

their manner of life and their general deportment; to say nothing of their heart.

**“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things (concerning the end of the world—vs. 10-13) before, beware lest ye also, being lead away WITH the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness” (II Peter 3:17). That is the note of alarm to the age in which we live. “The error of the wicked” has filtered into the very inmost portion of the church. Myriads have been so carried away with it that they have fallen from their own steadfastness. I speak not altogether of regular attendance in assemblies, calling or other various external involvements, which of themselves are right. I am persuaded that Peter is speaking of the steadfastness that touches the heart of the believer. The Psalmist referred to this type of steadfastness when he spoke of those whose spirit was not “steadfast” (Psalms 78:8). Paul spoke of a hope that was “steadfast” (II Corinthians 1:7).**

It is also witnessed by the Holy Spirit that there is a confidence that may be held “steadfast” (Hebrews 3:14). Also, there are those that are “steadfast in the faith” (I Peter 5:9). The early church continued “steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine” (Acts 2:42), and the Colossians were commended for the “steadfastness” of their “faith in Christ” (Colossians 2:5). There is hardly a child of God that does not begin with these traits. His appetite for the Word is virtually insatiable. Every sermon seems good, he cannot get enough of study. The Scriptures live to him, and he is enthralled with the message that they bear to his spirit. He confidently lives unto the lord day by day, and the Lord Jesus is not divorced from anything that he does. But, alas, he gets involved in the “church program” and soon falls from his steadfastness. His reading of the Scriptures is brought down to a minimum and is all too often merely perfunctory, he operates too much without God in his thoughts, and his heart is no longer ravished with the thought of personal communion with God. What caused this to come about? True, he still retains a form of godliness. He is involved in numerous religious activities—there is no end to them. But he has been caught up in the “error of the wicked.” The “error” tends away from the “truth

as it is in Christ” (Ephesians 4:20-21). It has a certain appeal to it, but it is to the carnal nature—the Adamic part of man. We are to beware of all such communications; that is the solemn warning of the Lord. Some of these basic and fundamental errors have the appearance of humility, some of spirituality, some of miraculous power, others of precise Scriptural orderliness—but they all tend away from the bosom of Christ wherein the spirit of the believer is hid.

Why Does Babylon Flourish?

One of the reasons (I speak now as a man) for the flourishing of Babylon is the tenacious hold it maintains over those that have seen fuller light. Were all of the spiritually informed to obey the Lord, as they are enjoined, and “come out from among them”, many of these institutions, if not all of them, would cease to be so influential. In view of this, those that maintain fellowship with inferior denominationalism (in comparison to the freedom which is in Christ) when they have once been apprised of the truth, shall become “partaker of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4). Ignoring this sphere of disobedience is not minor! Error is fostered, truth hindered, Christ reproached, and the admonitions of holy Scripture ignored. Who in such a case as that shall be able to abide the day of the wrath of the Lamb who came to “destroy the works of the Devil”? (I John 3:8)

Come, you who have been subjected to truth that strikes against your church beliefs! What will you do when you face the Lord? How will you defend your unseemly conduct and your ungodly disobedience to His Divine summons? Why do you insist on being identified with schisms and factions? Why do you devote the Lord’s money and dollars to the propagation of sectarianism? The Savior shall not long abide such insolence—such flagrant ignorement of His Word. This is a day and time which calls for true soldiers—those that are willing to “quit themselves like men” (I Corinthians 16:13) instead of being characterized by a cowardice that leaves them affiliated with that which is condemned. Will you answer the summons? Is your heart tender toward the Lord that you profess to love and follow? “Ah”, you say, “You should not speak with such harshness toward us. We are trying to influence

these people for Christ.” But ought soft and easy words to be spoken to such as you? To such as have disobeyed the Lord God of hosts, have trodden under foot the commands of the Savior, and ignored His demands upon your life? Does such conduct merit repeated soft and palpable pleas? Is it not time that you were apprised of the case as it is? Are you not weary of your spirit being famished? Do you not acknowledge that there is a pitiable deficiency where you are at? Or have you come to the place of cursing as Jehoshaphat of old; “Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord” (II Chronicles 19:2).

