

# The Voice of God

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One aspect of Biblical prophecy is that key *spiritual* characteristics are highlighted and emphasized – identifiable dates are virtually non-existent and even when specific, physically identifiable events are foretold, they are often only supportive to the spiritual predictions being made. Put succinctly, the prophecies were given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God – what supreme arrogance that any man would presume to be able to understand and explain the meaning of prophecies apart from submission to that same Holy Spirit! (see 2 Pet. 1:20-21)

Consider this prophetic prediction made by Paul somewhere around 62 or 63 a.d.:

“But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.” (1 Tim. 4:1-3)

Many have failed to see how this will happen. This failure is due, in part, to God having withheld from most people the spiritual insight needed to grasp this picture (see Mt. 13:28-30) – but it is more appropriate to blame the carnality (flesh, sin nature) by which so many have tried to approach, grasp and wield the Scriptural prophecies. “The Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith...” But will they stop reading and preaching the Scriptures? No. Rather these will preach demonically-attained *understandings* of the Scriptures. These will have preached their own and their denomination’s “theology” for so long that their conscience is no longer able to function properly.

And what is the outward signs that will be visible proof that these men are preaching lies in the name of Christ’s gospel? They will forbid marriage and prescribe diets. Why is this significant? Jesus said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you...” (Mt. 20:25-26) Priests, preachers and “pastors” have long excused their wielding of power over other followers of Christ by claiming to be gifted to dispense doctrine and therefore should be excused from “waiting tables” (see Acts 6:2) Some have arrogantly proclaimed that the man in the pulpit or speaking from center stage is the only gifting of “the Holy Spirit” in operation, so everyone else should be silent and listen. (compare to 1 Cor. 14:26) *Authoritarianism* is the key sign of the men who preach demonic doctrines – the “church” “pastor” who forbids previously divorced couples to remarry or who refuses to perform or allow a marriage that reaches outside of the “pastor’s” denomination and the “pastor” who enforces strict non-alcohol standards on the “church” staff or the Old Testament Levitical dietary codes on his followers is part of this fulfillment because he has set himself and his denomination’s demonically twisted “theology” – and not the Head and Lord Christ Jesus – as the basis of ordering other people’s behaviors.

Consider also this prophetic warning made by Peter somewhere around 64 to 66 a.d.:

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.” (2 Pet. 2:1)

In the first recorded (but not the ultimate) fulfillment of this prediction, Jude (somewhere between 66 and 80 a.d.) gives us further understanding of this warning when he writes:

“For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand written about for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.” (Jude 4)

This prophecy has been largely obscured by our usual misunderstanding of the word “heresies.” We hear the word “heresies” and we usually think immediately of error or of lunatic-fringe cults. But the real meaning of the Greek word is simply that of a group that makes themselves followers of a man or idea (“theology”) and excludes themselves away from the rest of the body of followers of Christ. Today we call them denominations and almost no one sees anything wrong with them. But they are only an expression of carnality – enmity against God (Rom. 8:7) which keeps its participants out of the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5:19-21)

As men – clergy, priests and “pastors” – have wielded their usurped authority, they and their followers have quietly instituted destructive divisions and factions (heresies). And inherent in drawing followers after themselves, their doctrines or denominational “theology” is the denial of Christ’s right to own and command them as He wills. He is effectively denied as the Master and King and becomes a mere lackey who bestows spiritual blessings on His favored, pampered chosen buds and pals. In the Scriptures, however, the real King, Christ Jesus, still *commands all men everywhere* to repent of their sin and selfishness. (Acts 17:30) The true King, Christ Jesus, still *commands* His true followers to lay down their lives for one another. (Jn. 15:12) The genuine King, Christ Jesus, still intends on judging and condemning *all* those who refuse to submit to His Lordship and Kingship. (Mt. 7:21, Lk. 19:27) And at the name of the one true King, Christ Jesus, one day *every* knee in heaven and on earth will bow. (Phlp. 2:10)

One of the primary objections to this line of thinking is the “once saved, always saved” teaching. This teaching virtually equates saying a sinner’s prayer followed by routine “church” attendance with salvation and the way of Christ and God. It is a fuzzy, nebulous “theology” that enables the demonic to deceive many. Few people indeed count the way of Christ a dangerous road from which one can lose his way.

The writer of Hebrews, however, clearly warns us: “We must pay much closer attention to what we have heard lest we drift away from it.” (Heb. 2:1) Few “church” attendees (many house “churches” included), caught up in the anesthetizing stupor of routine sermonizing (knowledge without obedience), seem able to recognize how far they have drifted from the personal Headship and Lordship of the King, Christ Jesus. Instead they excuse away and tolerate one another’s sin, laziness and neglect in regard to their duties to Christ’s kingdom of light.

The hypocrisy of it all is the same as what Paul was addressing when he wrote, “They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient, and worthless for any good deed.” (Tit. 1:16) Many “churches” excuse themselves by saying, “That’s true about that group *over there* but it’s certainly not true about us.” Or they will say something like, “Even if there is some truth in that about me, it doesn’t matter. I’m saved. I said my sinner’s prayer. I go to church. I’m under grace.” They profess to know God but they live their lives apart from His personal Headship and Lordship. This *is* lawlessness (doing what is right in their own eyes) and it will be the source of their condemnation on the last day.

Long ago, Jude wrote, their condemnation was written down. Consider this word of the Lord to the prophet Jeremiah:

“But this is what I commanded them, saying, ‘Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people; and you will walk in all the way which I command you, that it may be well with you.’ Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in their own counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.” (Jer. 7:23-24)

Notice carefully that God does not rebuke the people for disobeying His *law* but rather for disobeying His *voice*. The voice of God for every man is a still small voice that calls him to practice justice, mercy, kindness, faithfulness and humility before the Lord, the one true God and His King, Christ Jesus. (Mic. 6:8, Mt. 23:23) It is this still small voice speaking to them in their hearts that they disobeyed – any subsequent violations of God’s laws was secondary to this first disobedience. Had they listened to God’s voice, they would have also obeyed and even, like Jesus, fulfilled His laws. Instead, they walked in their own understandings and, by the time of Jesus, concocted a religious institution that routinely excluded those deemed “sinners,” that routinely devoured widows’ homes and lives, that routinely placed strutting “humble” men at center stage so they could tell others how to live and that murdered the Messiah because He was more popular and better followed than was their religious institution. They went backward spiritually and not forward. The “church” today does much the same to many of Christ’s true followers.

Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice...” (Jn. 10:27) Those who disregard the still small voice of Christ and God and instead follow their own “theological” understanding stand in just as much condemnation as the worst sinner. Those who have had some real encounter with Jesus but have settled into the lethal slumber of “church” life thinking they were serving God are in a most precarious position. “It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them.” (2 Pet. 2:21)

Let he who has ears hear.

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