

Wound of the Unknown Doctrine

We have heard the saying, "What you don't know can not hurt you!". However, we do know better, whether it is a snake that lies in wait to strike with deadly venom, or a small cancerous growth in the human body, or even a cell of terrorists in this country that we do not know about, they can hurt us. In many cases they do wound us greatly as testified to by what happened in this nation at 9-11. Well, there is a wound in the Christian body that largely remains undected because the truth about it is an unheard doctrine from Bible teachers and preachers. When is the last time, or ever, that you have heard a sermon or read a sermon or even a book on the Bible doctrine of the Falling Away? I don't mean this fictitious stuff from Tim LeHaye that is fiction based on fiction where they try to comfort Christians and scare the daylights out of the unchurched with their weird numbers, charts, and efforts to get Christians out of the way during the Falling Away. You see the impossibility of this: the Falling Away is a movement among church members whereby over a period of 40 or so years they depart from the living God. Without those claiming to be Christians, or God's people, there could not be a Falling Away on this earth; and that is completely contrary to the sound doctrine of the Word of God. Only one book, Second Thessalonians, and four verses of Second Thessalonians are enough Bible to assure us that there can not be a Second Coming of Christ--and hardly any church member doubts the reality of the Second Coming of Christ...there can not be according to Second Thessalonians 2:1-4 a Second Coming until first there is a Falling Away and the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition is visible in contemporary history.

2-1: The Falling Away was not Engineered by God to Be a Wound, it like the Man of Sin is meant to be a Sign that warns that the End is near.

1. You can attempt to put the End off with all these weird number systems of 7, and one thousand, and 666; but when the Bible speaks of the **End**, it is straight forward and simple, without any need of vast charts and elaborating numbering systems that confuse the real doctrines of the Bible.

(1). Jesus said the Gospel will be preached to every nation and then the End will come.

Eschatology is simply the word used to describe all the events and happenings before the termination of this world order as we know it. Our problem is that in our efforts to put off the eschatology of last events, we have failed to realize that eschatology is NOW! We are now in the Falling Away as many signs in the heavens above and in the earth beneath as on the earth itself now indicate. We are NOW reading about eschatology in the headlines of our newspapers. We are NOW hearing eschatology in the news on our televisions, and we are hearing last things and events on our radios.

(2). The Old and New Testaments group all these termination universe events under the heading of the **Day of the LORD and Lord**. In the Old Testament it was the Day of the LORD in all capital letters for Jehovah God, because it was and still is primarily the Day of true justice from the God, the Father of this universe. In the New Testament and after the life and teachings of Jesus on earth, that same Day became as much the Day of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Day of LORD God the Father. The last event is the punishment of the unbelievers and the reward of the believers. Now this One Day has no numbers in it like seven and one thousand and 490. Even as 1 is 1, so the One Day of the LORD and Lord is one day!

Is it a 24 hour Day? I doubt it. Most Bible scholars know that the Hebrew word for "day", the word "yom", literally means a period of time; and I would lean to that since so many things have to happen such as the Second Coming of Christ, the last great battle of Armagaddeon where Jesus destroys the army that comes against Jerusalem and the camp of the saints outside Jerusalem, the gathering of the believers from the four corners of the earth, the separation of the goats from the sheep in Judgment, then in Judgment the consignment of the unbelievers to hell with Satan and his angels and the consignment of believers to heaven and the new earth. That is a lot for one 24 hour day; but the God of heaven and earth that in the first place created the universe of

heavens and earth in seven days can do it all in one day if that is what He so desires. And we must always remember that in the thinking of God, that one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. Nail down in the mentality the fact that you can know for certainty about eschatology is that one equals one thousand and one thousand equals one in the mind of God! Well, that is what the Apostle Peter told us in II Peter 3:8, how "that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." {The Apostle John and the Holy Spirit in the writing of the book of Revelation had enough respect for this verse from Peter to explain the variable nature in the mind of God about one thousand years to use this same variable of a thousand years in Revelation 20 which in reality was an exact time that God did not chose to make known except to clarify in other Scriptures how it correlated at the beginning with the Coming of the Holy Spirit on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension and at the end with the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth. Even there is also the little variable of a "little while" added to the theoretical and ideal 1000 years.}

