

THE PULPIT IN DECEPTION

How the Devil uses pastors?
Is there Blood on the preacher's hands?

"And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." 2 Tim. 2:26

By Pastor Del Wray

Deception is the Devil's program. How Satan deceives in timing, in conviction, in repentance, in the experience of salvation and even in living the Christian life?

Multitudes of people who expect to go to Heaven will die and go out into eternity to Hell. Thousands of "good" people, "moral" people, church members, even church workers, yes, and, alas, even pastors and teachers, will find themselves lost when they expected to be saved, condemned when they expected approval, cast out of Heaven when they expected to be received. That is the explicit words of our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, Matt. 7:21-23, Psalms 11:6-7. Many a sincere and well meaning pastor will lose their souls and just by their preaching cause millions to lose Heaven and wind up in Hell. You see the great Serpent's assault is on the body of Christ, the Church.

The Devil deceives in contaminating your conscience with wrong feelings, with wrong emotions; he deceives with dreams, using signs, with manmade programs and with man's own inventions. The Devil would much rather use believers to accomplish his goal rather than he would the unsaved lost world. So true, all of Satan's energy might and forces are leveled at Christ body of blood bought believers, His Church. We are warned to be alert and of the warfare that is unavoidable. For most church goers and Christians though it is a joke, laughable that they would have to contend with the evil one, for they are already in his snare. Most care less and really don't believe in the existence of the Devil. And as far as the "Spirit World" goes no such realm exists! Blind leading the blind and when they make one a proselyte as themselves they make themselves two-fold more the children of Hell. For this reason many pastors and Christians are being used by devils to populate Hell. God have mercy on the sad state of affairs in our churches today! With a few notes of affirmation I will show you how innocent souls are being sentenced to the domain of Hell by many of the men in our pulpits and the Christians in the pew.

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" 1 Peter 5:8-9.

If you are a member of the body of Christ, get ready to face an angry Devil and his devils. You may not want to think about it or even accept it, but if you have determined to follow Jesus with all your heart, Satan has marked you for destruction. And he's going to flood your life with troubles of all kinds. The apostle Peter warns,

"...The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" 1 Pet. 4:7.

He is saying, in other words, "This is no time for frothiness. You have to get sober-minded about spiritual matters. It is an issue of life and death." Why the need to be so serious? The end of time is near and our enemy has turned up the heat. He is stalking us like a lion, hiding in the church, waiting for an opportunity to pounce. He wants to devour us, to utterly destroy our faith in Christ. Some Christians say we shouldn't even talk about the devil, that we're better off just ignoring him. Others try to reason him out of existence. Liberal theologians, for example, argue that there is no devil, no hell, and no heaven. But the enemy of our souls is not simply going to go away. Few biblical figures have been identified so clearly and extensively. He is described as Lucifer, Satan, devil, deceiver, hinderer, wicked one, usurper, imposter, accuser, devourer, god of this world, ruler of darkness, and the old serpent. These emphatic descriptions tell me the devil is real. And we know from scripture that he wields a very real power even more than men. Even now he is at work on the earth, in our nations, cities, churches, homes and individual lives. And we dare not be ignorant of his methods and strategies of warfare against us. What are the methods of warfare that the Devil uses against us?

THE DEVIL DECLARES WAR!

In Revelation Chapter 12 John penned the three times where the Devil declares war:

HE FIRST DECLARED WAR AGAINST ALMIGHTY GOD HIMSELF. John writes:

"There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" Revelation 12:7-9.

This passage recalls the moment in heaven when Satan rose up in rebellion against God's supreme authority. At the time he was known as Lucifer, an angel who had great authority. But Lucifer wanted to be as God. So, enlisting a third of the angels, he led an uprising against the almighty. But God cast Lucifer out of heaven, along with the other rebellious angels. All of heaven rejoiced in the victory. The devil lost that war, as well as his place in heaven.

A defeated Satan then declared:

HIS SECOND WAR, THIS ONE AGAINST GOD'S SON, JESUS CHRIST. John writes:

There appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she was being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the

stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born" Revelation 12:1-4.