O, I summon you to run with swiftness of foot before God brings down the walls of that high and revered Daughter of Babylon. Rest not in system, pilgrim of God! Lean not to an institution! Give no allegiance to that which is empty and void of life, where dead men flourish and religious politicians pacify the hearts of wicked men. “Come out from among them and be ye separate.” Take the same stand against these as our Lord takes. Admittedly, you will probably have to forfeit a lot of the religious pomp and splendor that you have come to hold sacred. But there are blessings ten thousand times ten thousand in the Lord Jesus’ bosom. Small bands of believers are scarce—but they are here and there—disassociated from denominations and institutions, just seeking to worship the Lord in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. They are not well known, and often have been known to “wander about” having no certain dwelling place. You may not be able to explain satisfactorily to religious bigots where you “go to church”—but what matter is that? Is Christ there: does He gather there with the saints? Is there inward peace, joy, righteousness, and communion of the Holy Ghost? Is the mind there molded in the image of the Lord? To that, my brother (sister), I summon you?

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## Necessity of Religious Separation

I am more and more coming into the fuller realization of the absolute necessity of total separation from the nominal church-world. When the truth is registered upon the heart and conscience of an individual by the Holy Spirit, his first obligation is to sever relationships with spiritual Babylon—the systematized form of religion that pervades virtually all churches. One of the marks of such systems is the building of theological fences around denominational dogmas and limited concepts. The Scriptures are thus viewed in association with the “church” (so called) and not as the bulwark of truth themselves—apart from any institution. The effect of new-found truth has been lost in many a life simply because of a carnal refusal to separate from denominational Christianity. But the Word of God is not vague or ambiguous on this point. Disobedience here constitutes and manifests definite and basic enmity and rebellion against the Lord within the recesses of the heart, however sincere and docile external actions and works may appear.. How plain does the Spirit witness to us on this point, and let all that name the Name of the Lord see to it that they take heed to these things: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with

unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) The intention of this exhortation is to awaken the people of God to the incompatibility of heaven with earth. The child of God is not to become intimately identified with those that are guilty of hating the Lord (II Chronicles 19:2). The scope of our understanding here is not to be limited to that which is apparently anti-God. The vast majority of the religious world (professing Christendom, I mean) are actually unbelievers and infidels. They have the spot of the world upon them and are guilty of loving and dwelling in unrighteousness. For the child of God to become affiliated with such systems and orders is an express transgression of the Word set before us. None but a fool would deny that most fundamental churches are absolutely plagued with people that stand aloof from God, know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God, and whose lives are living representations of their gross infidelity and unbelief.

**God’s edict concerning affiliation with such is, “separate.”** He does not say to stay and convert them, He commands that withdrawal take place. There can be no affinity between those that are righteous and those that are unrighteous! No alliance can be made between those that are believers and those that are unbelievers. There are no excuses offered in Holy Scripture for such an alliance, and therefore none is to be made. It is not necessary to become affiliated with carnal religious institutions in order to preach the Gospel—that is an error that has been perpetrated by the prince of deceivers himself. **Away with such stupid notions; “come out from among them” as the Lord hath commanded, or else**

forfeit the blessing and reception of the Lord! This is no small matter, and there is no minimizing it. I am cognizant of the fact that many of our readers are in the precarious position of identification with religious institutions that they are well aware dwell in no proximity to the God of all the earth. It is my duty before God to warn you, therefore, that you are living in active rebellion against the Lord and His Christ, regardless of the motives that you may claim as an exemption. Obey the Lord and see His blessing. You are **“unequally yoked”** if you are officially identified with unbelievers! The flourishing of unbelievers, unrighteous, infidels, and those that dwell in darkness within the very confines of these churches is abundant demonstration that no **“true worshipper” of God ought to be found identified with them.**