(3). It is what comes before that "great and notable One Day of the LORD and Lord that is the focus of the Old Testament, and the Signs such as the shaking of the heavens and the earth, such as the blood and fire and vapor of smoke, the signs such as the moon turning to blood and the sun and stars to darkness...all these are signs that usher in over a period of time the Second Coming of Christ with final battle, judgement, reward and punishment. The total picture we get from the Bible is that the shakings of the heavens and the earth will take place over a much longer **period of time** than of the One Day of the LORD and Lord. Even as it took 40 days and 40 nights of rain for God to destroy the total earth in the times of Noah, so it will take approximately 40 or more years for God to destroy this universe as He allows it to be shaken to pieces from the uttermost stars to the last inward stone of this planet earth. In order to get a mental image of this whole termination process, we could well think of the physics process called by scientists "entropy" where the whole universe is running down and going into a state of disorder, except where scientists like to throw thousands of years at it like the meteorologists did for global warming until lately. In reality the signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath are well into the final process as testified to by how deep we are presently into the Falling Away.

2. We have not yet looked carefully at II Thessalonians 2:1-4 carefully as we should for the **two signs that we are in that longer period of time** before the One Day of the LORD and Lord. Actually what we are going to find in II Thessalonians is far more than the two signs as precursors of the Second Coming, alias the Day of the LORD and Lord, for besides the Falling Away of Christians and

the Visibility of the Man of Sin, we see other signs such as the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth and the rising tide of the mystery of lawlessness. So in reality, there are really at least four signs in II Thessalonians which God has given us in His Word to indicate that the time of the Second Coming and Judgment is at hand.

Long ago in the Old Testament, God let His people know through a Prophet that He would never do anything on this earth without first letting His own people know. Well, these four signs of II Thessalonians are an effort on the part of God to let the people of God know that we are in the final, longer period just before the One Day of the LORD and Lord. Well, let us look at II Thessalonians 2:1-4 for two of those signs.

"Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him {you see how simple a little real Bible makes the One Day seem as we see grouped together the Second Coming and the Gathering of the saints: you don't see a comma there, or a semi-colon for a thousand years or even seven years--it is simply The Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ AND our gathering together to Him...if we would throw just a little literal Bible into our eschatology with the lawyer-like dreams of Darby and Scofield, with their Scofield Reference Bible notes, how much simpler would the two periods of eschatology be, the signs before the Day and then the One Day}...."

Let me start again and without comment!

"Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ {you see here in the New Testament the One Day of the LORD has become the Day of Christ, but the same One Day}. Let no one deceive you by any means, that Day {here the One Day is That Day} will not come unless the falling away comes first..."

I hope you saw and heard that. "that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first..." Good sound Bible doctrine: (1) it is that Day, the Day of the Lord and the LORD when Christ comes again and gathers together the saints; (2) the Falling is called THE Falling Away, that there is no other like it in extent and magnitude although the falling away of the Hebrews in the wilderness as described in the book of Hebrews is an example; and (3) it is good Bible

doctrine that the Falling Away must come before the Second Coming. *The Wound that is being described in this message is this Falling Away, and the Unheard Doctrine that is being described is the reality of the Falling Away.*

2-2: The Nature of the Wound among Christians and Church Members is both internal and external. It is a wound to each individual Christian that has unknowingly slipped into unbelief, cultivated a evil heart of unbelief, and has unknowingly departed from the living God; and it is a wound to the total body of Christ as the Falling Away is definitely a movement of the people of God away from Christ, God, and the sound doctrine of the Bible.

1. The nature of the internal wound is that **unbelief in the human heart is the greatest evil in the sight of God.** Beyond murder and adultery and covetousness or even lying and mistreatment of parents is the evil in the sight of God of unbelief. Unbelief is the only sin, or lawlessness, that will send a person to hell. A person can committ adultery, a person can commit murder, or lie, cheat and steal and still receive forgiveness and go to heaven; but a person that continues for 40 or so years in unbelief can not receive forgiveness and go to heaven. That is serious enought, isn't it, to call an evil heart of unbelief a serious and deterministic internal wound?

2. The nature of the internal wound in the heart of a Christian is that **the departure from the living God is silent and unseen.** It appeared to the children of Israel in the wilderness that they were still one with God over that period of 40 years as God fed them, clothed them, and gave them guidance by day and night; and yet in the sight of God they had departed from faith in Him.

