

The Passing Darkness

Neil Girrard

The observation has been made by many that mainline denominations are dying out. For those who have eyes to see, the reason is blatantly obvious. John wrote, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk (live, conduct our lives) in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.” (1 Jn. 1:6) The primary sins of the “church” are heresies (in the original sense found in the New Testament, “parties formed upon an idea or upon the leading of some man,” Greek *hairesis* [139]), contentions and selfish ambitions (in essence, rivalry for preeminence, Greek *eris* [2054] and *eritheia* [2052], also see 3 Jn. 9) and dissensions (especially between differing denominations and their “faithful” adherents, Greek *dichostasia* [1370], the “double standard” of “believe as I do or leave.”) Each of these four sins is found in Paul’s list of the works of the flesh that prevent followers of Christ from attaining to or inheriting the kingdom of God. (see Gal. 5:19-21) As the root of these sins, we must name the sin of lawlessness (Greek *anomia* [458], best recognized as the secular philosophy of relativism and summed up as “doing what is right in one’s own eyes” (see Jdgs. 21:25) as each individual decides which brand, flavor and kind of “ministry” he prefers most and then attends the “church” he or she likes best. Those who practice this kind of religious lawlessness may well find themselves eternally dismissed by the King, Christ Jesus. (Mt. 7:21-23)

To this list we can add schisms (divisions, Greek *schisma* [4978]), which the very presence of denominational divisions simply proves that the “church” is not the body of Christ because “God composed [Christ’s] body...that there should be *no* schism in the body...” (1 Cor. 12:24-25) We can add Nicolaitanism ([3531], “conquer or rule over the people” – Rev. 2:6, 15) where “pastors” and other professional rhetoricians use sophistry and eloquence and various forms of deceptive “damage control” techniques to keep their passive, spiritually ignorant listeners comfortably imprisoned and seated at their feet. (also see 2 Tim. 4:3-4) We can add greed and covetousness as far too many clergy are more interested in maintaining their lucrative career than they are in seeing that Christ’s *ekklesia* (Greek [1577], Christ’s “people called out of this world’s darkness to live in and attend to His kingdom of light,” the word inappropriately but most often translated “church” in English versions of the New Testament) stands as the unified, singular “pillar of truth.” (1 Tim. 3:15) And there are other subtle sins such as these we could add but hopefully the point is made.

To this above list we could even add those “churches” that embrace and practice flagrant and open sin and abomination but this would only allow those who practice the above sins to think themselves approved by God simply because they do not practice these gross and obvious sins and abominations but instead simply and faithfully attend what they think of as a “good church.” The truth remains that if we *say* that we have fellowship with Him and yet live in continuing darkness (wickedness, deception, lawlessness – doing what is right in our own eyes – sin or unrighteousness of any sort), we lie (to God, to others, to ourselves) and do not practice the truth (that is, hearing and following the Spirit of truth).

With all of this darkness practiced at most, if not all, denominational “churches,” it is no surprise they are dying out. The darkness is passing away and those who hunger for truth and light are no longer fooled by the putrid smell of death wafting from the pulpits, through the pews and out of the “church” doors.

In contrast, the kingdom of Christ and God is without end (Dan. 7:13-14) and completely unshakeable. (Heb. 12:28) The denominational “church” cannot long remain because God has

promised that all things that can be shaken will be shaken and only that which cannot be shaken – His kingdom – will remain. (Heb. 12:27) Only those who are truly in His kingdom – and not ensnared in some man’s “church” (by whatever name they call it, even “ekklesia”) – will be those who receive eternal life.

Christ’s kingdom is precisely that – a *kingdom*. Look in any dictionary – a kingdom is a realm that is ruled by a king. The subjects of a kingdom are those who live in obedience to the word of the king. The kingdom of God is that realm where Christ and God are obeyed and the people live as children of light. (Eph. 5:8) His will and His kingdom are inseparable. (Mt. 6:10)

Light or darkness – the choice, and the consequences, are ours.

Let he who has ears hear.

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