

The Naked Truth

Preface

“Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets; and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.” 1Kings 22:23

“For there must also be heresies among you, that the approved ones may be revealed among you” 1 Corinthians 11:19

“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12

“...And God has given them over to a reprobate mind so that they do that which is not befitting.” Romans 1:28ff

The verses of Scripture quoted above, and many more like them, are an enigma to most Christians. They cannot come to grips with the fact that God would send out lies and deceptions, not so much as to those in the world, but to those in the church as well. But that is the truth. These are the plain words of Scripture.

God has determined that deceitful workers and false teachers are necessary to catch and filter out those who pervert and abuse the truth. These evil doers are also here to test and refine the faithful. Remember how the Lord gave a parable describing how the wheat that He sows grows up together with the tares that is sowed by the enemy, until He sends the reapers to bundle the tares for burning. **Matthew 13**

As it is written, *“The deceived and the deceiver are His” Job 12:16*

Without the workers of darkness who lie and pervert the truth, the pure and glorious work of the Lord Jesus Christ in His saints would not stand out in contrast for all to see. Spiritual abusers of God’s sheep; false teachers who fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness proclaiming their *“divine authority;”* these are all part of the darkness, men who with feigned words are making merchandise of the many.

In today’s local institutional church, these deceivers staunchly teach and defend their carnal-minded, anti-scriptural view of rule and leadership. The false teaching of *“pastoral authority”* and *“eldership rule”*, a diabolical and confounded misrepresentation of the Scriptures, is one of the prominent indicators that you are dealing with a cult.

It is also one of the single most powerful delusions on the market.

These are men whose mission is self-serving; their eyes always on themselves, and not on God. These are men who become intoxicated with the lust for power and control. They stand, not as a lamp that shines unto all, but as a backdrop for the blackness of darkness against which God shines His True Light to give understanding to the simple who put their trust in Him.

It is because of the inordinate lust for power and control and the insatiable vanity of those who love to manipulate and rule over others, that the local church has become a cesspool of human iniquity; a quandary of religious bondage to the whims of men.

To that end, and in accordance with the counsel of the Scriptures, we unhesitatingly acknowledge that these false teachers have their purpose in Heaven's economy, and we are therefore moved at this juncture to show them up for who and what they really are – workers of iniquity and serial killers of the soul, disguised as ministers of righteousness in the Name of Jesus Christ, Whom they do not know, but Whom we know, and thus we speak.

THE NAKED TRUTH

INTRODUCTION

"Wherefore are not your disciples walking according to the tradition of the elders?" **Matthew 15:2**

This question that the Pharisees put forward to Jesus was not some unplanned or off-handed question. It was meant to ensnare and entrap Him, as were all of their questions.

But what was Jesus' approach to the religious teachers and rulers of His day? What was His modus operandi? What was His method or manner in dealing with them?

Did He accept them? No. Did He respect them? No. Just the opposite. Did He leave them well alone so as not to cause offense? No.

Jesus' tactic was to go against these religious rulers, along with their teachings. He not only did **NOT** accept them, but He fought against them. He exposed them. He condemned them as evil. He provocatively declared war on them as publicly as He possibly could.

Why? Because if you have people who proclaim to be *God's representative and mouthpiece to His church*, but yet at the same time have the arrogance and pompousness in demanding submission to rules and teachings that go against Christ and His ecclesia, then you have people who are prevented from going with Christ.

The “*church leaders*” of Jesus’ day (just like the church leaders of today) developed a man-made, man-centered system of authority of which they taught that it was *God ordained* and biblical. But Jesus taught otherwise and called them hypocrites.

Any of their policies that went against His kingdom, Jesus declared war on them and broke them not only whenever He could, but as publicly and as provocatively as he could. He went willfully and deliberately out of His way to violate all the accepted standards. Time will not permit me, but you can go through Scripture after Scripture after Scripture to read about and watch Jesus in action.

The healing of the man born blind in John 9; the numerous other Sabbath controversies over and over again; the ceremonial washing of hands; going against the tradition of the elders, etc. etc.

He is being provocative and using opportunities to go against them. And He does this knowing that all eyes of the religious authorities are upon Him.

This is Jesus declaring open warfare against the religious authorities of His time; exposing them for who they are - false teachers and control freaks driven by power, greed, and the lust for domination and authority.

Look at the situation in Luke 5 where Jesus calls Levi to follow Him. The church rulers and authorities at that time had given commandment to “*not have any interaction nor anything to do with certain types of people,*” particularly with tax collectors and prostitutes. In fact, they were to be hated!

But here in Luke 5, Jesus calls a tax collector to follow Him, a major “*mistake*” Jesus made by breaking the authorities rules. Not only that, He goes to the tax collector’s house for a banquet, where there are gathered all of his friends, (no doubt, fellow tax collectors and sinners) and has dinner with him! Jesus is enjoying a meal with the two groups of people that the ecclesiastical rulers forbade you to have any fellowship with!

And these religious leaders are looking on and they are getting mad, because Jesus is in open warfare against their carnal-minded authority and policies, one in which they (the rulers) were considered to be divine, set apart, special people whose rules must be obeyed because they stood as “*God’s mouthpiece*” before the people.

As said earlier, you could go on and on in the Scriptures and see this for yourself. In fact, just turn the page to the very next chapter, Luke 6, and see again where Jesus is being as provocative as He knows how. He makes the false teachings and policies of the religious rulers a public issue because the point is that if you don’t expose where the corruption and bondage is at any one time, many will suffer for it.

