing to discredit God's work." ²⁰

A spokesman for Popoff said, "Peter Popoff is not going to change the system he is using to pray for people. He used to hold prayer cards. Now, with modern-day hearing aid-type headsets), we have never claimed that these are words of knowledge. We have New electronics, we are in constant communication with him as he is on the air (television show). If he forgets to pray for one of the requests, his wife will

17 ibid

18 ibid

19 ibid

20 Charisma Magazine

remind him through the ear set. She has never said God has told us your name. Never have, never will."²¹

The merchandisers of God's people are sitting upon financial empires that will topple by the hand of God. God's true anointed ministers have nothing to fear because the Lord will back them with great power to perform his work. The sad part of the Popoff affair is that the cleansing comes from a humanist group instead of the Body of Christ. The world is looking but in the name of "unity" the church is accepting any error or personality that chooses to call itself "Christian." God help us in these days of darkness.²²

The seducers are on the move but the Church must bring to remembrance the warning of the Apostle Paul when he wrote: *"There were false prophets also among the people even as there shall be false teachers among you, who shall be bring in damnable heresies . . . "* (2 Pet. 2:1).

DOCTRINES OF DEVILS

The apostle Paul speaks of two dreadful events that will occur just prior to Jesus' return. First, Paul reveals the Church in this last day that there will be a falling away from the faith. Second, that an evil spirit of the Antichrist will overtake many turning them to doctrines of devils.

It has infiltrated every aspect of our lives and has been a secret operation until just the last few years, (Psa. 2:3), says, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

The Great Deception

Throughout his various Epistles, the Apostle Paul admonished us to stay awake - to "watch and be sober."

(1 Thess. 5:6-7), "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night."

(Rom. 13:11), "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

(1 Cor. 15:34), "Awake to righteousness, and sin not..."

(Eph. 5:14), "Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead..."

(Rom. 12:11), "Not slothful in business..."

People who are spiritually asleep generally have certain features about them. Some of them are as follows: They are -

...secure, careless, and unconcerned about their souls.

²¹ L. A. Times/Washington Post Service, A Breach of Faith Florida Times Union and Journal, Jacksonville, FL. 32202, May 11, 1986, p A. 20.

²² ibid

...negligent of their duties like prayer, Bible Study, fellowship with other believers, and witnessing
...regardless of their spiritual enemies or the warfare in which they are engaged.
...given to a carnal security and sinful indulgences.
...stupefied and blinded by besetting sins.
...living as though there is no tomorrow or an eternity awaiting them when they leave this world
...willingly ignorant of God's Word and His Will for their lives.
...unteachable and avoid any serious means of instruction.
...generally intemperate and excessive.
...corrupt in their morals.
...insensible to spiritual things.
...lukewarm in their love for the Lord and His kingdom work.
...given over to the lusts of their own flesh such as "chambering," "strife and envying," "surfeiting".
...unresolved in their convictions and unstable and unsteady in their purposes
...constantly in a warfare in their souls as to whom they should serve - God or the world, their own
Selves, and Sin.

They have a divided heart between God and this world . . . fear God - yet have hearts that are filled with the idols of this world . . . Like Ephraim, they have mixed with the people of this world, learned their works, lost their spiritual identity by becoming conformed to this world and its ways, and adhered to the counsel of the ungodly rather than the Word of God . . . have "itching ears" which are constantly looking for teaching and preaching that will gratify the lusts of their own flesh and satiate their endless curiosity or desire for variety . . . avoid any kind of teaching or preaching that calls for holiness of living or the crucifixion of their flesh . . . and have turned away their ears from the plain and solid Truth.

The Apostle Paul loudly and clearly sound out the alarm to the Body of Christ today -

(1 Thess. 5:6), says - " . . . let us not sleep, as do others . . . "

(Rom. 13:11), says - "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

Some believe when Jesus said, "I am the Way," that He lied. "They believe there are many roads to God. Unfortunately, man's channel of supernaturalism is Satan's counterfeit religion. The host of darkness has converged upon the world and churches are offering counterfeit faith and counterfeit gifts. The Word of God implies that these spirits are legion. 'Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?'" (1 Cor.' 10:21).

The new world religion is here. You can follow any religion that you want and the Devil will answer. You can worship any false god, including yourself and it will be fine as long as you don't

say Jesus Christ is the only way back to God.

Christians should be looking for the return of Jesus Christ. They must be willing to meet him as sold out Believers. While seducing spirits are unleashed by Satan to draw the world to his Antichrist he is also working diligently to deceive Church people. In (1 Cor. 10:20-21) we read, “But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the ‘cup of the Lord’ (Communion cup) and the ‘cup of devils’; ye cannot be partakers of the ‘Lord’s table’ and of the tables of devils (Demons).”

We must avoid the proclamation of the “doctrines of devils” (I Tim. 4:1), and the teaching of “Damnable Heresies” (2 Pet. 2:1). The worldwide false revival of “Christian idols or Christian stars,” are being guided by demons and one of the “*Signs of the Times.*” It should be a warning to every true child of God of the approaching end of the Age.