

Revival or Apostasy

There will be a revival of religion that will sweep the world in the last days. It will not, however, represent the truth - instead, multitudes will be deceived by false gospels, false prophets, and false messiahs.

At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. - Matthew 24:11

While guaranteed by today's "prophets" that we are in the "greatest revival ever," the church is sinking deeper into the last-days apostasy foretold by Christ and His apostles. Jesus warned that false prophets will appear and deceive many people and today as the last days draw to a close, false teachers and preachers are gaining in popularity. Satan is well on the way to success in his goal of enslaving the world. To accomplish his dark objectives, he has reestablished his Church, Mystery Babylon.

"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons." - 1 Timothy 4:1.

Counterfeit Christianity

False forms of Christianity have become popular in our culture and it seems there is a resurgence of interest in things "spiritual." The media has been compliant with its recent offerings of everything from Brad Pitt scaling a Tibetan mountainside in search of divine inspiration to *Nothing Sacred*, the controversial TV drama that features a sometimes fallible priest. Joan Osborne sings "What if God Was One of Us," while Michael Jordan, jogging in Tibet in a Gatorade commercial, encounters a holy man who tells him "Life is a sport: drink it up." Then there are the millions throughout the world who are involved in the occult, astrology, witchcraft, spiritism and Satanism.

The most obvious sign of the spiritual decline of the church is apathy - apathy towards the house of God, the Word of God and the presence of God. Apathy sometimes overtakes a believer - even an entire body of believers - before they are even aware anything is wrong. The fruit of apathy is apostasy.

What fuels this apostasy?

Unbelief:

Implicit or explicit rejection of the authority of God's Word is being spread throughout the Church, often, it seems, with the explicit purpose of leading God's people away from His Word, and sometimes to the active encouragement of immorality. Pulpits across America are silent about sin and do not tell their congregations of their need for repentance. Rather, they preach a politically correct gospel of "tolerance" of sin.

According to Ralph Martin, "Even when the unique and absolute claims of Christ are not clearly rejected on an intellectual level, syncretism often fosters an emotional hostility to such claims. This creates an atmosphere that saps the strength of Christianity as effectively as explicit apostasy. If belief about the unique and absolute claims of Christ is unclear, then faith is corrupted, worship becomes enfeebled and distorted, and evangelism ceases." [Ralph Martin, *A Crises of Truth* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1982), pg. 21.]

According to a recent survey by the Barna Research Group, while 88% believe Jesus Christ was a real person, what they believe about Him differs sharply from scriptural teaching. Forty-two percent of those surveyed believe that while He lived on earth, Jesus committed sins, just like

other people. Even among born-again Christians, one-quarter believe Jesus sinned during His time on earth.

Other pulpits are silent about sin because those sitting in the pews do not want to hear anything that might shatter their perceived security. Or, maybe the preacher is more interested in the collection plate and he believes that if he preaches anything controversial, he will lose some large contributors.

Fear:

A large part of the church is held in bondage because of fear of the unknown. They don't know their Bibles and they don't know about the promises of God. Rather, they rely on what others tell them. Self help books flourish and authors fill bookshelves with titles extolling every kind of human wisdom - but they do not contain the truth of Scripture.

Fear drives some to seek knowledge in places where truth is the most distorted. New Age teachers abound with messages from ascended masters and spirit guides. For example, one popular quasi-Christian movement surrounds the writings of Helen Schucman who penned "A Course in Miracles," which teaches that the world, sin, sickness are all illusions which can be overcome with the power of the mind. Where you find the "Course" you will often also find teachings about reincarnation, Yoga, dream rap, channelling, Christ consciousness, pyramidology, astrology, meditation, metaphysics, shamanism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. You might expect to find these teachings at some remote New Age retreat center, but incredibly "A Course in Miracles" is the text being used by many Sunday School classes in some mainline Christian churches. I personally was introduced to the study at one of Wichita's leading evangelical churches.