The ruler’s reaction? “*This man must die because He is too much of a threat.*”

Throughout Jesus' ministry, He does not release these religious leaders who claim to be God's mouthpiece. He keeps them by His side; He is forcing them, based on their policies, not His, by their laws, not His. He was exposing them publicly as well because the people had been misled by them.

If you are causing the people to submit to your self-righteous, diabolical authority structure, then you are leading people into disobedience. To the people being caused to follow this type of false authority, the Lord wants to set free so that they will follow Him and the Scriptures.

This is why Jesus took the kind of action that we see. Jesus wants those who claim divine authority and demand submission **to be opposed and to be renounced**. This is clear in the conflicts that you will see in the Scriptures.

Jesus DID challenge the false teachings and despotic authority of the leaders. They were "lording it over them" and **Jesus REFUSED to be under bondage!** I repeat: **Jesus REFUSED to be under bondage!**

A PUBLIC DISPLAY

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." **Matthew 7:15**

Have you not seen the way people who disagree with a church policy or teaching are treated at your own assembly? Haven't you heard the gossip and slander from the pulpit concerning these individuals? Haven't you been told to mark them and shun them?

Do you know of a church or pastor that instructs his congregation that it is their "*duty to Christ*" to treat people who leave that particular local church as enemies of Christ and worthy of true hatred?

But what has been your response? Do you go right along with the leadership for fear of being marked and shunned yourself! Well?

I've heard those denunciations many times and the reasons that they use for such counsel was no better than that used by the religious leaders in Jesus' day to justify their attitude of hatred toward their enemies! It's ironical that these very same people who ridicule the Scribes and the Pharisees for their distortion of Scriptures will themselves use the same distortion to justify their own hatred of brethren that dared to question or disagree with the pastor's sermon or some other point of church teaching.

History has witnessed some very ungodly behavior that was done under the guise of "*love for God's truth*" and that history is being repeated today by some church leaders to justify their

godless attitude toward sincere brethren who have refused to kowtow to every whim and fancy of *“the elders in the church.”*

The following exercise of *“God’s clear truth”* is being used today by the so-called *“duly authorized servants of God”* when someone would dare to take their family out and leave that particular church. One of the ecclesiastical rulers will stand behind the pulpit and instruct the people thusly:

1) *“These people have forsaken Christ’s duly authorized Church which is the pillar and ground of the truth.”* (1 Tim 3:15)

2) *“Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it”*

3) *“In leaving God’s duly authorized Church, these people show that they hate the very thing that Christ loves the most.”*

4) *“The Psalmist said, I hate them, O Lord. That hate Thee,”* 139:21 and *“I hate them with a perfect hatred.”* 139:22.

“Since these people have proven their hatred of Christ (by leaving His church) it is our duty to God to hate these people with a perfect hatred because they have left Christ’s Church which he loves above all else. As your duly appointed elders and overseers, we are instructing you to break off fellowship and avoid all contact and interaction with these people.”

This is almost a word for word account used by churches with a cultic mentality for literally forcing the members to despise and shun anyone who:

- 1) dares to leave that particular church or group
- 2) dares to even question *“the pastor”* or *“the elders”* on an issue of church doctrine or a point in a sermon.

The only reason these modern day *“duly authorized defenders of the glory of God’s holy truth”* have not literally cut your head off is only because they do not have the civil authority to do so, or else they will most eagerly and happily do so!

The present evil abuse perpetrated by tyrannical elders is far more than a personality or temperament problem.

Its roots run not only in a theological misunderstanding of the scriptures, but its roots run much deeper than that. I believe the roots run deep into a diabolical, depraved and blackened soul which inwardly craves for a rigid, self-righteous, and condemning attitude.

I've heard men infected with this mentality ridicule and mock "love" in an angry screaming voice. Straight from their pulpits, they will also ridicule and mock sincere brethren who would question or disagree with them on an issue of church doctrine or policy.

This is why men with such an attitude and theology can very easily step in between a husband and/or wife (because one of them is disagreeing with the pastor) and destroy marriages and families and feel that God is "*being glorified and His truth is being vindicated.*"

That's why men with this attitude and theology can "*punish heresy with death*" as well. All of these things have happened before and it will and IS happening again.

Brethren, this is just another example of the kind of corrupt teaching and practice that is prevailing as we speak. Can it be any plainer than that?

DIOTREPHES: A BIBLICAL WARNING

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; For many false prophets have gone out everywhere." 1 John 4:1

In the early church there existed a man who thought he should control what his brethren read and who they should fellowship with. Diotrephes would have nothing to do with the apostle John. So, when John wrote the church, Diotrephes squelched the message. He maliciously gossiped about John, refused to welcome the brothers, stopped those who wanted to welcome them and put them out of the church.

Isn't it typical of the attitudes of modern church leaders, who prevent Christians from openly examining and questioning their "*leader's*" teaching in the church? Surely, supposed godly and sincere men who are attempting to imitate Christ can do better!

Diotrephes was a good example of the kind of mentality and rulership that we are examining. John describes the actions of this arrogant, despicable scoundrel in his third epistle.

"I wrote unto the assembly, but Diotrephes, who is fond of always taking the first place among them, is not receiving us." 3 John 9

In this body, there are to be no positions or titles given or accepted, either theologically or in practice. Diotrephes didn't hold a gun to anybody's head when he assumed a position of eminence. To be sure, he had his band of followers. They may have followed him for a variety of reasons but they followed him just the same.

