

Articles and Sermons :: 19 The Final History of The Church on Earth

**19 The Final History of The Church on Earth - posted by kathleen1 (), on: 2009/10/25 10:10**

19-The Final History of the Church On Earth-BH Clendennen  
The Pathway To An Overcoming Life Series

Even the apostles kept the soon return of the Lord before the people as a present hope all the time. Yet, there are many Scriptures that in a hidden way, showed that certain events had to take place before Christ could return. In the wisdom of God, these events were not set forth in such a way that they would hinder Christians in any period of continually expecting the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, in the twentieth century, two of God's great days have gone by. We look back over the long history and see how all her varied states and experiences of the church were foreknown, our hearts should be filled with the great expectancy of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord Himself intimated what we have in the parable of the ten virgins, in other words, the times we live in and where we are. It was a picture of the whole course of Christendom, and divides the church dispensation into three stages.

First, the period of expectation, second, the era of lazy indifference to this blessed hope, and third, the season of awakening, which was the almost the immediate forerunner of the coming of the Bridegroom. Now, we're living in the last hour. It's well that we be trimming our lamps, waiting in holy fear the coming of this wonderful Lord Jesus. The parable of the 10 virgins presents in a graphic way the responsibility of the saints to wait for the return of the Lord. There are other passages that are proof or confirmation of this interpretation which we look at at this time. In the two epistles to Timothy, we have two distinct conditions predicted, as characterizing what the Holy Spirit designates first of all, the latter times, and the last days; two different times.

In 1 Tim 4:1-5, the Holy Spirit speaks of the first of these two periods, but in 2 Tim 3:1-9, He speaks of the second. Careful reading of these two passages will reveal the progress of evil. The condition of the latter times was the first to develop. Out of these grew the disruptive state of the last days.

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

1Ti 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

1Ti 4:3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

1Ti 4:4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

1Ti 4:5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

It's very evident that the latter times was in connection with the Roman apostasy. It was a time of papal dominion. Note how Rome has fulfilled these conditions to the letter. Departing from the faith of God's Word, she's been misled by evil spirits to believe the church is infallible and her voice is the voice of inspiration. Thus, she's foisting doctrines of demons on blinded nations. She's spoken lies in hypocrisy. Her leaders have consciences that are seared, become immune to all Scriptural appeals. The Reformation proved this when God gave her a space to repent and she refused. Rev 2:21

In verse 3 of our reading, God's given us two marks that nobody can deny fit Rome. It was Rome who forbade her priests to marry, it was Rome who cultivated the dogma that holiness is manifested in the abstention of certain foods. Others have been deluded by the same demons, but it was in the Roman apostasy the latter times came in. Now, we look at the second epistle in what is termed the last days.

2Ti 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2Ti 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

2Ti 3:3 Without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

2Ti 3:4 Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

2Ti 3:5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

2Ti 3:6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

2Ti 3:7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2Ti 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

2Ti 3:9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

These are outstanding features of the last days. Closing the church dispensation and to be immediately followed by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Can any believer in the Word of God doubt we live in such a time? I'm aware of the objection that says when have men been other than what is described here? The answer is this is indeed a perfect description of the natural man. Such things describe the natural man, this is indeed what he is. But 2 Timothy does not describe the heathen. Here, the Holy Ghost is describing the conditions in the local church in the latter days. This is the way it is. It's not fallen man being described, it's those who have a form of godliness while denying its power. This is what makes the passage so solemn and gives it such a tremendous weight in the present day. There are 21 outstanding features in the passage which give a clear picture of the condition of the church in the last days.

We look now at the features of the last day church and we must be able to conclude that this is us. Men shall be lovers of themselves. It's no longer that I might know Him, it's what is in it for me? It is men, self occupied, as contrasted with the godly of all ages who found their joy and delight in looking away from self to God. It's not merely the carnal and wicked, it must include the preacher, who is more occupied with his work than with Christ. This is the age of the egotist, in spiritual matters as well as carnal. They find their god within them, we're told, and not without. They make no secret of it. When they profess to love God, it is themselves they love. First of all, money lovers. Great fortunes are amassed by men who profess to believe the Bible and its testimonies. An investigation in America has saw some preachers worth a hundred million dollars, yet begging widows for a ten dollar offering. What a spectacle for angels and demons.

The command not to eat with a covetous man is a dead letter in this Laodcean generation. Preachers are worth millions, begging widows for ten dollars. Nothing wrong with having money, if it was given to you that the Gospel may be preached.

Deu 8:18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

The preaching of wealth as a sign of godliness is an abomination to a Holy God. Wealth, to a godly man is a sign that God can trust him. Boasters, read the advertisements of preachers, and many Christian papers. C.M. Ward's comment on such was, it's a sad day when a preacher believes his own propaganda. Listen to the pulpiteers of today. What is their message? Rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. Great, swelling words, rapturously applauded by people living in a fool's paradise. Even when uttered by men who are tearing the Bible to shreds.

Then proud. So proud they glory in their shame, congratulating themselves on the very thing the Word of God condemns. Proud of their fancied superiority, proud of their eloquence, proud of their very impiety, which is hailed as broad mindedness and a cultivated intellect. How sickening this must be to Him who said take My yoke upon you and learn of Me because I'm meek and lowly in heart.