**“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove (expose) them.”** (Ephesians 5:11) Any works that do not **eventuate in fruit toward God are “unfruitful works of darkness”**. No child of God is to engage in participation with them, that is clear! The **“church schemes”** of religion bigots and opportunists do exist. But the believer is not to have any form of fellowship with these works! His influence is to be exerted toward the exposing of such spiritual debauchery, making manifest the vanity of it. Especially is this true in relation to **one’s spiritual affiliation. If, for instance, a believer is associated and identified with a religious institution that is engaged in all sorts of carnal programming and appeals to the flesh he becomes partaker of the curse of God upon these things. We are told to come out from among Babylon that we “be not partakers” of her “plagues”** (Revelation 18:4) That is one of the chief means of exposing or reprovng the unfruitful works of darkness—coming out from among them. Programs and genius plans of men that detract from our Lord and Savior and lull men into spiritual complacency are not approved by the Lord; He fellowships not with them and is not in their **“solemn assemblies”**—neither should His children be! **The Lord commands us “be not partakers of other men’s sins”** (I Timothy 5:22). To become identified with them is to be partaker with them. Many peo-

ple find great delight in being called a Baptist, Methodist, Seventh Day Adventist, or Presbyterian—etc., etc.; **but in so doing they have distracted men’s hearts from the “one and only Potentate”** (I Timothy 6:15) and are **“delighting” in the “legs of a man”** (Psalms 147:10) Such unlawfulness cannot be exposed from within the walls of the institution; only from without! Therefore, let all that name the name of Christ **“come out” as the Lord hath commanded!**

Paul further develops this great truth to young Timothy as he spoke of those that deal in **“vain Babblings”, “striving about words to no profit, to the subverting of the hearers”** (II Timothy 2:14-16). Their words are those that **“eat as a canker” and increase unto more ungodliness (v. 16-18), even “overthrowing the faith of some”**. These false teachers and preventers of truth, while posing great threat to men, do not, however, upset the election of God, for that **“foundation” standeth sure, having this seal; “the Lord knoweth them that are His”** (v. 19) These beguilers, however, are in the presence of God’s people often—that is true; they are like **“vessels of wood and earth” that are in a great house; vessels unto “dishonor”** (v. 20). These are men that instruct in things that they understand not, who **“intrude into things that they have not seen”** (Colossians 2:18). They speak traditionally, and are mouthpieces for an institution rather than prophets of the most high God. What is to be the relationship of the believer to these men? Is he to tolerate them, remain in their presence, and generally affiliate in the circles wherein they traverse? The word of the Lord is strong on this matter; **“If a man therefore purge himself of these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work”** (II Timothy 2:21) Those, therefore, that sustain an affiliation with those whose mouths are unbridled, and whose lips give forth the uncomely sound of Babylon are **unfit for the Master’s use; primarily because they are living in active rebellion to the Kings of Kings!** Our lives are to be purged from the influence of those teachers that know not the truth, and as we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ our obedience to this precept is also to grow; **“If a man**

PURGE HIMSELF from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor!”

**“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away”** (II Timothy 3:1-5). Here once again the command is clear! Those that have outward forms (or any other types of form) but are devoid of the power of God are not our companions of glory! **From such we are to “turn away”, knowing that “evil communications corrupt good manners”** (I Corinthians 14:33). **By “turn away” it is meant that we are to remove our ears from the sound of their false words, and our hearts from sympathy and carnal connection with them. The fact that they may be congenial people, friendly and pleasant is not to affect our judgment in this matter** (II Corinthians 5:16). If they have merely a form of godliness but deny the power, refusing by an act of their will to submit themselves unto the Lord, they are not to be our companions. **We are to “turn away” from them, reject their formal fellowship and refuse identification with them—that is the edict of God Almighty!** These are the type that lead captive those that are as the **“silly dove”** (Hosea 7:11; II Timothy 3:6) **These are they that are “ever learning, and never ABLE to come to the knowledge of the truth”** (verse 7). The **“things of the Spirit of God”** (I Corinthians 2:14) **always have a strange sound to him. You may speak of things in traditional or sectarian tones, and these know whereof you speak. Let such words as “evangelism”, “soul winning”, “Missions”, “Sunday School”, “crusade”, etc. be found in your lips, and at once you have the ear of these sophists. But speak in words that the Holy Ghost teacheth** (II Corinthians 2:13), such as **“regeneration”, “justification”, “atonement”, “redemption in Christ Jesus”, “sanctification of the Spirit”, “the spirit of faith”, “the mind of the flesh”, the “election of grace”, etc.; and suddenly the veil is over such men’s eyes, and they are unable to enter into the joy of these things. They have a “form of godliness”; their appearance bears some similitude of reality—and yet, it is not real. The command—“from such, turn away.” Their religion has never touched their lives; they live in abject disobedience to the Lord of lords. The words of the Scripture too often contradict**