John describes the situation further:

"For this cause, if I come, I shall be reminding him of his acts which he is doing, with wicked words gossiping about us; and not being sufficed with these, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and those who want to receive them, he is forbidding and is casting them out of the assembly. Beloved, do not be imitating the evil, but the good. He who is doing good is of God. He who is doing evil has not seen God." **3 John 10-11**

Where did Diotrephes get this authority to exclude believers from their fellowship...even John? Think about it! He didn't get this authority from Jesus even though he may well have claimed so. He assumed it for himself and the people believed and accepted it!

His authority came from all those who allowed it to happen; those who had no Scriptural right to do so. The people may not have *"called him Rabbi"* or *"teacher"* in theology, but did so in PRACTICE. Just as the Israelites failed to listen to Samuel, these believers failed to listen to Jesus and the apostles. They preferred instead to have *"church officers"* moderate their discipleship and then, after all was said and done, they were tyrannized by them. They failed to obey Jesus' teachings, warnings, and example.

Diotrephes would fit in pretty well among the *"leaders"* of many churches today. But even John, the apostle of love, found this kind of ecclesiastical arrogance and despotism too intolerable to go unchallenged. Freedom is too dear to be lost!

The fact that we DO have so many so-called *"church leaders"* today like Diotrephes is a great tragedy. But the fact that many people shrug their shoulders and do absolutely nothing is an even greater tragedy.

We must not shrug our shoulders and say, *"But what can we do?"* We fail to see that Jesus himself' set the example: **Jesus REFUSED to be under bondage to religious rulers.**

HE WALKED IN FREEDOM and wants you to do the same.

A USURPER'S NIGHTMARE

"...In that just as He is, even so are we in this world." **1 John 4:17**

Jesus called the ecclesiastical rulers and authorities of His day *"whited sepulchers", "fools", "blind guides", "hypocrites", "serpents", "murderers", "a generation of vipers,"* and many such names. Jesus spoke this way to the religious leaders throughout His ministry.

He virtually had nothing nice to say about any of them.

Yet while continually challenging the authoritarian, tyrannical rule of the Jewish leaders, Jesus was always insisting that things were going to be different in His community. When His disciples came to Him and asked who would be greatest in the Kingdom, Jesus answered:

"Assuredly, I say to you, unless you turn and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." **Matthew 18:3-4**

He said, "You guys need to change your attitude or you will not enter the kingdom at all. You are looking at things the wrong way."

Does this sound like the apostles were going to receive even a hint of a position, or a title, or a divine office to rule in?

In another instance, the mother of James and John said to Him, *"Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on your right hand and the other on the left, in your kingdom."*

I can almost hear Jesus saying, "What! Are you kidding me?"

Of course, the other disciples made a great show of indignation as though they had not wanted the same honor for themselves. So Jesus began to explain what the leadership in His community is going to be like. The leadership in His assembly or community would **NOT** be like the worldly authority and ecclesiastical system of things represented at that time by Jewish Scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus rejected the authoritarian structure of his own religious heritage and anything that even came close to the carnal rule of men. Jesus explains this plainly as he continues in **Matthew 20:20-28**:

*"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles are lords over them, and those who are great exercise authority (or are tyrants) over them. **YET IT WILL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU**; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."*

"Greatness is NOT through ruling positions or titles but through service. You want to rise to greatness in My kingdom...then serve. Those desiring esteem in my assembly must set the example in serving! You will not exercise authority over my people!"

How utterly ironic that this is exactly the type of leadership style Christ specifically warned His disciples NOT to practice!

If that left the disciples in doubt about what positions they were to enjoy in the Lord's community, He certainly cleared it up by attacking the prevailing system of the church rulers and their love of titles and position in **Matthew 23**:

"Then Jesus spoke to the multitude and to his disciples, saying: The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. ..They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

But you, do not be called Rabbi, for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, who is in heaven. And do not be called leaders; for One is your leader, even the Christ. But those who are great among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled and the one who humbles himself will be exalted." **Matthew 23:1-12**

Jesus, in these few sentences, is making it very plain what the nature of leadership in His community was going to be. His leaders would NOT assume titles or positions. *"But you, do not be called Rabbi!"* They were not to assume the title or position of Rabbi (master, teacher).

As if this was not basic enough to persuade them, He continues in this vein by saying also, *"And do not be called leaders ."*

"Don't even let someone ascribe to you or 'ordain' you with the position or title of leader or guide".

Don't be called Dr. Smith. Don't be called Preacher Smith. Don't be called Pastor Smith. Don't be called Minister or Reverend or Elder or Deacon Smith.

Is this not a true application of what Jesus was saying? If not, why not?

Another powerful example was before the feast of Passover, at the "Last Supper."

When the Supper was over, Jesus got up from the table and He knelt before them one by one, washing every dirty foot in the room until they were clean. Then He said, *"Do you know what I have done to you?"*

They were speechless. Never before had they seen a King wash His servant's feet. They saw with their eyes what we can only imagine, "God with us," washing human feet.

"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them." **John 13:17**

AGAIN, what do we see? We see that the model of leadership in God's ecclesia is NOT the CEO Business Exec; it's NOT the "Chairman/Pastor" sitting on the Board of Elders; it's NOT a group of men ruling, and reigning; barking out their demands of authority and headship and submission to every beck and call.

No, it's the household slave!

For from His knees in the upper room, Jesus said, "*For I have given you an example that you also should do as I have done to you.*" **John 13:15**

THIS is the example that is always to be set before our eyes!

Yes, Jesus did leave us an example to follow - one that stands in stark and total antithesis to the current notion of "*Church Leadership.*" This model from heaven though, like oil, does not and will not mix well with the waters of a "*local church institutional*" rule of despotism.

