

Newsletter September 2016

In our July 2016 Newsletter in which we introduced biblical Eschatology, we provided a broad overview of the events that must occur in the last days. Last month we began a series of Newsletters going into more detail concerning the aforementioned events. In that newsletter (Newsletter August 2016), we discussed the unleashing of human depravity, which will take place in the last days, and its destructive effect upon human families and society, leading to the total corruption of human government. The political decline of the world's nations, in which all personal and religious freedom will have been sacrificed on the altar of humanistic globalism, will ultimately lead the world downward into a grim and dark post-Christian era.

This irreversible animosity against the Christian ethic that will exist within the hearts of all degenerate men and women, will eventually infiltrate and overwhelm institutionalized churches as well through a massive influx of the ungodly into their congregations. All major denominations will become fully infected without exception as will most autonomous churches. As a consequence, the temporal church will fall so far away from the Truth that it will no longer be a voice in the world for Christ and the Gospel. The present humanist-driven ecumenical movement will ultimately succeed in establishing a universal world religion that, through radical compromise, will totally deny true biblical Christianity. A dense spiritual darkness will then encompass the earth as the Word of God is fully rejected.

This dark future period is commonly referred to as the "Great Apostasy." The English words "apostate" and "apostasy" are transliterations of the Greek word *apostasia*, which is translated "to forsake" in Acts, Chapter 21, verse 21 in the *King James Version* and "to turn away" in the *New International Version*. In Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians in Chapter 2, verse 3 it is translated as a "falling away" in the *King James Version* and "rebellion" in the *English Standard Version*. From this, we must conclude that the Great Apostasy will constitute a forsaking, a falling away, and an open rebellion against all biblical truth.

In his first epistle to Timothy, Paul predicted that in the latter times there would be a "departure from the faith" (1Ti.4:1; i.e. apostasy). It is evident that when Paul spoke of this rebellious falling away in the last days, he was not speaking of rebellion by the world at large, inasmuch as the world has always been in rebellion against God and his Christ (Ps.2:1-3). Nor can Paul be referring to an apostate Israel, inasmuch as Israel had already rebelled against the true faith when their people rejected and demanded the crucifixion of their own Messiah; this took place several decades prior to the writing of this statement by the Apostle Paul. Therefore, this text must refer to a falling away from the true Christian faith by the very people who had previously professed it. We should clearly understand as we proceed in this discussion that when we speak of the total apostasy of worldly temporal churches, we do not mean to infer that elect believers can ever depart from the faith inasmuch as that would deny the security that Christ has promised every one of his own (cf. Jn.10:28,29). We speak only of worldly institutional organizations, the temporal church, that will have become so overwhelmed with the false doctrines of the pseudo-Christian that they will fully depart from the true faith.

As we noted in our two previous Newsletters, men and women living in the last days will become highly resistant to the Gospel message such that the Holy Spirit will no longer contend with sinful man. Even in this day, we find this obstinate resistance to the Gospel message forming to the extent that Truth is being rejected with fierce anger. This vehement resistance has in large part come about through the indoctrination of mankind with a satanical fabrication regarding a supposed random evolution of the heavens and the earth and all living things upon it. Under the guise of genuine science, this satanic lie has been diligently taught to children in public school systems from elementary grades upward. All studies of geological and natural history have become completely infused with evolutionism, thus firmly implanting this strong delusion into young minds to the extent that it is perpetuated into their adulthood as incontestable fact.

This fiction regarding an evolutionary geological process of the earth was put forth by Charles Lyell and his followers as having taken place over many millions of years by intentionally misinterpreting the many fossil-filled layers found all over the surface of the earth in which each layer of earth is described as representing a separate vast geological era. This premise directly confronts the Bible's account of creation in which it is stated that God instantaneously created the heavens and the earth out of nothing (cf. Ge. 1:1; He. 11:3; Newsletter July 2015). Then, over a period of six days, God molded the earth and its surrounding environment in space making it suitable for habitation by the first man, Adam – whom He uniquely formed

from physical elements attained from the earth (i.e. “dust”) on the sixth day (cf. Ge.2:7). Then, came man's disastrous fall into sin as he denied God's authority and put himself forward as his own god (cf. Ge.3:5). In doing so, Adam corrupted his divine design and condemned all mankind to physical death and eternal futility.