Satan knew an incredible church was about to be born out of the Old Testament remnant. It would be a glorious body, clothed with the sun of righteousness. So the devil declared war once again, reasoning that now he could do battle on his territory, the earth. This passage suggests that Satan knew he couldn't get to the child in Mary's womb. So he determined to destroy Christ as soon as he was born. He gathered all his demonic forces around Bethlehem, sending spirits of deception to blind the scribes, priests and Pharisees. Then his own spirit entered King Herod, possessing him. If Satan couldn't kill Christ himself, he would have a man standing by, ready to do it for him. But the Lord's armies of heavenly angels stood guard over the child, so that Satan couldn't touch him. The devil would have to wait another thirty years to try to devour Christ. He saw his next chance at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, when the Holy Ghost declared him to be the Messiah. At that point, Satan led Christ into the wilderness to be tempted. Yet Jesus defeated him in that battle also. God protected his son again, sending angels to minister to him in his time of physical weakness. The devil would try one last time to devour Christ. This time he moved forces into place to try to kill Jesus by crucifixion and cast him into the grave. He sent demonic spirits to incite a mob, entering the bodies of priests, soldiers, political leaders and false witnesses. At last, Satan thought, he had his hour of power. Now he would wage an all-out war. Yet you know the rest of the story: Resurrection day was Satan's most humbling defeat. When Jesus ascended to heaven, he was out of the devil's reach forever.

"Her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne" Revelation 12:15. All of hell was shaken because Satan had lost again. Even using all of his power, he still could not defeat the son of God.

THE DEVIL DECLARED HIS THIRD AND FINAL WAR ON THE SEED OF CHRIST, THE CHURCH!

This means he is at war with every true believer on earth. John writes:

"When the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child" Rev. 12:13.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" Rev. 12:17.

Satan has turned his wrath on the Church of Jesus Christ. And he has reserved his worst rage for believers who keep God's Words and trust in Him. The Devil knows this war is his last chance, because only a short time remains before Christ returns for his bride:

"...he knoweth that he hath but a short time" Rev. 12:12.

Therefore, Satan's war against the Church is the most intense of all. He wants to gain back the ground he lost to Christ, so he'll stop at nothing to destroy the faith of his bride. That means he's going to use all of his weapons against us, all subtleties, deceits and devices. How does he go

about his task of deception? The same as he did in the garden by using the Word of God an attacking man at his weakest point.

THE “WORD OF GOD” IS GOD’S TESTING GROUND!

Why and how does God allow the Devil to use pastors and Christians? The “why” is simple, God chose His WORD to be the final standard and authority in all faith and practice. And He “tests” man in each of the dispensations as to whether he believes God or believes His Word or not. By His sovereign choice, before the worlds were created, He chose to use HIS WORD as the final authority! In every dispensation! Let me say that again, in every dispensation! Man is being tested by what he does with God’s Word! Will man believe it or not! That’s the test for men today as it is for the future Millennial Kingdom as it was in the past. NEVER FORGET THAT! Never forget that! It is His Word, the only way He speaks to men today! It is His Word He uses as the testing ground for every man! THE WORD! Why else is it under such attack today as it always has been? The Devil knows he can’t destroy the Word, so his assault is on the believer, on you who believe and on me! If you have no sense of the devil oppressing you something is absent in your life. God knows the hearts of men. He knows whether you believe Him or not. What about the how? How does the devil use Christians, pastors, and preachers, to bewitch lost men and women in hindering the work of God? He begins his attack on the mind, the source of man’s thinking. He gets men to think:

TO THINKING ONE CAN BE SAVED ANYTIME HE PLEASES:

One way is by getting people to think that they can be saved anytime they choose or anytime they want. And that’s not so! Our churches are filled with lost souls who have been lead to believe that they can be saved anywhere and anytime they won’t. Many delay their decisions until His Spirit has past by and then it is too late. You may walk the aisle’s all you won’t, pray all you won’t, cry until you can’t cry anymore and seek God all you won’t and if the Holy Spirit is not passing your way, drawing you, you’ll die and go to Hell. Many professions are made and the Holy Spirit is nowhere around. God don’t move on your whims or when you want! If He’s not there convicting you of sin, of your sinfulness, of your lost condition, and drawing you, you’ve been lied to, deceived and will wind up in Hell. That is the Devil’s lie! If the Holy Spirit is not drawing you and passing by you, you cannot get saved no matter what. You cannot find anywhere in Scripture where God saves a man on his own terms, that’s a lie! You either get saved on God’s terms or you don’t get saved at all. You better listen! If God is convicting you, if the Holy Spirit is pulling at your heart’s door, don’t delay, immediately go to God, respond and receive Christ on His terms, you may not be given another opportunity! John makes that clear:

“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:” Isa. 55:6

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:44

“I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them? My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for

him. I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.” Song of Solomon 5:2-8

PASTOR’S WILL NOT PREACH ON SIN:

Another way the Devil uses Christians is by keeping the pastor from preaching on SIN! The HEART that’s in every one of us, the sinful nature, also called “the old man” in the Bible! The great failure today is our pulpits don't preach against SIN anymore and very seldom do they preach against "sins" either! The HEART is one thing and what comes from the heart is another. Preaching against the outward sore (sins) may only bring about a reformation on the part of the unbeliever still leaving him a child of Hell. Now preaching against the heart (SIN) shows an unbeliever his helplessness, his sinfulness, his lost condition and his need of a Saviour. Then and only then does the unbeliever, when he sees his hopeless LOST condition have the opportunity to exercise his free moral will to receive Christ or reject Him! Too many people today come to this very place and see their lost condition and instead of accepting Christ they go the way of the Armenian or to the opposite extreme Antinomian and trust their own self righteousness, a fig leaf factor called self determination or simple try and work through it themselves, placing themselves even further under bondage to the flesh, to the devil. The Antinomian, prays thinking he is accepting Christ and then goes and lives anyway he pleases. Both are blasphemous! While in faith taking God at His Word, admitting his helpless lost condition and receiving God’s Son Jesus Christ ALONE in to his life as a free gift for the pardon of SIN is the only method by which a Holy God will find any man acceptable. Glory! Hallelujah! Amen!

Let me reemphasize! The Devil gets preachers to preach on “sins” instead of SIN, instead of your heart. They preach about your conduct instead of your condition. They emphasize the sores on the body instead of the disease within. They preach about what you do instead of what you are. They preach about your sins of lying, stealing, cheating, cursing, drunkenness, sinful habits, adultery, wife-beating, breaking the Sabbath and other like sins. By emphasizing these, all of which are wrong, they make the sinner feel condemned and bad, because of what he has done. This brings morbid regret to the sinner; a feeling which he thinks is conviction. He is embarrassed before his sins; but he is not embarrassed before God.

Holy Spirit conviction makes a man look, not so much upon his sins outwardly, but upon himself inwardly. He sees himself as a sinner against God; a Christ-rejecting, hell-bent rebel against God's will. This comes from preaching on what a man is rather than what he does. Holy Spirit preaching emphasizes the disease rather than the sores. This brings to the sinner a feeling that he is LOST. "Undone" is the word we used to use in describing this feeling. Yes, we knew we had done wrong, but more than that, we knew we were hopelessly doomed because we were afflicted with the disease of sin, and that there was no remedy except Christ. This is Holy Spirit conviction! NO LONGER PREACHING ON THE CONDITION OF MAN’S HEART! This brings me to conviction:

PASTORS WILL NOT PREACH ON CONSCIENCIOUS CONVICTION OF SIN! They’re afraid to get personal, fear of men, afraid to offend or hurt some prominent member who may contribute more than another. They are afraid of REJECTION, they are afraid of CRITICISM,

they are afraid of FAILURE and of LOSS. They would rather offend Jesus Christ than offend one of their members. They will not preach to sin, they will not preach to the real need of man's heart, its sinful condition! The Holy Spirit cannot convict of sin when the preachers life is dirty and deceitful, when the pastor fears men. You as well as I know the Holy Spirit will not use a dirty vessel. Ultimately this compromising leads to the loss of too many souls in Hell. This is why I say so many times that multitudes are going to Hell because of the pulpits in our churches. A man's character is built on his convictions and when the preacher fails to build on a man's convictions he makes him more the child of Hell.