And many of these "*pastoral despots*" will spend large portions of their life seeing to it THAT IT NEVER WILL MIX WELL!

Those who posture themselves to "*rule over God's people*" hardly ever see Christ in this light, or if they do, they pay the most pathetic, empty lip service imaginable at any one given worship service, and then turn around the next week and do just the opposite!

As usual, the Lord's call to "*let THIS mind be in you*" not only lands upon deaf ears to the majority of those in "*leadership positions in the local church,*" but tragically, lands upon blinded eyes to the majority of those who occupy the pews as well!

Look inside any typical local institutional church today and what do you see? To those who have eyes to see, there is virtually nothing of "*the mind of Christ.*" Those "*ruling*" in the church today have traded in the servant's towel long, long ago, replacing it with a business suit and tie. Many today are above the washing of feet, as kneeling has become so far beneath the so-called "*Sacred Pastoral Office*" and the "*ministerial dignity*" of the professional clergy.

How far we have fallen from the divine standard, only God fully appreciates.

Instead of ever wanting to set before our eyes the Lord Jesus as our example, our Divine mandate, what do we see? Do we see love constraining? No! This is what we see:

-We see men commanding submission unto themselves, teaching that "*....submitting to me is submitting to God....*"

-We see men defying the Lord, commanding that ..."*You must address me as "Pastor."*

-We see men hollering and screaming with spittle flying out of their mouths: "*WHO ARE YOU TO QUESTION MY DIRECTION AND AUTHORITY?*"

-We see men operating their local church institutions like military bases and slave camps, teaching that *"...the Church is His kingdom and dominion of rule over us, which rule is exercised by your duly-authorized elders and overseers."*

-We see men seizing upon, and then usurping *"the authority of Christ."*

Today's "churches" and their "leaders" act as if the life of Jesus and His example was a myth and the cross at Calvary a fantasy.

Power hungry, lust-filled, greedy men are the ones who have designed this system of *"pastoral authority and eldership rule over the people"* whom they can now control.

The emphasis of Jesus in the Scriptures was not upon *"rulership."* It was not upon *"power."* It was not upon *"spiritual authority."* It was not upon *"exercising your ministerial dignity and sacred pastoral office."* It was not upon being *"duly-authorized."*

The emphasis of Jesus was on SERVICE. Bear in mind that according to Jesus, not even the apostles would *"exercise authority"* over the people of God. His teaching was, ***"NOT SO SHALL IT BE AMONG YOU;"***(exercising authority) ***"WHOSOEVER WOULD BECOME GREAT AMONG YOU SHALL BE YOUR MINISTER"***(servant) etc.

What Christ was describing was definitely not the job function that we see today in virtually every denomination that you can think of. This is very significant for if Jesus emphatically withheld *"divine authority"* from the apostles, surely, He did not delegate it to elders.

Remember that the bullheaded, pious pronouncements of your spiritual overseers and rulers are ***never neutral.*** Jesus taught us that this was so. He warned us in **Mark 7:5-13** that the pronouncements which originate from religious leaders will always take on the force of law. They will multiply and take precedence over more vital and weightier issues. They will cause the worship of God to be a vain undertaking.

When these words of men are elevated, the actual instructions of God will always take a back seat. When fervor and devotion is actually directed towards the person himself, the commands of God will be flagrantly violated. When people are thoroughly fixated on their *"pastor"* and his teachings, God's Word eventually is made of no effect and this fixation will begin to permeate, and then actually erode all of one's existence.

As someone aptly pointed out, *"those who are the most willing and eager to claim spiritual titles and offices for themselves are always the ones who are the most UNWORTHY to fit them."*

Isn't this exactly what we see happening throughout all of organized Christendom?

Why do we confess that the New Testament is a sufficient guide for the church's faith and practice and yet, not only **do not** follow its precepts or patterns but categorically **go contrary** to and belie its faith and patterns?

The constitution which He gave for His kingdom makes no provision for the employment of power. After 2000 years, don't you think it's high time that we stop playing church and discover, perhaps for the first time, the Truth that is in Jesus?

Don't get too wound up though. Remember that church leaders even unto this day cannot stand to have their false power, false authority, false control, prestige and other worldly lusts stripped from them, and will probably live until they die, defending their delusions, unless the Lord Himself intervenes otherwise.

The example of Jesus is the most powerful argument against the idea of a ruling clergy. Did He model one thing, only to build another?

Did He come serving, only to change His mind and elevate His people's status later down the road?

We think not!

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of the mind examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." Acts 17:11

The Scriptures indicate that things we be getting worse and worse, and if you read very carefully, it's not talking about the secular world, but the "religious world" with its churches and religious leaders getting worse and worse!

"But we feel God's presence" they say.

"But our pastor is so wonderful and sincere."

"But God is working through our church."

"Ah, but can't you see? God is using us!"

All to which I say, God used Balaam's ass to speak through too! So what does that tell you?

No, it is not God's presence but emotion and the effect of seducing spirits. Wonderfulness and sincerity do not cut it with God. Neither does an impressive knowledge of the Scriptures, great oratory or great organizational skills.

Just because somebody is awakened by God and they begin to increase in faith is a demonstration of God and not to the false teachings and practices of men. Many so-called “pastors” will immediately jump on situations like that to somehow prove that the church is being blessed and is evidence of the presence of God and His Spirit at work.

But the fact that God can work in a cesspool of a situation is no proof at all of God’s approval of that cesspool. It is because of ignorance and utter apathy for Truth, that professing Christians might view these things as some sort of spiritual endorsement.

Yet, we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose, not your purpose.

