

so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8,9). Why such severity? If we find ourselves in a devil’s hell because of the false teachers, as multitudes will, we won’t have to ask that question. We should hear and obey God now.

Paul further commands: “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17); “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Thessalonians 3:6). Teaching error is certainly walking disorderly! There are multitudes of doctrines of men today that are, of course, contrary to the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11). People could see the truth **IF** they would only do as the Bereans and search the Scriptures, whether those things were so (Acts 17:11 cp. 1 Thessalonians 5:21). The Psalmist said: “Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way” (Psalms 119:104). Please heed all of these warnings.

False teachers and their followers are condemned (Matthew 15:14). One may protest saying: “It is not fair that one should be lost if he is deceived.” But think again! In the first place God is not unrighteous – His judgment is right! Furthermore there are multitudes of warnings and examples in the Bible to keep us from being deceived. And we should not and must not be deceived. We have God’s Word!!! Why let men take truth from us by adding to, taking away from, twisting, perverting, etc.? My friends, with all the love I have for your eternal well being I write these things. If you do not have enough concern for your own soul to study the Bible for yourself and honesty to change whenever you find yourself in the wrong, you have no right to expect Heaven as your eternal home. It will not happen (2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Peter 3:18; Luke 8:15; Matthew 5:6, etc.).

Are you following the false teachers??? Are you willing to obey God in all things (Hebrews 5:9)? Are you willing to examine yourself (2 Corinthians 13:5)? And to prove all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21)? Are you willing to “try” your preacher (1 John 4:1)?

If you have any doubts, we will be most happy to study with you from the Bible. ♥



“Hold fast the form of sound words”

SW

(2 Tim. 1:13 cp. Tit. 1:9; Jude 3)

SW

Church of Christ (Rom. 16:16) Mission USA

Perry Sexton 1763 Highway 166 N. Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474

Email: jpsexton@peoplepc.com

Website: www.mission-usa.org

Volume VI

August 2013

Number 12

False Teachers

by Perry Sexton

In the Bible we can read much about false teachers or preachers. They are often called “false prophets.” In Bible times the true prophet’s work was primarily to teach the Word of God. Because the Bible was being written in this great time period, the true prophets received the Word directly from God: “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21; cp. 2 Timothy 3:16). Many times God gave these inspired men things to predict about the future, thus they were called prophets or seers (2 Kings 17:13).

There are no inspired men today. The Word of God is complete (2 Peter 1:3), having been “... once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3). There is no need to have inspired men today. However, some men claim to be inspired and able to predict the future. Some have predicted the second coming of Jesus. Of course they missed it! Others have not predicted the time of the coming of Christ, but have made utterly foolish statements such as: “The trumpet is at His lips,” and “The horsemen are on their way,” and similar statements showing their Bible ignorance. After many predictions and failures, some simply started saying: “Jesus is coming soon.” But friends, even that statement is not according to the Scriptures. Anyone who truly believes the Bible can know without doubt that these people are speaking error! To believe and trust God is to believe and obey God’s Word, the Bible.

How can we know the false teachers? In Old Testament times God told them how to tell the false prophets. If they predicted something and it did not come to pass, they would know they were

false prophets and not prophets of God: “When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him” (Deuteronomy 18:22, see v. 20ff). **And of course if the prophet taught contrary to God’s recorded Word they were false prophets** (cp. Deuteronomy 13:1ff).

For us under the New Testament Jesus said: “Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” (Matthew 7:16). We are to “try,” i.e. examine them (1 John 4:1). How? By comparing what they teach with God’s Word. “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). The noble Bereans “proved” or “tried” the apostle Paul and rightly so (Acts 17:11). It is a very foolish person who will take the word of man in religion without first checking it out thoroughly with the Bible. Those who have nothing to hide will welcome such honest examinations and even public scrutiny in debates. Of course, the false teachers want none of this.

There are many false teachers in the world: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). We read of many false prophets or teachers in both the Old and New Testaments. And we are warned: “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (2 Peter 2:1). The sad thing is many will be deceived by the false preachers and will be lost eternally: “And many shall follow their pernicious [destructive] ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. {3} And through covetousness [cp. the love of money (1 Timothy 6:10)] shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not” (2 Peter 2:2,3).

False teachers come in sheep clothing. False teachers are deceivers! They are not going to announce their purpose and who they really are. Jesus warns us and we need to take it very seriously: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matthew 7:15 cp. 1 Peter 5:8). Paul informs us: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. {14} And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. {15}

Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). How do they operate? “For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Romans 16:18). And make no mistake friends, multitudes are deceived by the many false teachers in the world today (Revelation 12:9; Matthew 7:13-15; 15:14; 1 John 4:1, etc.).

False teachers are false accusers. Since the false teachers cannot stand before truth – cannot refute truth (no one can), they falsely accuse those who proclaim the truth. When they cannot meet the doctrine of Christ they attack the one preaching it. Did they not do such with Jesus, Paul, and many others (cp. Mark 3:2; 14:57; Luke 11:54; 23:2; John 8:6, etc.)? They cannot prove their accusations as Paul said of his accusers: “Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me” (Acts 24:13). This is another reason why false teachers will seldom be courageous enough to meet gospel preachers in public discussions or debates. They do their work behind closed doors, in spiritual darkness – backbiters, false accusers (cp. 2 Timothy 3:3), etc.

They are giants when it comes to accusing, but mice when it comes to proving! Peter said: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: {16} Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ” (1 Peter 3:15,16). They are not ready to give an answer and be examined publicly because they have much to hide. They know they are likely to lose some of their “merchandise” to truth (cp. 2 Peter 2:1-3 above)!

Jesus comforts His own: “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. {12} Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matthew 5:11-12). Whenever one speaks the truth, he will make many enemies (Galatians 4:16) because there are many who walk in error.

What should our attitude be toward false teachers? God tells us through His apostle. Paul instructs us: “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. {9} As we said before,