

Lifting Up The STANDARD

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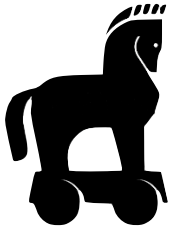


Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Monday, September 28, 2015

The Undiscerning Pastor

“Thou hast them there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else...” (Revelation 2:14-15)



The conquering of Troy is a very famous story of ancient history. Greek soldiers had laid siege to the city for over ten years, but were unable to conquer it.

Finally, they built a large wooden horse and it left outside the city walls as a supposed gift to the unconquerable Trojans. They then sailed away in what appeared to defeat. The Trojans brought the wooden horse inside their fortified walls not knowing a few Greek soldiers were hidden inside the horse. That night they crept out and opened the city gates and the enemy flooded in and they were destroyed. Ever since, the Trojan horse has been a symbol of infiltration and deception.

The pastor at Pergamos was a very hard worker for the cause of Christ; however he lacked the discernment to know the “doctrine of Balaam” and the “doctrine of the Nicolaitans” were about to destroy the local church for which he was responsible.

Somehow, this pastor had come through the ranks, whatever those ranks were in those days, to become the pastor of the church at Pergamos, without learning how to discern false doctrine from sound doctrine.

The pastor at Pergamos was a hard worker. Christ said, “I know thy works.” Christ knew the pastor’s situation. He was working “where Satan’s seat is... where Satan dwelleth.”

The city of Pergamos was filled with many pagan temples. Along with many pagan gods, Caesar instituted “imperial religion” where Caesar was to be worshiped. It was required that every citizen come once a year and worship their king and refusal would lead to certain death.

It was very dangerous for Christians to live and worship in Pergamos. Antipas is mentioned as a martyr who died for the cause of Christ in Pergamos. Christ commended the pastor's steadfastness saying he had, “held fast to His name,” and the pastor had not “denied the faith.”

Some Areas of Concern

In verse fourteen Christ said,

“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”

In verse fifteen, Christ rebuked the pastor saying, “So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”

Christ rebuked the pastor for corrupting the church by allowing wrong associations with those who promoted “the doctrine of Balaam,” and “the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,” and he warned the pastor to “Repent; or else...”

The pastor at Pergamos rejected the doctrine of separation, and refused to separate from those who promoted false doctrine. He allowed infiltrators to infiltrate and poison the membership with “*the doctrine of Balaam*,” and “*the doctrine of the Nicolaitans*.”

“I Hate”

Sixteen times in the Word of God we find the phrase “*I hate*.” The phrase occurs seven times in the Book of Psalms and were all written by the man after God’s own heart.

Psalm 101:3,

“*I hate the work of them that turn aside.*”

Psalm 119:104,

“*I hate every false way.*”

Psalm 119:113,

“*I hate vain thoughts.*”

Psalm 119:128,

“*I hate every false way.*”

Psalm 119:163,

“*I hate and abhor lying.*”

Psalm 139:21,

“*I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee.*”

Psalm 139:22,

“*I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.*”

“I Hate!” or “I Tolerate!”

The pastor at Pergamos was commended for many things; however, he was sharply rebuked because he tolerated what he should have hated.

The Doctrine of Balaam

Balaam was Israel’s phony fundamentalist. He sounded very fundamental; however he was Israel’s fundamental promoter of apostasy. (For a detailed article on Balaam [click here](#)).

Balaam was Israel’s “*stumblingblock*” that caused them to fall into the serious apostasy of their day. The doctrine of the **Nicolaitans** was a false doctrine that began to flourish in the first century A.D. The pastor at Pergamos tolerated this false doctrine.

Exactly what this false doctrine was is not revealed here; however, one thing we know for sure about their doctrine and that is it was hated by the Lord.

In Contrast To The Pastor At Ephesus

Jesus commended the pastor at Ephesus because he hated “*the deeds*” of the Nicolaitans. (Revelation 2:6). The pastor at Pergamos had not learned how to “*hate with a perfect hatred*” (Psalm 139:2), and soon “*the deeds*” of the Nicolaitans became “*the doctrine of the Nicolaitans*” (Revelation 2:15).

The pastor at Ephesus hated what Jesus hates. (Revelation 2:6). The pastor at Pergamos had no discernment concerning the things that Jesus hates (Revelation 2:15).

Tolerant Pastors of Today

Today, because of pastors who are tolerant of the Hyles, Hutson, “*damnable heresy*” that tells us that repentance is not necessary for salvation, multitudes of people are sitting in the pews of our “*fundamental*” churches actually thinking they are saved because they prayed a little forgiveness prayer minus repentance.

Galatians 1:6-9 Is Still In The Bible

Galatians 1:6-9,

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

I can almost hear some of you grasping for breath saying Pastor Kirkland are you saying Jack Hyles and Curtis Hutson should be “*accursed*”? Actually no, I’m not saying that. **GOD SAID THAT!** I just happen to be one of the few preachers left in this age of apostasy who will not bow down to the politics of our so-called fundamentalism.

