

Welcome friends to another broadcast of "Morsels for Zion's Poor"

Paul gave a sobering warning to the Ephesian elders, that grievous wolves (false teachers and prophets) which would enter the church and would wreak havoc among them without regard to the well being of the flock. He had spoken on other occasions of these teachers of false doctrine; even calling them enemies of the cross. The ages since that time have proven the prophecy of Paul to be true in this regard. Many cults and religious organizations of every ilk masquerade themselves as the true church of GOD. So many false teachers have arisen in the course of time that it is very difficult to find the purity of sound doctrine which is not mixed with the error of man's tradition and ideas. Deception abounds. Discernment of spiritual truth is seemingly non-existent among multitudes claiming to be the followers of JESUS CHRIST.

While the prediction which Paul spoke concerning the "grievous wolves" has obviously come to pass, it is the second part of his prophecy which we see as an even more insidious and dangerous reality. He said that "of your own selves" (i.e.; the Ephesian elders) would come some who spoke "perverse" (i.e.; wicked, twisted) doctrines designed to attract followers. The LORD taught HIS disciples to go forth preaching the gospel and teaching men to follow the way of CHRIST. Yet no where did HE teach them to try to attract followers by any other method than the simple lifting of HIM up in that gospel message.

To say that we are inundated by those who seek to "draw away disciples" would be to understate what we see happening around us. Many eloquent and forceful "preachers" have arisen who are convinced that their mission in life is to gain a following. We do not criticize their zeal nor their earnestness in this endeavor. Many of them are tireless in their efforts. Bright and educated in the ways of psychology and entertainment they ply their trade tirelessly and effectively. The more shameless of them resort to manipulation and "miracle" working to impress the masses. Their measure of "success" in these endeavors is always seen in the great numbers of disciples that are generated.

One of the identifying marks of all of these so called "ministries" is that they are always asking for and concerned about "money". Their books and seminars all come at a price. Somehow I cannot envision the apostle Paul charging a fee for his services. In fact he went to great lengths to avoid being chargeable to any man. Somewhere along the line the "preaching of the gospel" has become a career opportunity. Many go about shamelessly becoming wealthy in this world's goods. Some even flaunt the "wealth" they gain in milking the sheep. They show off their affluence under the guise of demonstrating what can be expected if one is "faithful". There will be great judgement on those who "preach" the gospel for gain; whether it be for filthy lucre or for "followers". True preaching is done simply for the glory of CHRIST.

Another identifying mark of such "ministries" is that they place a great deal of importance on making their message and "program" appealing to the masses. When I am exposed to most so called "contemporary worship", entertainment comes to mind. Everything is geared to making men, women, and children comfortable; from elegant and auspicious buildings to family activities and sports programs. They want to ensure that people will want to come and keep coming based on an appeal to the flesh. The only people to whom the gospel will ever appeal are those who have been convinced and convicted by the HOLY SPIRIT of the fact that they are unworthy sinners who deserve destruction. The church is not a place for the masses to gather and be amused and comforted but is a place where GOD's people meet to worship HIM as a body of believers, in SPIRIT and truth and to be built up in the most holy faith.

The LORD JESUS said that if HE was lifted up HE would draw men to HIMSELF. HE has called some and given them the privilege of proclaiming the gospel of the glory of GOD in the earth. They seek no followers nor disciples, yet delight to see men and women embrace the truth of that gospel. The "success" of their endeavors is not measured by the number of converts that may or may not be produced in the preaching of it. Rather their success is measured by the faithful declaration of JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified. Their joy is full when they see CHRIST exalted and men worshipping HIM in adoring wonder. Do you desire to be found numbered among those who have no HOPE but CHRIST?

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