Because fallen mankind's thoughts after nearly two thousand years had become continually evil beyond any hope of redemption (cf. Ge.6:5), God sent forth upon the earth a massive global flood that destroyed all human life with the exception of Noah, his immediate family, and a broad sampling of animal life (cf. Ge. 6:17-22) – all preserved aboard a huge barge-like vessel whose specific design was dictated to Noah by God (cf. Ge.6:14-16). The repeated undulating action of huge tidal waves deposited great layers of earth one upon the other in a relatively short period of time. Therefore, the massive fossil layers do not in any way constitute a record of an evolutionary process of the earth and its primitive life, but rather speaks of the sudden death and burial of existing sea life and the earth's many land-animal species in the catastrophic global flood that covered the earth in the days of Noah (cf. Newsletter August 2015).

As we plainly see, the teaching of evolutionism is totally incompatible with the doctrines contained in the Bible; in fact, evolutionism was specifically designed by atheists to refute and undermine the teachings of the Bible. It was conceived by the “...deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie” (2Th2:10,11). Through many decades of intense indoctrination and infiltration of its congregations with this atheistic teaching coming from major secular universities and many seminaries, the temporal church at large has come to accept this unsubstantiated evolutionary theory as undeniable fact over God's express Truth to the contrary as contained in the Bible. It follows that if the first chapters of the Bible cannot be relied upon as a truthful account, all text that follows it in both the Old and New Testaments must likewise be considered unreliable fiction, thus placing all of the major doctrines of salvation as recorded in Holy Scripture in serious doubt. Many professing Christians no longer accept the literal interpretation of the Genesis account as valid, while attempting to cling to a nebulous hope of redemption in Christ. This impossible hope is aided by putting forth various irrational compromises such as “theistic evolution,” in which an evolutionary process was supposedly set in place by God who then abandoned it to its natural progression. This is a restatement of the false doctrine of Deism in which God is no longer interested or involved in the lives of men and women; but, if so, how is redemption possible?

Therefore, central to this coming Great Apostasy will be a complete denial of the divine authorship and authority of the Bible by the temporal church. The entire Bible has previously been subjected to human revision by religious liberals in an attempt to conform it to contemporary scientific theory (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 352). Darwinian evolutionism of mankind (cf. Newsletter June 2015) as well as Charles Lyell's geological uniformitarianism (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 352 and footnote) is already being accepted over the teaching of Holy Scripture by many churches such that mankind's sin and rebellion against a holy God has no meaning except in an obscure theological sense. If acknowledged at all, God is now viewed as a mere mental concept – a philosophy commonly referred to as “open deism” – whose nature and character is based upon the imagination of men (cf. *CRC Book III*, page 351).

When the Gospel is presented against the deeply entrenched atheistic backdrop of evolutionism, it makes no sense whatsoever. Therefore, the Gospel is viewed as utter foolishness by today's vast populations much as it was to the Greeks in the Apostle Paul's day: “But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness” (cf. 1Co.1:23). The strict monotheism of the Jew in Paul's day acted as an insurmountable obstacle to their acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah; nevertheless, they did believe in God as the creator and sustainer of all things. Today, even the Jew has been largely overwhelmed with the satanic lie of evolutionism. Not surprisingly, then, when we attempt to reach individuals with the Gospel today, we find that we must first make an extreme effort to apprise them of the reality of God. This is a steep uphill battle against the forces of evil that seek to impede us. All of the doctrines of the Bible appear nonsensical to the depraved mind that has been fully permeated with evolutionism from their youth. If man merely evolved by random chance from earlier life forms, there can be no Creator God and we are accountable only to ourselves and other men for our actions. Furthermore, there can be no such thing as mortal sin against a God who does not truly exist. Moreover, there can be no need of redemption from a

depraved state, which is considered by evolutionists to be but a normal exercise of human nature, as mankind continually fights and struggles to climb up an imaginary evolutionary ladder.

