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by Derek Melton

Matthew 23:24 (KJV)

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

An eerie enemy has slipped into our modern church panorama leaving a trail of horrific spiritual devastation wherever it goes. This enemy is not new to the Christian faith but it seems that the effects of its wrath are wider spread and deeper rooted. The damages being inflicted far transcend the superficial, threatening the very core of our biblical values and spiritual life.

Insomuch, if this plague is not eradicated, and the epidemic stayed, an entire generation of Abraham's seed may be in imminent danger. What is this perilous dilemma facing our generation of Christ's followers? Before I answer this question I must reveal what it is not. This plague aforementioned is not any external or surface malady or dysfunction. This affliction transcends the externalities of religious woes being rooted in the birthing chambers of the human heart.

This crisis we are facing is an internal dysfunction that hyper-exalts the insignificances of the spiritual life above the significances. This infers that we have become inordinately sensitive to superficial and temporal activities and identities within Christendom and thereby becoming inordinately insensitive to eternal and necessary divine precepts and principles.

Those who are monitoring the temperature of the church are currently watching the mercury drop to frightening levels of frigidity because the glowing warmth of God's presence has been replaced by an overemphasis upon frivolous religious fads. This is marked by the flowing current of church members drifting from church to church to feed upon the most palatable religious cuisine of the day. Icons of the true Christian life such as love, commitment, faithfulness, and loyalty are soon replaced by the unsatisfiable and ever-changing desires that have been born out of the womb of selfishness and greed.

This creates a religious mood that omits the greater and weightier pillars of Truth to attain the lesser and degenerate appetite driven religious fads holding popularity for the moment. Those infected with this virus find themselves dancing to the rhythm of their own corrupted appetites having abandoned the weightier matters of the Kingdom of God. Greater value is placed upon the current and popular religious fads than the timeless truths of God's Word. Soon our decisions are born out of these inordinate desires and our lives are soon governed thereby. Beloved, in this very moment innumerable thousands are driven by this insanity. They float from meeting to meeting and from church to church on a personal quest to gratify the unsatisfiable appetites of meaningless rhetoric.

And just as the Pharisee's they will strain out a gnat but they will swallow a camel, ignoring the very precepts birthed by Sovereignty in pursuit of ignoble religious appetites birthed by inordinate desire. In this pseudo-religious quest, God fearing and Holy Ghost empowered churches are abandoned to gratify these phantom, faddish whims. Gnats are soon being strained while camels are being gulped down and swallowed. Meaning overemphasis is placed upon trivial matters, while eternal and weighty matters are ignored.

Oh brethren, this illness threatens the vitality of true Christianity. It threatens to reduce powerful and eternal holiness to the dreags and wastelands of degeneracy. What can we do? What can be done to offset this spiritual influenza and stop the plague? Beloved we must readjust our thinking to restore the importance of important issues while reducing our perception of less important issues.

Simply put - our vagabond Christianity needs to be stopped. Our floating from church to church, endeavoring to gratify our sick appetite for self-worth, needs to be nailed to the cross of Jesus Christ. Beloved, if your church is preaching repentance, dying to self, faith towards God, evangelism and world missions, stick with them. Your abandonment of this greater in quest of the lesser of self-significance will ensure the plagues affliction. It's high time we learn to swallow the gnats while purging the camels.