Is the common Christian church member no longer capable of rational thought? Do they need someone to tell them if they are being blessed, when they are blessed, how they are blessed, why they are blessed? Do they need someone to tell them what to believe and what to reject; what to hear and what to refuse, what to read and what to avoid?

Many religious strongmen of today would unashamedly answer, “*Absolutely!*” They believe that Christians need to be coddled, milk-fed, protected, and kept forever enslaved as babes or, as you know, “*d-u-m-b s-h-e-e-p.*”

It should come as no surprise then when you see many church members, week after week, year after year, remaining in a seemingly perpetual comatose state; always dependent on “*their leaders*” to teach them, hear from God for them, do the work of evangelizing the lost for them, entertain them, counsel and encourage them, help them in crisis, and direct practically every single area of their lives.

This dependence on men is a natural byproduct the church system produces. Ironically, it's not just a byproduct... **it's also the fuel that keeps it running.** If it fails in this task, the system will crumble for lack of support. It needs these immature foster children as much as they think they need it.

For example, some religious leaders have commanded Christians in their churches not to go to a site like wickedshepherds.com, or other sites like it. They, and their authorized agents have publicly ridiculed and totally misrepresented our site on their blogs, in their pulpits, and even at their pastor’s conferences and workshops. You say, “*...at Pastor’s Conferences and Workshops?*” Trust me. As **Ecclesiastes 10:20** will say, “*... for a bird of the heavens shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.*”

These deceitful workers who disguise themselves as caretakers of the soul will lash out at websites such as this one, calling it “*poison*” and “*evil*” and say that what is being put forth there is *dangerous error*.

Coming from their own dark, blackened souls which foam out their own shame, they are correct.

Because to a man who loves darkness, the light **IS** poisonous; and as for the “evil,” the Truth **IS** dangerous.

Which, by the way, reminds me of the first “Planet of the Apes” movie back in the 60’s with Charlton Heston. Do you remember that? An astronaut crew crash lands on a planet in the distant future where intelligent talking apes are the dominant species, and humans are the oppressed and enslaved ones. As far as the apes were concerned, this was the way it has always been; except for a few apes who had surmised otherwise.

Some of them had suspicions that perhaps the humans were originally the superior beings. Their searching for clues as to what happened will lead them to the “Forbidden Zone” which would reveal the real evidence for the truth of the matter.

But,...BUT, it’s the “Forbidden Zone” for a reason!

No one was allowed to enter there by reason of the edict from the “*spiritual ruler*” of the ape civilization (Dr. Zaius) You see, Dr. Zaius **KNEW THE TRUTH!** He knew what was at the “Forbidden Zone.”

He was there and saw the evidence for the truth; namely, that the humans were indeed at one time the superior race, but something terrible had happened to reverse this course. It isn’t just “*the Faith*” that Zaius is defending, but the very survival of simian civilization. His role as the leader and supreme ruler of the ape empire was to see to it that no one would ever discover the truth of the situation, because if they did, there whole mindset, yea, there whole civilization will be through.

Thus, the “Forbidden Zone,” a place of “*evil and poison and danger that will upset your faith if you tread that dangerous path.....It must be avoided for the sake of your never-dying souls.*”

Do you notice the parallelism?

Beyond the walls of your local institutional church and its teachings, lies truth’s and practices that you never really considered or even heard of before; truths that will ultimately release you from the bondage and chains of men. BUT, you must not go forth!

“...They do not believe the way we believe; they do not worship the way we worship; they do not sing the way we sing; they do not follow the way we follow; they do not care for your souls like the way we care for your souls. These people teach error and are servants of the flesh. Our system and theology is from the Bible. To stray into a different area is heresy! Keep away from these men and their teachings for they will ultimately destroy your soul...!”

The ***Forbidden Zone*** is to be avoided at all costs.

This clever set-up equates your *system*, your “*leaders*,” your *books*, your *creeds*, your *confessions*, your *constitution*, and your *traditions of men* with the words inspired by God Himself. It makes popes out of church leaders and bobble-head dolls out of those who follow them.....which is exactly the desired outcome!

The “*ecclesiastical authorities*” have done everything to insure that true freedom from the bondage to religious rulers as revealed in the Scriptures will never be realized in the heart of institutionalized church members.

Consequently, the leaders will see to it that the people are regularly reminded of the supposed “*uncertain fate*” and of the horrors and “*mysterious dangers*” lurking beyond the institutional walls, warning them not to rebel and feed outside the confines of the organized/institutional sheep pen. And so, the people once again withdraw, somehow convinced it is their duty to do so.

This is why religious strongmen will always get angry when they see or hear of someone teaching the Truth and exposing them for who they are.

These men **NEED** you to attend their services in order for them to carry on. Without dumb sheep willingly playing the game, giving away their true standing and freedom, the whole system of operation would not function. **THEY KNOW THIS WOULD HAPPEN.**

Just as an automobile needs fuel to operate; just as the human body needs food to survive, so likewise, these men NEED YOU to be their followers or else, they will shrivel up into nothing.

This is the one great fear that all of these ministerial mudslingers of every persuasion have: that you will **STOP** following them and their teachings. The reason is because when Christians STOP following them, then these men will lose their power, their prestige, their comfort zone, their free money, their pride, their position, their perceived authority.

When this happens, the people will only have one choice left: either they follow Jesus Christ, or they reject Jesus Christ.

Either they will proceed and enter the “Forbidden Zone” to discover the Truth in all of its Glory, or choose to remain institutionalized in all of its corruption.