The institutional church of the last days will have become an empty shell much like the one described in Chapter 3 of the book of Revelation. In this passage of Scripture we read Jesus' severe rebuke of the corrupt first-century church at Laodicea. They were not at all concerned about matters of true faith; their religious belief was like barely-warm soup so distasteful that Jesus said He would "spew it out of his mouth" (cf. Re.3:15,16). In similitude of the church at Laodicea, many of today's rich and self-indulgent churches worship a God they do not truly acknowledge, and they have effectively locked Jesus out of their assemblies. Metaphorically speaking, Jesus stands outside their church door and knocks, pleading for someone to open it so that he may fellowship with them, but the congregation as a whole does not hear Him over the loud noise of their decadent musical revelry, nor would they admit Him into their sanctuary if they did (cf. Re.3:20-22).

We have been given a brief outline of the form that the apostasy will take in the Apostle Paul's first epistle to Timothy in Chapter 4. While it would appear that Paul realized that a falling away would begin in Timothy's lifetime, it is evident that the relentless march toward total apostasy has progressed through many centuries with occasional setbacks as reforms and revivals have broken out among God's people. Nevertheless, Paul wrote, "... the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2Ti.4:3,4). The false teacher speaks to the godless nature of fallen men through incessant psychobabble delivered in a religious fashion. The apostate church will heap up their books and listen to their words instead of studying the Word of God. Even now, many churches treat the Bible as a religious relic from which they can occasionally select sweet-sounding poetic passages to dress up church services. The distinction between Truth and fiction has already been severely blurred.

In the last days, congregations, made up entirely of the unsaved, will have previously driven out all men of God and will have hired men (and women) more to their liking to hear only what they want to hear even before the final apostasy of the church takes place. Preachers and other prolific writers of error will all seek after the way of Balaam, the Old Testament prophet for hire. They will speak evil of spiritual and heavenly things, but will speak glowingly from the pulpits of base and amoral things – even immoral things as they seduce men and women to commit adultery with the world. They shall seek the reward of men, heaping money upon themselves and upon their massive works – money that has been seduced from the spiritually ignorant and the unwary. Such radical men and women in those days will become quite popular because they are very charismatic speakers that support the world's licentious view of human nature. They will not produce any genuine spiritual fruit, nor will they speak a Word of Truth, but will engage instead in "speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1Ti.4:2). These evil religious church leaders will think nothing of boldly telling lies even as to their own relationship with the Lord (whom they do not truly know). Rather, they will use great swelling words, which they so easily speak, to motivate the unsaved masses to follow them into the darkness of oblivion.

In the time of the Great Apostasy, the institutional church will also give itself over fully to various seducing spirits. We can already see this happening to the public at large through "new age" and various other neo-pagan religious beliefs. Elements of those errors are also making their way into many of today's temporal churches through wild glossolalia and other false doctrines associated with the present-day Charismatic Movement (cf. Newsletter January 2015). No wonder Paul said that in the time of the Great Apostasy the temporal church would adhere to the doctrines of devils (cf. 1Ti.4:1)! The doctrines of demons are specifically designed to please men and excite their emotions, because their express purpose is to destroy men and women in their sins by keeping them away from the Truth of the one true God and the salvation made available in Jesus Christ.

