

SEDUCING SPIRITS

As we know, the Scriptures forewarn us in...

“...that in the last days perilous times shall come.” —2 Timothy 3:1

Now, I don't think there's any question, we live in the last of the last days. Indeed, such times as are warned of here, are upon us. Jesus is soon to come, and yet, the Bible again cautions us in....

*“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first...”
—2 Thessalonians 2:3*

Over the years, I've seen many once-strong believers become weakened, then confused, and ultimately lead astray. Amazingly, today you can meet someone who is seemingly a strong Christian with deep conviction and in a year or two hear they have fallen into terrible theological error, sin, or both. I believe it is obvious, there is a spiritual pressure, a shaking and sifting, like we've never seen before taking place in this hour. There is a conspiratory oppression, demonically inspired and leveled against anyone who dare stands for Jesus, and it is sweeping through the land. Make no mistake, thousands are being swept away, compromise is epidemic, and spiritual blindness is the norm rather than the extreme. Only those who carefully abide in Christ and are faithful to God's Word will survive. Does the Word of God give us any insight? Indeed, it does...

“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...” —1 Timothy 4:1

Our topic, in this article, will be *'Seducing Spirits'*. May God pour His spirit of grace and discernment upon us that we might overcome in these perilous times.

Now, the word *'seduce'* used here, offers us profound insight into the deceptive process employed by the enemy. It's likened to how an indiscreet woman, a harlot, might break down the resolve and excite the unlawful passions of an unsuspecting man. As the wise man in Proverbs declared...

“For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit (a trap).” —Proverbs 23:27

Thus, to be seduced is to be allured, enticed, even to be enchanted, bewitched, and charmed, to unwittingly fall under a strange fascination. Now, seduction is calculated to break down resistance, to weaken stubborn moral roadblocks, hence, it doesn't always happen abruptly. Usually, it's a process of slowly undermining and ultimately sabotaging and destroying spiritual

conviction. In light of this truth, it is essential that we use discernment regarding our spiritual associations. Likewise, as the Bible teaches, we should know those who labor among us and be very circumspect in regards to spiritual fellowship. Above all, we should be very careful whom we open our hearts to, especially in regards to ministry, always fearfully remembering the inspired words of the Apostle Paul...

"...know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" —1 Corinthians 5:6

In this brief article, I'd like to offer seven common areas of concern, warning signs, if you will, of spiritual seduction. If you see any of these things in an individual, family, or church, be very careful. Rest assured, no matter what it looks like externally, there is something amiss. So, in no certain order, let's discuss the signs of the influence of a seducing spirit. When you see these things, be very careful...

WHEN THEY REFUSE TO BOLDLY DENOUNCE ROME

"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

I do not know if there is anything, anywhere, more abominable than Roman Catholicism. Likewise, nothing is more deceptive/sweeping than the ecumenical movement that's weakened the once robust Protestant church. The Romanist system, no doubt, atop all false Christianity, is the Great Whore in the Book of Revelation. The attributes are all there, her unparalleled wealth/political power, her insidious doctrines, and perhaps above all, her soiled history. Her hands are stained guilty with martyrs' blood. In fact the Bible declares...

"And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." —Revelation 18:24

Dave Hunt, declared in his book, *'A Woman Rides The Beast'*, that...

"John Foxe's book, Foxes Book Of Martyrs, which was a detailed account of the fierce persecution during Bloody Mary's Inquisition, after the Queen's demise, a copy was chained to every pulpit in England, lest they forgot martyr's blood." —Dave Hunt

Now, some may wonder, should men concentrate on this? I am not suggesting that this is the end of all preaching, but we cannot preach Christ without exposing every anti-christ spirit. The O.T. Prophets, Jesus, the Apostles, all exposed false religion. Yea, the Word of God itself, boldly calls out the spirit of anti-christ by name. When men either are too timid or too blind to boldly renounce Catholicism, make no mistake, something is terribly amiss.

WHEN THEY CANNOT IDENTIFY GOD'S WORD

This, I am sure, will not be popular. Nevertheless, what could be more important than God's Word and rightly discerning what is and what is not the true Word of God?

"My sheep hear my voice..." —John 10:27

Whether you know it or not, there is a crisis regarding the Word of God.

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." —Matthew 4:4

Therefore, from the beginning, Satan has sought to undermine the Word of God.

"...yea, hath God said" —Genesis 3:1

We are naive to assume there is no Satanic plot to dilute, corrupt, and ultimately undermine God's Word. So it is in the English speaking world, the enemy has flooded the West with literally dozens, if not hundreds, of different translations. What do they all have in common? Two things...

- For the most part, they all disagree and align themselves against the Authorized Version, the KJB.
- The current apostasy parallels the popularity of these corrupted modern versions of the Scriptures.

Now, remember friend, the Word of God, by nature is inerrant and perfect. If any book ceases to be perfect, it cannot be referred to as God's Word. Sadly, most today do not believe there is a perfect translation of God's Word in their language. Or, that it was perfect only "in the original autographs". It is heart-rending to see bumbling, unbelieving, professing Christians embrace the accusation that God's Word is fallible. Of course, their confidence is broken because they reason, "if fallible men had anything to do with the copying of the original manuscripts it must be questioned." Of course, they arrive at this conclusion by reading textual criticism written by "men". It is amazing that they ask us to question God's Word because God used men to record His Word, while they, without hesitation, and by faith, hold to the opinions of men. How do they know that their favorite article attacking God's Word is accurate? After all, in the process of publication, passing through untold numbers of fallible, human hands, perhaps it has become corrupted? Who really knows whether or not the original author is being misrepresented or not? How can they be sure that these documents, condemning God's Word, are reliable seeing they are written, copied, and published by fallible men? A bit ironic, isn't it? To chide Bible-believers for clinging to God's Word by faith while such men base their arguments on the fallible writings of men, presents a most glaring

contradiction. It is hypocrisy of the highest order. I choose to believe God's Word and allow it to define my reality.