Brethren, has Truth become so enfeebled that it fears honest and open examination? Sadly, this is exactly the case. If the millions upon millions of people who attend their church services week after week are ambivalent to what’s going on, or worse; refuse to search for the Truth, isn’t that an open exhibition how readily people swallow poisonous false doctrines and practices without question?

Indeed, they continue to remain in churches that mistreat them, abuse them and exploit them. They flock to these churches in droves. Just like Israel in Bible times, most Christians today want an earthly king (a Saul) not Christ as King. So they submit to all the abuses and mistreatments that a spiritual ruler imposes and requires, regardless of God's strong warnings to avoid these leaders.

They are told that this is strong medicine and healthy tonic for the soul. This is very demonic.

It is Satan's finest hour. IT'S THE POWER OF DECEPTION OPERATING AT ITS BEST.

THE WISDOM OF GOD

"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." 1 Corinthians 1:25

What if we lived back in Jesus' day? Wouldn't some of us today be interested in His qualifications and schooling and background? You bet they would!

Some Christians today go so far as to not even listen to what an individual has to say concerning the Scriptures without first inquiring as to their "qualifications" and/or whether or not their particular theology matches their own. Many feel that this is a safe and biblical approach in keeping yourself from error.

But, is it really a safe and biblical approach? Or is it something that you have been taught to do; a clever approach implemented in order that you will not have to answer serious and difficult questions that go against your particular system of belief?

As always is the case, following the style and practices of the world; being impressed by the world's standards; seeking the glory, praise, and adulation from men - pursuing this path seems to be the way to go for many professing Christians.

The following is how some people today would broach the subject with Him:

"...You know Jesus, it would be nice to know a little bit more about where you're coming from - your education; your background. I'd personally like to know if you attended any seminary. Are you fluent in Hebrew and Greek? Do you have any degrees from Jerusalem Theological Seminary? What was your major? The Whole Old Testament? The Major Prophets? Who's your family? By the way, where are they?"

You see, I don't know if you can be trusted or even listened to! As you and your friends go about the country side with your message, people are starting to ask questions. They are beginning to wonder if what they are being told by their church leaders is really accurate! Because of you,

some of them are actually getting into the Scriptures for the first time and finding truths that they have never seen before, and boy, the leaders are getting mad!

I've heard some of your new teachings, and to be very honest with you, many of them scare me to death. You shouldn't be causing people to question our great Scribes and Pharisees. Some of them went to the school of Tyrannus. Some were trained at the feet of Gamaliel. Some graduated from the Antioch Ministerial Academy. They all have degrees to show for it.

Some of them are even great Professors with tremendous oratory and you really shouldn't be talking about them the way you do. You know, calling them serpents, murderers, blind guides, things like that. Don't you know that God called them to be his mouthpiece; that they have been ordained to the ministry and have been divinely installed into their office...?"

I think that this would be a pretty accurate account of what would have transpired.

But the question is, Is this kind of mindset and tactic important, or not? There are some today who would say, "Absolutely!"

The Pharisees and others seemed to think so too. What does that tell you?

The first thing the Pharisees said regarding the ministry of Jesus Christ was:

"Where did he get such wisdom and these mighty works?" "Isn't he the carpenter's son?"

"Where did he get all this?" "And so they began to reject him."

"Well, are you also from out of Galilee?"

"And seeing the apostles, they were amazed to learn that they were unlettered and obscure men, and they began to marvel,"

Isn't it just like the world, or perhaps should I be saying, isn't it just like the church? As then, so now.

Many leaders in today's churches will promptly and unashamedly present themselves as:

"Dr." xxxxxx or "Rev." xxxxx or "Pastor" XXXXX or even "Professor" XXXXX.....all of these, so designated by men's "schools of higher learning."

These degrees and/or titles may indeed impress men, but not God. All of God's servants learn directly from Him, the Highest there is, without fanfare before men.

By calling yourself *Pastor* or *Doctor* or *Reverend*, leaders present themselves as some kind of an authority on God. And yes, MEN respect this claim, but here is the reality:

“That which is highly esteemed amongst men is abomination in the sight of God” **Luke 16:15**

The Lord Jesus Christ had no degrees in this world, and He confers none. He gives something infinitely better; Himself and His Nature, to those who believe, obey, and follow Him.

Did the apostle Paul, when speaking to the Athenian’s or his accusers, refer to himself as “*Dr. Paul*”? The very thought is utterly ridiculous! Paul left all that behind, calling it nothing but dung. **Philippians 3:8**

Paul was taught at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3) and I'm sure that Gamaliel was a very fine Hebrew scholar, but what did that knowledge do for Paul? He became the worst (chief) sinner who ever lived! (1 Timothy 1:15)

I know of men with theological degrees galore; possessing a whole string of titles and letters, one after the other, before and after their names, and yet at the same time, they also don't have a clue as to what the true gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is or even who Jesus really is.

If you are looking for and are impressed with the worldly credentials and qualifications of men, you need look no further than today's local institutional church. It is there where you will find them and it is there where you will be happy and satisfied.

Yet, to find the true servants of God; to find the description of true brothers and sisters who have forsaken all and are following Him, you need look no further than to the Scriptures themselves and see what fits them for service.

For should not THIS be our standard? What is the evidence for whom the Lord endorses? Who does the Lord call for service into His Kingdom?

This is where you will find no worldly credentials. It is here where you will find brethren who are but your fellow servants with like passions as yourself. It is here where you will find NO credentials, except for the Spirit of God!

Wow! How are those for credentials? NOT good enough for some people I suspect.

You see, God's servants had credentials, but not the kind you see in today's world of theological academies and local church institutions.