Paul also tells us that the apostate church will forbid marriage (cf. 1Ti.4:3). As we discussed in previous newsletters, the temporal church is already corrupting itself by accepting serial fornication and homosexuality as acceptable alternative lifestyles. Although Mariolatry (the worship of Mary) was rejected by most Protestant churches, the female principle in worship that began with the earlier worship of ancient pagan goddesses (on which Mariolatry was based), has arisen again in today's churches in the form of contemporary feminism (cf. Newsletter March 2015). Out of this influx of feminism has come a general tolerance of feticide through surgical abortion (cf. Newsletter May 2015), as well as the acceptance of various other sexual perversions (cf. Newsletter

April 2015). Base sexual immorality will soon seem so normal and become so prevalent that the temporal church will most likely fear that any insistence upon the sanctity of meaningful marriage bonds will serve no purpose but to limit their numbers.

If we are amazed that the temporal church could ever become so utterly depraved, if we cringe from even looking at her – this corrupted apostate church – so did the Apostle John as he saw a blasphemous rich temporal church wielding military might and drunken with the blood of saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus (cf. Re.17:3-6). We must understand that this apostate church will certainly not be the body of Christ, but a counterfeit temporal church that once had her roots in Christianity that have long since been cut off. She will prostitute herself before the world and deny her betrothed, her Lord; the apostasy will then become absolute.

Admittedly, a gradual progression toward a total state of apostasy is already nearly two thousand years old as the vast history of the temporal church emphatically attests. As the Apostle Paul departed from Ephesus for the last time, he said, “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears” (Ac. 20-29-31). In October 2014 we began a series of Newsletters on the temporal church. In that first newsletter we discussed institutionalized churchianity in which the early church began to worship itself. Leaders in the church were soon elevated as the primary source of authority displacing Jesus Christ as the church's rightful head. The Holy Scriptures, then available only to church leaders, was set aside in favor of human pragmatism. This false ecclesiastical authority was exercised through ritualistic sacramentalism in which baptism and the Lord's table became the supposed exclusive property of the political church (cf. Newsletter November 2014). Churchianity reached its zenith in the *Roman Catholic Church*, which dominated Christendom for a thousand years. Although many pagan notions were refuted and rejected by the biblically inspired *Protestant Reformation Movement*, churchianity has continued to dominate the church to the present day. In various newsletters we discussed non-biblical doctrines and practices that continue to plague the temporal church. These extend from the false notion of ritual fasting to gain God's special favor (cf. Newsletter February 2015) to many modern innovations such as the wild glossolalia of the Charismatic Movement (cf. Newsletter January 2015) and the twin delusions of perpetual health and wealth of the believer (cf. Newsletter December 2014).

Whereas in the past, biblical truth could be restored, churches in the last days will become so reprobate of the faith that restoration will no longer be feasible. During the time of the *Protestant Reformation Movement*, God replaced the corrupted storehouse of the Roman church with a framework of Protestant churches so that his Truth would survive. However, as we approach the future end of this age, there will be no institutional repository for the Truth to be found, as God finally gives over depraved mankind to their just end. Genuine believers, as they become increasingly scarce numerically, will necessarily abandon these parodies of the Visible Church as the outspoken pseudo-Christian takes their places in its highest offices and within its pews. Truth will continue to exist only within a rapidly dwindling remnant of the Visible Church. Due to severe governmental persecution aided by the hostile apostate churches that they will encounter in that day, they must meet secretly within a wide scattering of small house churches throughout the world as they await the return of Jesus Christ.

There are many texts in Scripture that suggest that this final state of apostasy must come about closely preceding the physical return of Christ to the earth to establish his Millennial Kingdom. Jesus Himself said that although the abuse of the elect would be avenged by God, “...nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find [the]faith on the earth” (Lu.18:8)? The rhetorical question at the end of Jesus' statement leads to “no” as the only possible conclusion. Over many centuries, the elect have been persecuted and killed because of the unrelenting stand that they have taken for the Gospel and for Jesus Christ. Yet, God has put a protective “hedge” about many of them such that they have survived, and through their faithful witnessing others have come to know Christ. Nevertheless, when Jesus physically returns to severely judge the earth, all elect Christians will have passed through the door of death, or they will have been instantaneously transformed and called up to meet Him in the air within the faithful Visible Church that will one day be transported off the earth (cf. 1Th.4:16,17).