

**Revivals And Church History :: John Alexander Dowie? heretical?****John Alexander Dowie? heretical? - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/12/26 0:23**

I am wondering about the man "John Alexander Dowie" if he was a solid Christian or was part of a cult or heretical sect? Here is some generic information on him, I am not sure if it is biased in one direction or not: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Dowie

Re: John Alexander Dowie? heretical? - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/12/26 0:26

Quote:
-----Dowie had claimed to be the forerunner of the second coming of Christ. Dowie was particularly hard on Muslims, whom he felt that Christ would return and destroy. Ahmad, a Muslim, had claimed to be Christ in the spirit, who would establish the "final victory of Islam" in earth. When Ahmad heard of Dowie's claim, he challenged him to a prayer duel, in the following words, which represent a small excerpt:
"If the pretender to Elijahship shows his willingness by any direct or indirect means to enter the lists against me, he shall leave the world before my eyes with great sorrow and torment. These...signs are particularly for Europe and America. Ah! That they ponder over them and benefit by them."

I wonder if it was because of spiritual warfare that his life went downhill spiritually? perhaps the devil did spend overtime on him through this character mentioned above?

Re: - posted by Forevidence (), on: 2005/12/26 9:36

Dowie was a weird one but I believe he was legit for the first part of his ministry but later fell away. Look at this little bio sketch of his life and teachings, the true things and the false,

JOHN ALEXANDER DOWIE.

John Alexander Dowie was born in Scotland in 1847, but spent much of his early life in Australia. He was a fighter in the true sense, boldly battling the sin and compromise he found all around him - even as a young minister in Australia. In later years, particularly after his move to Chicago in the United States, he became probably the most renowned pioneer of Divine Healing worldwide, and by the turn of the century had become known to millions around the world. In his early years of outstanding success in Chicago, where the power of God was being constantly demonstrated, and hundreds were being healed of every affliction, it seemed as if the devil was summoning every demon from hell to attack and somehow bring him down. He was arrested over 100 times on trumped-up charges, ceaselessly attacked by the most prominent media men in the city, and he even suffered street-riots and attempts upon his life. (-On one notable occasion, when he had been suddenly warned by a voice from God to leave his office, he narrowly averted being blown to pieces by a powerful bomb that had been planted there). Eventually, he won through, with credibility intact (in fact, greatly enhanced despite all the controversy), and became God's most effective champion of Divine Healing in America up to that point.

Tragically however, when the early years of constant battle were done, and a time of relative peace and prosperity settled in upon him, this daring fighter who had brought healing to America, ended up being deluded by the devil into dressing in High-Priestly robes and thinking that he was Elijah the prophet. After this, the end could not be far off, and John Alexander Dowie died in comparative ignominy several years later, an ill and broken man - a shadow of his former self - having lost his ministry and literally everything he owned. How one of God's greatest fighters could come to such a tragic end, is something that should be an object lesson to us all.

The quotations used here are almost all taken from the book, 'John Alexander Dowie - A life story of Trials, Tragedies and Triumphs' by Gordon Lindsay:

As with many men of God who are being prepared for a mighty ministry, God had used the early years of Dowie's Christian walk as a "toughening- up" or training period. Dowie's many struggles and pitfalls, plus the harsh spiritual 'wilderness' and obscurity of Australia, were used to mold and break him, bringing a great hunger and seeking after God. As Gordon Lindsay wrote in the Introduction to his book on Dowie, "when any man is chosen of God to be used in an unusual manner, God permits him to go through a training period, which sometimes includes trials and tribulations of the

most severe nature." He said that when Dowie first set foot on American soil at the age of 41, he was almost completely unknown, but that when the healing anointing that he had received from God was recognized, and God's perfect timing came, John Alexander Dowie rose to international prominence with astonishing abruptness, as one of God's great leaders of that period. Lindsay wrote of the decline of Dowie that, "it was at that moment when he began to engage in secular activities, and departed from the simplicity of his earlier days, that his decline began."

John Alexander Dowie is described as, "a reformer who, fighting against the greatest of odds, single-handily challenged the apostasy of his time, and succeeded in bringing to the attention of the Church visible, if not to its acceptance, the message of the Gospel of healing - a message of deliverance for the whole man, body, soul and spirit... Against overwhelming opposition, a hostile press, bitterly opposed clergymen, antagonistic city officials, unscrupulous lawyers... he fought for and maintained the right to pray for the sick. Despite the fiercest persecution, numerous illegal arrests - as many as one hundred in a year - he outwitted and foiled his enemies, and succeeded in bringing to the attention of the world, the great truth that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever." (Pg 3-4). And all through this period, numerous documented, outstanding miracles of healing were taking place under his ministry.

Please remember how NEW all this was at the time. Today, the things that Dowie fought for are taken for granted throughout the Christian world, but in those days there were basically NO SUCH THINGS as healing ministries or healing evangelists. Dowie was a pioneer, an instrument of God who paved the way for what was to follow, just like many Christian Reformers down through the ages.