Blasphemers, a word you hesitate to use, but which is chosen by the Holy Spirit to describe the men who call themselves ministers of Christ. Blasphemers. The new theologians miss called. Higher critics, who deny the deity of the Son, His virgin birth, His holy humanity. Others who make wealth a sign of God's approval. Blasphemers, every one. Think of the disloyalty of Christians who sit and listen to such men, week after week, and are too timid to protest or too indifferent to obey the Word of God. From such, turn away. Disobedient to parents, this is one of the crowning signs of the age, and root of most of the trouble in this world. This one sign of the last days indicates the breaking up of the whole social fabric as we know it. Opposition to authority is undoubtedly one of the characteristic features of the times. Children will not obey their parents' restraints. Parents have largely lost the sense of their responsibility toward the rising generation. Isaiah 3:12 has become a reality.

Isa 3:12 As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

The results of such is prophesied.

Isa 30:1 Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:

We, in this respect have sowed to the wind for years, and the reaping of the whirlwind has come. Then, unthankful. This is a denial of divine providence. Utterly forgetting the source of all blessing, both temporal and spiritual. When we become unthankful in the ordinary things of life, it's not long till God will label us unthankful. Unholy, the Godly separation from the world has now become old fashioned. In its place has come a worldliness that is sensual and foolish. The most popular preachers are comedians. Think about it. A look back at mid-evil portraits tells everything. Comedy never appeared until a society became morally bankrupt. It is not necessary to be outwardly vile to be unholy. Giving up the line of separation between the believer and the unbeliever is unholiness. Disobedience to any known command or instruction is ungodliness and unholiness.

Without natural affection: The foundations of family life are not being destroyed, they are all but disappearing in modern society. Unscriptural divorces and all the evils that followed have cast their dark shadows over the professing church. There are as many divorces in the church as there are outside of it. Abortion, child abuse, pornography, homosexuality, infidelity are all products of being without natural affection. Hear me people. We are at an end time. This absolutely describes the modern Pentecostal church, not just the old line organization. There is no connection between believing and behavior.

The next, unholy hate, I need not speak particularly. To name them is enough to stir the heart and appall the soul when it's remembered how they're tolerated and spreading through the church. Unforgiveness, how much of that's in the church today. People sit in the church with unforgiveness in their heart toward another member of that church. God says there's no forgiveness from Me, with that in your heart. False accusers, how much of that. We must beware lest we find ourselves in this Satanic company. Incontinent, fierce, that means savage. That's what you got. Churches are torn up, broken up, destroyed, by people who don't have their own way. Haters of good, traitors, heady, high minded. This last accounts largely for the daring things uttered proudly by learned doctors against the Word of God and the great fundamentals of the faith and the terrible things happening in the church. I was in a camp meeting, a powerful meeting of God. People were being brought under conviction. A man there after being broken, came to me, and he was a member of one of the largest Pentecostal churches in the world. He said "Our Pastor announced that our Sunday morning service, there would be a movie of John Wayne. And he said to us, now there'll be some cursing in this, but you remember he's not saved." My God, people call that church! Why would you pay tithes to such a mess when you can probably rent that for five dollars? See, this is where we are.

In Ohio, recently a man in the pulpit opened a can of beer, and said this was his second of the day. He said we ought to act in church like we act at home. That is right, if you're a devil, don't come to church and try to act holy. That's what he was. You see, it's a lower form of man, trying to teach a higher form of truth. It also accounts for those who changed the truth to fit their lifestyle and to fit the tares. Thinking themselves wise, they become fools. Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, how aptly these words characterize the outstanding feature of the twenty first century church. It's gone into the entertainment business. The people must be amused. As the church needs the people's money, therefore, the church must supply the people's demands, and meet the craving. Everything from belly dancing to a pool hall in the thing that calls itself a church. How else can the godless hypocrite be held together. How else can the throngs of the unconverted be attracted to the service? The theater, the singing and funny stories take the place of the Gospel message and the solemn worship of God. The church is thus filled with Christless men and women who have been lulled to sleep and made to feel religious while gratifying every carnal desire under the sanction and sham of a called church. What an awakening awaits such people. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power. Men must have some form of religious expression and so the outward thing is sustained after the life is gone. Thus, informality and imitation prevails while regeneration, sanctification and everything vital has long since been denied.

85% of the average church members have never been born of God much less filled with the Spirit. For the most part, this is foreign to their mode of thought, speech and behavior. The pure, unadulterated Gospel, which alone is the power of God, which is seldom preached and never missed by the masses. This is indeed dark days in which we are living. God help us to wake up and know the coming of the Lord is at hand. The final thing He said about that church generation is they were ever learning but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. Are you listening? Ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of truth. Truth is Christ. They are running everywhere looking for Christ, but never truly finding Christ. At that point in time, and we're there, the true church is going to be taken up and they will find the antichrist and believe he's the truth. Jesus said you won't believe Me who is the truth, you'll believe that which is the lie. We're there, ladies and gentlemen, Christ is about to come. That's the reason I brought these messages to you. We must stir our hearts, come back to that altar, repent and confess before God.

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