For many Christians caught in the web of fear, they profess faith but look for works for their salvation for they have no faith. They judge others according to their works as well for that is their only barometer, i.e. that which they can see. They walk by sight exclusively and not by faith. What can I do for God? And, what are you doing for God? They can be very busy workers, but they do not listen to the voice.

Ignorance:

Without regular communication with God through prayer and regular, systematic study of God's Word, we are at the mercy of the doctrinal storms that are raging in the church today. Much of Christendom is now in an apostate condition as professing believers accept "new revelations" even though it conflicts with the revealed Word of God. New Age occultism of every variety is exploding not only in the secular world but also in the church in what is indeed the greatest worldwide revival of paganism ever known. Spanning the globe and encompassing hundreds of millions of teachers and disciples, it has within its fold thousands of individual cults, churches, groups, and organizations. Those who preach a distorted gospel are even gaining strategic leadership positions in denominations and theological schools, enabling them to deceive and mislead many within the church.

All kinds of radical groups claim some affinity to the gospel of Jesus Christ and only serve to confuse the non-churched and borderline Christian. The KKK for example has as one of its rallying cries, "We are Warriors fighting for our great white race, our families and our savior Jesus Christ."

In many ways the Church has turned to the beliefs, teachings and practices of the world and the cults, from the penchant for humanistic psychology among conservative evangelicals to the cultic affinity for godhood and the demonstration of godlike powers among more extreme charismatics. Popular movements and teachers are influencing the Church to take dominion over the earth, to set up the Kingdom as a requirement for Christ to return, to produce signs and wonders, and to solve its problems through unbiblical methods such as self-esteem therapies, 12-step recovery programs, inner-healing rituals, "binding demons" strategies, and "Christian" mysticism. Many professing Christian leaders promote unity by demoting doctrine and encourage ecumenism to include even overt paganism.

Carnality:

There is little focus on Christ's second coming because that would end the pursuit of pleasure

and prosperity. Instead of Christ as the object of affection, the popular church is attracted to a celebrity, an evangelist, a project, a political cause, a fund-raising campaign, a new building, or supposed miracles and healings. Faith has turned to fantasy with a message of health, wealth, and comfort. In that kind of environment "easy believism" flourishes and many people who associate themselves with the church aren't even Christians. They may have a form of godliness, but they deny its power. Satan is still using this form of deception, and often his representatives are being disguised as ministers of righteousness. While propagating that which brings death and darkness to the mind and heart of the sinner, they profess to be representatives of enlightened living. This is satanic deception.

Theology in many modern churches is focused on meeting people's needs, on solving one's own problems so one can live more comfortably. Few churches hold to a Christ-centered faith that helps a believer stand in the midst of his trials. "For all too often the twentieth-century church takes its cues and defines its role by the ways of the world. It accommodates a consumer-oriented culture that wants, above all else, to feel good. And it focuses on action at the expense of character, on doing rather than being. There is nothing wrong with seeking to meet people's needs or creating programs to do so. The church setting should be an environment where non-Christians feel welcome. The church should grow. But when programs and growth become the central focus, the church is in danger of profaning her first Love... In danger of trivializing the holy." [Charles Colson, *The Body*, pg. 381.]

"For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." - 2 Timothy 4:3-4

The appearances of these false gospels, false Christ's and false prophets is only a prelude to the final apostasy. They are only preparing the way for the ultimate antichrist who will set himself up in the temple and declare himself to be God. You might say he is preparing his followers to accept his ultimate lie.

Are you prepared? Are you armed with the truth so as to recognize the lie and extinguish the firey darts of satan? Are you burdened with a sinful past that weighs you down and makes you feel unworthy? Maybe you've lived a good life, went to church every Sunday, and followed the Ten Commandments as best you could. But, you're still unsure of what right you have to enter heaven. Friend, there is an answer you can find right [here!](#)