However, the days of needing to constantly battle gradually drew to an end, and because of his newfound success and the relative prosperity of his ministry, Dowie eventually made the tragic mistake of relaxing his guard. As Gordon Lindsay noted, "Middle age is a dangerous period and not a few succumb to the temptation at that time of life to spiritually relax (something quite different to physical relaxation). The great difference between Dr. Dowie and others was that he had become a world leader whose actions were watched by the eyes of multitudes." (Pg 195).

"In the days of adversity, John Alexander Dowie learned to lean heavily upon God. When every other resource failed him, he abandoned his life to the mercy and graciousness of God. But AFTER SUCCESS HAD COME, when thousands of people ALMOST IDOLIZED HIM, he apparently did not feel so strongly that same need. He allowed himself to become so very busy... A fateful mistake! How many sorrows would John Alexander Dowie have saved himself had he taken the time to get the mind of God on decisions which were so all important? How many fatal mistakes men of God have made because THEY DID NOT PAUSE TO TAKE COUNSEL WITH THE LORD WHEN THEY HAD SOME VITAL DECISION TO MAKE?" (Pg 194).

As Paul Billheimer wrote, "The sands of time are strewn with the wrecks of the broken lives of many, who were once mightily used of God, but who suffered shipwreck upon the rocks of SPIRITUAL PRIDE."

In his early days in Chicago, certain people had approached Dowie with what they claimed as a "direct revelation from God" that Dowie was, in fact, 'Elijah the Restorer', the great end-times prophet. For their trouble, Dowie immediately rebuked them soundly and dismissed them from his presence, warning them never to mention such things to him again. However, the suggestion that had been planted that day kept ringing in his ears. "According to his own testimony, he tried to rid himself of it, but could not. A voice seemed to say, 'Elijah must come, and who but you is doing the work of Elijah?' Time passed. Then one day there came flooding into his consciousness a strange and intense conviction that he was indeed Elijah - the one spoken of by the prophets who was to come and restore all things. The impression came with such overwhelming power, that his entire personality became absorbed with it." (Pg 188). In June 1901, Dowie took the fateful step of publicly announcing that he was indeed Elijah the Restorer. (A claim which was immediately challenged and denounced by religious leaders all over the world).

By this time, Dowie was also heavily involved with land development. Having purchased over 6000 acres of land near Chicago, construction was already underway on what would become 'Zion City', an entire large town to be occupied by Dowie's followers, and to be run according to "Christian principles". Sadly, no-one seemed to remember that the New Testament never advocates separating ourselves from the world in this way, but rather of living IN the world, but not being OF it. Initially, Zion City was a resounding success, both financially and in every other respect. But eventually it was to lead Dowie to financial ruin, and there can be no doubt that it contributed greatly to his overall decline. One of his great dreams was to build 'Zion Cities' all over the world - no doubt part of his supposed mission of the "Restoration of all things" - from which he and his followers would begin to exercise rulership in the earth. What fateful days these were.

For many years John's wife had been content, along with John, to live almost in poverty, trusting God. However, it has

been reported that "when prosperity came to the Dowie family, she lost her simplicity of life: she bought gowns in Paris and indulged in extravagances..." (Pg 200). All of this would have been unthinkable to them only a few years earlier. "But with the prosperity that came to him in America, eventually the simplicity of his life was altered. He came to the conclusion, and apparently Mrs. Dowie abetted his proposals, that it would be to his advantage to build a costly executive mansion in which he could entertain important personages. This large edifice when finished was elaborately appointed with expensive furnishings." (Pg 201-202).

In the end, it seemed almost as though the very things that Dowie and his wife had stood against all their lives, were the very strategies that Satan now used against them, to destroy them. And to help the tragedy along,- "at the crucial time of Dr. Dowie's life when he needed help so desperately, it does not appear that his wife was a spiritual reservoir of strength that he could fall back on." (Pg 201). At times, especially during this latter period, there were those who tried to warn him of the dangers of what he was doing. But he refused to listen. Even when his daughter died tragically as a result of a fire in 1902, he hardly paused to reflect on his headlong forward momentum.

The last days of John Dowie were not particularly good. He had fought a great fight for many years in his early period, but he was defeated in the latter part of his life. As is so often the case with great Revivals or great men of God who fall from the path, the harm that they can do and the ridicule that they can bring upon the Gospel in the end, can almost undo much of the good that originally came from them. How delighted the devil must have been, not only to deceive and sideline this great man of God, but also to use him to bring ridicule upon the very truths that he had originally proclaimed so effectively. God could not afford to have John Alexander Dowie continuing in this state for much longer. He had to take him home. Dowie died still believing he was Elijah, an ill and broken man, crippled in a wheel chair. His ministry was gone, Zion City was almost bankrupt, and he had lost everything that he once thought of as his own. "How have the mighty fallen!" He died on March 9, 1907.

There is also a bio sketch on a bunch healing revivalists. Like Willaim Branham, Smith Wigglesworth, John G. Lake etc.

(<http://65.108.220.179/books/GREAT%20HEALING%20REVIVALISTS.htm>) Great Healing Revivalists

The articles are put together by Andrew Strom and Larry Magnello.