Accursed?

The Greek word translated “*accursed*” is “*anathema*.” It means to set apart for judgment. It was a temple type of our New Testament church discipline.

Strong's Concordance says *anathema* was to prepare a proclamation that was to be "hung upon the walls or columns of the temple, or put in some other conspicuous place."

International Influences

Today, we have hundreds, if not thousands, of ministries that are influencing Christians. Some of these ministries are scriptural and some of them are far from it.

The Christian who does not learn how to think according to the Scriptures is going to go astray. First Corinthians 2:15 says "he that is spiritual judgeth all things." Jesus said, "Judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). Jesus also said, "Ye shall know (recognize) them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16).

Silence Gives Consent

It is not enough to quietly disassociate ourselves from apostate leaders or those who promote unscriptural doctrine. Jude 1:3 says, "it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The dictionary says to contend is to "state a fact or belief confidently and forcefully."

Stand Up And Be Heard.

All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good pastors to say nothing about the blasphemous heresy being promoted under the banner of our so-called fundamental movement. As pastors, we need to withdraw ourselves "from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received," and our people need to know why!

Peter wrote concerning the congregation, understanding and making proper judgments "at the house of God" (First Peter 4:17). The congregation will only be able to "judge righteous judgment" if they have the facts.

Judged For What They Did Not Preach

In Ezekiel's day, God was angry with His leaders, not because of what they were doing but for what they were not preaching.

Ezekiel 22:26,

"Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean."

What God Demands

Ezekiel 44:23,

"And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean."

Did you read that part where God commanded "they shall teach my people the difference...and cause them to discern"?

Our Mandate In Our Age of Apostasy

Isaiah 59:19 reads,

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him."

The word standard isn't talking about getting a haircut and acting like a fundamentalist. The Hebrew word is "nuwc." The same word is translated in Psalm 60:4 where we read, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." It refers to letting everybody know where you stand.

Silence In The Pulpit

The pastor at Pergamos had no discernment concerning what he should have hated and the people under his watch care needed to know that he hated what the Lord hates. The next generation was at stake and we will see in our article on the pastor at Thyatira that the influence of pergamos developed into a spiritual fornication that destroyed the local church at Thyatira.

Apostasy is not the absence of truth it is the subtle mixture of truth and error.





C.H Spurgeon

Discernment is critical in these last days!

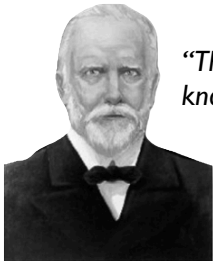
Jeremiah 3:15,

“I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”

There is much more to a successful church than having a large group of people without discernment

Hosea 4:6,

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”



R.A. Torrey

“The man who has no technical knowledge of Greek and Hebrew but has spiritual discernment is a far more competent critic of the Bible than he who has a rare technical knowledge of Greek and Hebrew but no spiritual discernment. It is exceedingly

unfortunate that, in some quarters, more emphasis is laid on a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew in training for the ministry than is laid on spiritual life and its consequent spiritual discernment.”

Discerning What It Is That We Need To Discern

Discernment is nothing more than the God-given ability to determine between truth and error, right and wrong; however, discernment is not the ability to simply have the truth about everything in general.

All Things Must Be Judged Separately

First Corinthians 2:15,

“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things.”

The Greek word translated “judgeth” in verse fifteen is the same word translated “discerned” in verse fourteen, where we read “all things” are “spiritually discerned.”

“Discernment is not simply a matter of telling the difference between what is right and wrong; rather it is the difference between right and almost right.”

The truth about “all things,” all the issues, such as the separation issue the CCM issue, etc. must be discerned separately.

Prayerfully running issues through Proverbs

2:1-9 and other Scriptures concerning whatever subjects we want the truth about is the ONLY way to get God-given discernment.

Let us not think that we will get discernment concerning any issue without many hours of prayerfully seeking the truth from the Word of God. Discernment comes only from God.

Isaiah 28:9,

“Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk.”

Articles like this one or commentaries are simply a little milk. We might receive a little knowledge from them; however, discernment is another matter. Learning to discern demands hours and hours of prayerful study in the Word.

Discernment only comes from the Word of God. To have our senses exercised on the issues of our day we must have a vigorous workout in the Scriptures concerning each issue. It means hours and hours of study not just reading an article like you are reading now. You might have picked up some information from this article; however, discernment only comes from God and He only gives it to those like David or Job who pray “Lord teach me.”

The pastor at pergamos was very actively involved in the ministry; however, he was not very actively involved in the Word. Jesus warned him to “Repent; or else...”

Psalms 119:30,

“The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”