Peter, James, and John were all fishermen. Matthew was a tax collector. Paul was a tentmaker. Jesus was a carpenter.

Do you think that the twelve apostles all had degrees from the Jerusalem Academy of Theology?

Do you want to know what the fundamental ingredients are for our calling? Do you want to see the credentials for our brothers and sisters who are called to serve and follow Him?

These are our credentials:

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh (THAT'S US), not many mighty (THAT'S US), not many noble (THAT'S US), are called:

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world (THAT'S US) that He may be disgracing the wise; and God has chosen the weak things (THAT'S US) of the world to disgrace the things which are mighty;

And base things of the world, and things which are despised (THAT'S US), has God chosen, yea, and things which are not (THAT'S US), to bring to destruction things that are:

*That no flesh (THAT'S US) at all should be boasting in God's sight. But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that is glorying (THAT'S US), let him glory in the Lord (THANK THE LORD, THAT'S US TOO). **1 Corinthians 1:26-31***

*"Where is the wise?...Does not God make stupid the wisdom of this world?" **1 Corinthians 1:20***

CONSLUSION

*"...Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy cometh in the morning..." **Psalm 30:5***

I am very well aware of how radical all of these issues are to the entire world of Christendom. It is as radical as *"breaking the Sabbath"*, as *"not going up to the feast on time"*, as *"doing what only was lawful for the priests to do"*, as not *"washings your hands"* or as not *"walking after the traditions of the elders"* in Christ's days on the earth.

But Christ set us the example, and He obeyed His heavenly Father and stayed the course. He was willing and determined to expose the black darkness of the corrupt religious rule and tyranny His people were under then, and the corrupt rule and tyrannical bondage from religious leaders He knew they would be under down through the centuries after His departure.

Without a doubt, the establishment of Christendom's local institutionalized church, epitomized by *"ecclesiastical oversight and control,"* has become a mammoth institution. Many of the adherents to this system are in great darkness, blinded to its corruption and abuse, sometimes through no fault of their own, but most times, deliberately and carefully blinded by the debased and depraved practices of the leadership who are relentless in demanding obedience and submission to their so-called *"God ordained authority."*

Those calling themselves “Christians” hardly know good from evil anymore, neither truth from error, or light from darkness, or God from Satan, or true men of God from deceivers coming in the Name of Jesus Christ. Many don’t even know what Christ’s Body is, or where or who it is.

This is because many of them are remaining mere followers of men and will always be so, unless the Lord Himself intervenes on their behalf.

Dressing up once a week to attend their three “services” on their assigned Sabbath, multitudes breath a sigh of relief, convinced that they are “strong Christians” for once again having fulfilled their “duties to God.”

Most of them don’t even have the Spirit of God to discern. They are lost and without a shepherd. If you were to read [“The Christian Church: Distorted and Deformed”](#) and/or [“Obey Them”](#) , you would find far more than enough sure evidence that this is precisely the case.

But yet, the burning question must be asked: Why are you still there? Why do you “go to church”? Are you in bondage to men and their teachings?

You might be quick to answer, ***“Absolutely not! I go because of love for God, His Church, and to hear His Word preached.”***

Oh really? That's a nice answer. Clean, methodical words; well trimmed and polished theology, though painted red to hide the dirt beneath the nails. Just like those who pretended to see the Emperor's new clothes, there are many who will parrot the same polished answer, all nodding their heads in unison, not having the slightest clue as to what they are saying, neither the mind to question its genuineness.

Is this really the reason? And is there a chapter and verse for such a response? I didn't think so.

Let's ask some questions and see if we can bare the bones and expose this orthodox monster.

Are there other reasons, (perhaps some that you would never even dream of asking) for going to church?

Are you afraid perhaps, that you will “grow cold” in your faith and even perish if you leave? That's what your “rulers” always tell you. But if you are really afraid or think of the possibility of that happening, do you know what that actually means? It means that you are not carrying your own oil, let alone, possibly not even having any! A very telling and tragic sign indeed!

Or maybe you go there for some other wrong reasons such as:

a) social pleasure and enjoyment: (*Ah. Another day away from my chores!*)

- b) sympathy: (*"My husband/wife was mean to me the other day"*)
- c) pressure: (*"...you must attend all of the services unless providentially hindered..."*)
- d) attention: (*"Hmmm. I wonder if they will notice all the weight I lost?"*)
- e) friendship: (*"I enjoy finding and making new friends"*)
- f) fear of man: (The Pastor says, *"...I am clothed with Divine Authority.."*)
- g) receiving and/or dishing out the latest gossip: (*Listen to this! You know what Sharon told me yesterday?*)
- h) dressing up: (*"Honey. Will this color tie match my new shoes?"*)
- i) keeping up with your connections: (*"Hey Bill. Do you think you can provide me with more business contacts?"*)
- j) fear of being shunned: (*"Remember to obey your Elders and avoid all fellowship with Ron & Cindy because they have resigned from the Church."*)

How about it?? I can name many more, but I hope you get the point.

None of these things has anything to do with *love for God, His people, or hearing His Word preached.*

Listen! Let's get right down to brass tacks, as they say.

The truth of the matter is that when someone begins to touch and expose this corrupt system of religiosity, (nerve) the whole body quivers. People who remove themselves from this corrupt, unscriptural system **out of faithfulness to Christ and His Word** will have a heavy price to pay, just as their Great Example did.

When you do, you will learn very fast just how little interest indeed many of your supposed Christians friends have in God's Truth. You will be accused of heresy, of joining a cult, of abandoning your friends, and family. It will get plenty rough before it gets better.