BEING CONVINCED OF SIN!

God has given us a CONSCIENCE to guide our behavior in matters not specifically covered in the Scriptures. But conscience can only be a reliable guide if it is a "good conscience" Acts 23:1 and a "pure conscience" I Timothy 3:9. If not followed as guided by the Scriptures Acts 24:14-16, the conscience can become "weak" I Corinthians 8:7, verse 10, verse 12, "defiled" Titus 1:15, "seared" I Timothy 4:2, or even "evil" Hebrews 10:22. The conscience is a reliable guide only if constrained by Biblical principles. Note Acts 24:14-16 in reference to how Paul expressed his conscience. The word convict is only used once in the Bible where the men who accused the women of adultery were "convicted by their own conscience" John 8:9. The word convince is used seven times Job 32:12; John 8:46; Acts 18:28; 1 Corinthians 14:24; Titus 1:9; James 2:9 ; And Jude 15. This word CONVINCED, is the key to understanding the other two words. One who is convicted is convinced of sin or error. In its simplest meaning, a conviction is something about which we are convinced. In most of the cases where convince is used in the Bible, it is similar to our use of the word convict. It usually deals with those who are convinced of sin. To simplify: ONE WHO IS CONVICTED OF SIN IS CONVINCED OF SIN. Convinced that he daily walks around with an old nature, his heart and it is totally depraved. All one's life depraved! John 16:8, the first work of the Holy Spirit is to "convict" the world of sin!

"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." Acts 24:16

Conviction is known in the Bible as Godly sorrow. God's Word tells us that Godly sorrow is what leads us to repentance Romans 2:4. Condemnation tells you, "You are such a failure! Look at what you did!" while conviction tells you, "Come to me... and I will forgive you!"

"Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." 2 Cor. 7:9-11

PASTOR'S WILL NOT PREACH ON GODLY SORROW WHICH WORKETH

REPENTANCE TO SALVATION: Repentance is no longer preached in our churches! One pastor told me he would not preach repentance from his pulpit because it introduced "works" to

salvation. Wonder where his head is? Not in the Word! Let me be clear, right here, Repentance is a gift from God;

*“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure **will give them** repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;” 2 Tim 2:25*

“There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Luke 13:1-5

Godly sorrow that leads to repentance is a work of the Spirit of God in the heart of the unbeliever as Christ moves in and gives the unbeliever a “change of mind” a heart of “belief” saving faith that turns him around and renews the Spirit of Christ in that man. Titus tells us:

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;” Titus 3:5

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Rom. 8:9-11

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:” Rom. 8:15-16

Repentance is a gift of God as is faith Eph. 2:8-9 both worked out through us by Jesus Christ himself!

THE WRONG KIND OF PREACHING DECEIVES IN THE EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION:

By the wrong kind of preaching the sinner is led to believe that when “he feels better” he has been saved. He goes entirely on feeling and Satan goes with him. By encouragement from those who ask, “Now don't you feel better?” and who admonish him to “trust the Lord and claim the blessing,” he feels at last that he has “prayed through” and arises to proclaim, “I feel better! I've got the blessing!” And Satan whispers, “That is salvation. That is what the others got. Now you have it, and you are saved.” Under the spell of fleshly religious fervor, it is easy to do, once the sinner has gone through what we have described. And, he is sincere, but may be deceived.

The Holy Spirit, through the right kind of gospel preaching, would direct the sinner not to try to do anything about his sins. He would tell the sinner to look to Christ who has already done all that can be done, or that is necessary, about his sins. He would tell the sinner to take his place before God as a sinner, submitting to God's judgment of him, which is repentance, and then look

to Christ as the one who has satisfied the Father about his sin, and who, by His death, has redeemed him. Then the sinner can say: "Because I have taken a sinner's place and have looked to Christ to save me, on the authority of God's Word I can declare I am saved. I know it is true because God says so, and I feel it because I believe His Word." This is the true salvation; none other is. Don't be deceived by the modern preaching of our day!