I am convinced, the Word of God is spiritually discerned rather than intellectually discerned. In other words, it is primarily a matter of the heart, not the mind. A foreign preacher once quipped in our pulpit, "you, Westerners, it is so fruitless to squabble over translations of the Bible". However, I ask you, what could be more important than the Word of God? If a man cannot truly discern and understand the spiritual warfare leveled at God's Word, he has, at best limited spiritual insight.

"He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." —John 8:47

WHEN THEY DEFEND SIN IN ANY WAY

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."
—Romans 13:14

When men defend sin in either doctrine or practice, we had better flee. Antinomianism, the rejection of moral law, is perhaps the greatest doctrinal error of the modern American church. Sin lovers, sin-excusers fill our churches and even worse, the pulpit. The thought that men could actually, through grace, live above sin is derided as legalism, or even worse, heresy. False doctrines like OSAS are enjoying unparalleled popularity. Remember, in the *Book of Revelation* we read...

"And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."
—Revelation 13:2

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." —Revelation 13:11

And so it is, false religion will either look like the Devil and speak like Jesus, or it will look like Jesus and speak like the Devil. It will have a compromised life and right words, or a seemingly pure life and wrong words. Any Antinomian spirit must be utterly rejected.

WHEN THEY REDEFINE THE TRUE GOSPEL

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." —Galatians 1:8

Do we understand this command? Even the slightest departure from the Apostolic gospel is reason for concern. No doubt, our churches are filled with tares in this hour. However, this is only a reflection of the gospel preached to them. When anyone believes/preaches any other

gospel we must beware. If the presentation of the person of Jesus, His atoning work, or His deity is altered, we must wholly denounce such preaching, as the Scriptures teach, as "accursed". If the conditions for regeneration are misrepresented or skewed, whether it is repentance, faith, or submission, we must condemn such gospel misrepresentations. Any departure from orthodoxy in the gospel presentation must be seen with great alarm.

WHEN THERE IS A LACK OF SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." —1 John 2:15

Worldliness is a sign of grave spiritual problems.

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." —James 4:4

It is common today, for professing Christians to dismiss the entire thought of separation from the world.

"Isn't everything worldly?", they irreverently question. Nonetheless, when either in practice or doctrine worldliness is allowed, we must be very, very careful. On FaceBook the examples are plentiful: professing Christians, without shame, promoting the most heinous secular music, movies, and entertainments. Of course, these hypocritical worldlings offer their excuses and justifications for their compromise, but in reality, there is none. They have clearly violated the N.T. absolute of "separation" and any discerning Christian should take notice and walk carefully. The modern day "seeker-sensitive" church-models are actually promoting worldliness by using whatever is culturally popular to couch their false gospel message as a drawing tool. Dear saint of God, don't be deluded by this awful trend. Worldliness is a sign of gross, spiritual compromise. Regardless of what excuses are offered, when worldliness is evident, stop your ears and run for your spiritual life.

WHEN THEY ARE BLIND TO DIVINE DELEGATED AUTHORITY

"Let all things be done decently and in order." —1 Corinthians 14:40

- Order: (*Greek*) τάξις—Regular arrangement, fixed succession of rank.

God is a God of law, structure, and method. However, disorder is rampant in today's churches. Likewise, independence is common in today's culture. Men, who call themselves Christians, despise both civil, spiritual, domestic, and vocational authority without blushing. Among the so-called, "Spirit filled" such unscriptural attitudes are epidemic. Spiritual independence and rebellion should be seen as a reflection of a lack of submission to the Lordship of Christ. When men refuse to listen or be corrected by divine, delegated authority, be very circumspect.

In the natural, a man who loses his hearing generally loses his ability to speak as well. In the spirit, it is the same, men who refuse to hear will never be granted divine authority to speak. When men are spiritually independent, refusing to submit to authority as outlined in the N.T., something is grossly amiss.

WHEN THEY REJECT THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” —Luke 24:49

For the Christian, to be filled with the Holy Ghost is a command, not a suggestion.

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” —Acts 1:4-5

No doubt, the extremes of modern ‘Pentecostalism’ has brought a great reproach, as there is no greater error as we find in the so-called Spirit filled churches. We must remember, many have seen nothing but a misrepresentation of Pentecost and we cannot blame them for their conclusions. If all I knew of ‘tongues’ was what is presented on TBN, I would denounce it as satanic as well. However, the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is Scriptural. Remember, the heretics on TBN also claim to be ‘born-again’ but few professing Bible-believers reject the doctrine of regeneration because of their poor testimony. To be filled with the Spirit is a command, is necessary for effective ministry, and essential to establish an accurate testimony of Jesus. If the Apostles needed to be filled with the Spirit how much more you and I? Thus, be careful of men who wholesale reject the baptism of the Holy Ghost and explain away the obvious implications to the N.T. Christian experience.

In conclusion, in these deceptive times, let us guard our heart, exercise keen discernment, and thereby resist every seducing spirit.

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” —1 Corinthians 10:12

—B.W.