Your choice to live by the Truth's of God's Word will reveal enemies and persecution from sources you never dreamed of! You will be mocked, lied about, slandered up and down, left and right, especially by those in so-called "*positions of church leadership.*"

Remember again that Jesus Christ, the teachings of Jesus Christ, and the followers of Jesus Christ were hated and despised by most of the religious teachers and spiritual leaders in His day too. The cesspool of darkness and corruption that was evidenced amongst the religious leaders

back then, is the very same cesspool of darkness and corruption that is evidenced amongst the religious leaders inside the local institutional church today.....with one exception.

Have the religious leaders changed? Yes indeed! They have gotten worse!

I don't know which false teachings are worse because they are all bad. Outright lies and false teachings enslave; they blind; they rob; they bind; they destroy; and they ultimately erode all of one's existence, and the deceptive teaching of "*going to church*" certainly does all of those things.

[Hebrews 10:25, "forsake not the assembling,"](#) is the most popular verse used to defend this false doctrine, and it is used as though it spoke of the issue, which it does not, but only as interpreted and twisted by men building their own kingdoms and seeking social benefits and pleasures rather than God.

That Scripture doesn't say that it is sinful not to go to church Sunday morning, evening, and Wednesday night. The word "*church*" isn't even in the passage! It is nowhere to be found or even remotely alluded to! When you read the verses preceding, it is crystal clear that the Spirit of God is not trying to get us to be more faithful to attend church services! In fact, when this was written, Christians did not even have "*church services*" or even *church buildings*, for that matter.

It is MEN who teach this false doctrine of "*going to church*" because they want you there for them. Notice how important "*numbers*" and "*membership*" and "*impressive buildings*" are to the flesh. The leaders of these groups will take all that you have, even your very soul itself if they can, and enlist your services to build up their works. It is all lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh and the pride of life and, be not deceived, God is nowhere to be found; supposed *fellowship, love, and preaching* notwithstanding.

YOU are God's church; not once a week, meeting for a "*worship service*," but 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You become a member of His church when you received His Spirit and are baptized into His body by the Spirit of God. You have come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, (who is with you, and you with Him 24/7!)

If your spiritual health and well-being depended on fellowship and "*going to church*," then many of our Bible brethren would never had made it through.

Abraham could never have made it to be our father of faith. Paul, the great apostle, spent some serious time alone with the Holy Spirit separated from the big apostles in Jerusalem. David spent considerable time living in caves and among the heathen separated from Israel. Moses spent forty years separated from His people before He was prepared to lead them out of

Egypt. Joseph languished in prison for years. John the Baptist stood alone in the wilderness for God, because no one wanted to stand with him. Daniel ended up in the lion's den alone, because he was the only one who cared enough about God to pray.

According to some people, all of these brethren would have been snatched up by the evil one because they *forsook church and fellowship*.

A Christian's responsibility is to be found faithful with what He has given us to do during our short stay on this earth.

What did Jesus say would happen when you turn your back on this worldly religious system?

Today's ministerial strongmen would have us believe that unless we belong to some "*local institutional church*," we will fall prey to Satan who goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. But as usually is the case with these false teachers, the very opposite turns out to be true. And it is none other than Christ Himself who has promised us differently!

This is what Christ has promised us would happen. He has promised us that if we are faithful to Him and His teaching, **we would be put out of their synagogues!** Just the opposite! We would **NOT** be welcomed and we would **NOT** be received into fellowship!

"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever kills you will think that he is doing God service." **John 16:2**

Christ Himself was rejected by the religious rulers of His day, and we are to be "*as He is... in this world*."

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." **1John 4:17**

When we refuse to "*come out of Babylon The Great*" and stand with Christ and His Words, but prefer instead to be accepted by our friends and the rulers of the ecclesiastical system, we are simply denying the Lord who was put out of the synagogue for His teachings. **Luke 4**

Just dare to stand on Christ's Words, and you will soon come to know the meaning of this verse of scripture:

"If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." **John 15:19**

If Jesus were to return today, you and I both know that there is not one church on the face of the earth who would dare hire Him to be their "*Pastor*". Not one!

Be not deceived. The church that killed Christ two thousand years ago is the church, to this very day, that would without delay, kill Christ all over again if He were here today teaching us:

"...YET IT WILL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant..."

Being faithful to Him and to His Word should be our first priority. You have been provided with the occasion to see the Lord Jesus in ways perhaps you have never seen Him before, along with verses of Scriptures and examples that are certainly NOT going to be pointed out to you in the churches of Babylon.

That is why we are all given the following exhortations. It is not I who forsakes the assembling of ourselves together, but those who belong to the local institutional church!

As it says,

*"And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, says the Lord, And touch no unclean thing; And I will receive you, And will be to you a Father, And ye shall be to me sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." **2 Corinthians 6:16-18***

*"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." **Revelation 18:4***

As said before, thinking and acting for one self will come with a price.

Christ is our only Master and He will not play *second fiddle* to anything or anyone in our lives. Count the cost, because it requires our life. But if we are granted the privilege to follow in His steps and endure the trials, the rewards will be well worth it. We "*will be hated of all men*" for sure, but our names will be in His "*book of remembrance*" and His "*book of life*," and that is worth far more than being well spoken of by all men.

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love him. But God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God."

1Corinthians 2:9-10

May the Lord Himself grant unto us ears to hear "*the voice of the True Shepherd*" who **alone** is the Head of His own Body and may He grant to us the courage and strength to face the battle which must be waged by everyone who is granted the privilege to follow Him.

<http://www.wickedshepherds.com/TheNakedTruth.html>