YOU CAN BE DECEIVED IN LIVING A CHRISTIAN LIFE:

The man who is "saved" by feeling or "getting the blessing" is dependent on that feeling to keep saved. He is saved as long as he feels like it, according to him. But faith has to walk many a mile without feeling. So, the days of depression come, and he loses a sense of that presence which he thought he felt. He trusts his feeling, and his feeling has gone. He no longer has that assurance, the temptations of the former life come back to him, and he has no one to sustain him, he falls into sin, and is embarrassed again. At least he concludes he has "fallen from grace," and either goes on in sin again, or seeks to be saved again.

But the man who has been really saved, through genuine repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, stands on the solid rock of God's Word. That Word declares that we are justified by faith, not by feeling, and that "though he falls he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." Ps. 37:24. He knows that sin is not charged against him any more Rom. 4:8, and that when he sins he has an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous. I John 2:1-2. He finds relief in hearing John say, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9. Thus he concludes with Paul in Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under law, but under grace."

CONCLUSION:

With a salvation based entirely on what God says in His Word, a salvation that depends on Jesus Christ alone rather than on our feeling, we can "go on unto perfection, unto maturity" with the blessings of God upon us!

Back in May of 1970 I remember coming to the area where I now make my home. I was only here for a week but God told me in that weeks' time it was where He wanted me. Preaching at Calvary Baptist Tabernacle, don't let the name fool you, it wasn't Baptist at all only the name on the sign out front of the church. Twenty-one young people came to Christ accepting Him as Saviour that week. During one of the evening services the church got a call from a fifty-one year old man wanting to talk to me. After the service, the lady that took the call passed the message on to me. At ten PM that evening I gave him a call and he asked if I would come on his radio station and give my testimony. Agreeing, the next day, I went out to his station and to my surprise it was a "country music" radio station. I went on the air, gave my testimony and preached for over an hour. Shaking hands with all of his employees who were present giving them Ford Porter's "God's Simple Plan of Salvation" tract as I was leaving, one of his announcers stop me and ask "if I would come out to his home and talk to him?" I said yes and that afternoon I went by and was received graciously. This young man, CR, told me how he had been going there to church for eight months, and how he would roll his wheel chair, you see he was paralyzed from the waist down from a car accident when he was seventeen, down the aisle

just about every service wanting to be saved. And every Sunday he left that church with the impression that he was saved. But when He got home he knew he wasn't. The pastor of that church told CR if he got saved that he would in time get out of his wheel chair and walk again. For eight months he struggled with what that pastor had told him and the prior Sunday before I had come to the radio station he was on his way home from church and pulled off the road and crawled out of his car and crawled down into a ditch and prayed "God, I guess I'm going to Hell, I can't walk and I'm not going to leave this ditch until you save me." He told me, "for hours I lay in that ditch crying and after a few cars had stopped asking if I needed help, I finally crawled into my car and went home." When I heard that tears began to roll down my cheeks and I cried. I told CR all he needed to do was believe God's Word to be saved! I open up God's Word to him and he became a believer right there in his home. His countenance was like a light bulb had been turned on in his face. That pastor allowed me to baptize CR that Sunday morning before I left. God set CR on fire and from his wheel chair; he lead his mother to Christ and then his sister. I know because three months later I returned to Salisbury, MD and baptized his mother, sister and six of his other friends. One of those friends, Clark Miklewait, went off to Bible School to Tabernacle Baptist in Greenville, SC and is now a full time Baptist pastor. What a good God we have if only we take Him at His Word and believe the Bible. Back to the pastor of that church, the charismatic movement had swept into that church and instead of opposing its error he went along just to keep his job. Later he lost his job and the church split and from it God used me to start the Bible Baptist Church which is still in existence today but having been overcome by all the new false bibles. I've been in this business for over fifty-five years and I know what I'm talking about, the devils are running rough shod over our Baptist churches! I hope this helps someone along the way and keeps them out of the snare of the Devil.

PULPITS ARE IN DECEPTION!

Paul told us:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 Tim. 1:15

Isaiah cried:

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Isa. 6:5

Job abhors himself:

"Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:6