You see, we can see Christians active as church members. We can see their works at church, their attendance, their presence as they sit there and listen, and seemingly learn something from the pastor and the Word of God. However recall that Jesus during that gathering period of the saints will have many church members and church leaders say to Him, "Look at all these marvelous works of attendance, church building, etc that we have done in your name." And Jesus will say to them, "depart from me you that work iniquity, for I never knew you." They worked iniquity in the church because they developed over a period of many years an evil heart of unbelief; and they did not know it, before Christ they were convinced that there was no wound in their life and heart! That is what departees and false prophets and false and itching ears Bible teachers do. First they deceive themselves that they are doing the works of God and Christ just as the men did in the parable of Jesus above, and then they manage to con-

vince others around them in the church, even in the larger church body of the total assembly; and it takes the true One Day of Judgment to see the reality.

3. The nature of the external wound of the Falling Away is that it is **encouraged by the world and the majority of church members**. That is one reason that it will take the shock of the judgement for many to see that an evil heart of unbelief and a subsequent approximately 40 year departure from the living God has deceived them.

The external symptoms of the wound of the Falling Away among Christians has many evidences, but the one very determinative evidence verified by a recent survey of American Christians is that over 61% of American Christians believe the Gospel of Prosperity. Do you realize how hideous that is? What the Gospel of Prosperity says is that if you do not prosper materially as a Christian and do not prosper health wise, you do not have enough faith. That is horrible; so contrary to the real Gospel of Christ; it is another Gospel, other than that preached by Paul; it is another spirit or attitude contrary to the real Gospel; it is under a curse of the Bible; it promotes the cares of this world under the guidance of the world, the deceitfulness of riches that leads to a choking of the Word of God out of the soil of the human heart; it causes stumbling; and it causes no root to be built in the lives of church members until they stumble into a state of the Falling Away.

2-3: We Should as Briefly as Possible Look at Internal and External Evidences--let us call them symptoms of the Falling Away.

1. Have you ever heard of so many Bible teachers and preachers, and so many with **itching ears Bible teachings**? You just have to recognize that the "time will come" of II Timothy is the time that we are in now.

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."

2. Hand in hand with the vast heaping up of itching ears Bible teachers is the intolerance toward sound doctrine among Christians and church members.

3. The wound of the Falling Away is deeper than simply the intolerance toward sound doctrine as Christian church members have become motivated in their church and church work by their own personal desires. As hideous as it is for a minister to work for personal gain and a personal following, it is also as hideous for church members to chose pastors, conduct church business, and dictate doctrine out of their own personal desires. Generally these are personal desires to justify themselves centered around the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the Gospel of Prosperity. Their desires are for security and comfort, and any doctrine or teaching or sermon from the Bible that does not square with these

desires is aggressively opposed, running off the pastor even as he will not conform to their wishes and desires.

4. The internal wound is so deep of the Falling Away among church members that whole churches and the whole Christian movement has turned into fables. You have the famous fable of the Gospel of Prosperity; you have the famous fable about what God expects in a marriage; you have the famous fable of justification of the taking of God's name in vain; you have the famous fable where democracy in the church replaces Christ and the pastor as head of the church; and you have a great number of fables centered around the worship in the church such as speaking in tongues that Paul dealt with adequately in First and Second Corinthians years ago, but which have been ignored.

2-4: The Caution of the Bible, time and again, is for Christian Brethren to Beware of falling into the Falling Away, and at this point we must look at the prime Scripture of the message of "The Wound of the Unheard Doctrine", that of Hebrews 3:12.

"Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today', lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, while it is said: 'Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.'" (Hebrews 3:12-15)

1. We mistakingly think that "today hear His voice" is for the unchurched and lost, but it is for brethren as the address of Paul here is for Christian "BRETHREN".

2. It is that caution against the internal and unseen wound of the evil heart of unbelief, just like the children of Israel did for 40 years in the wilderness in spite of seeing many mighty works from God.

3. The exhortation in the only admonition to assembly for Christians in the Bible is the very reason that Christians assemble in the first place. If you assemble without exhortation you have become simply occupiers of a seat. Exhort one another in order that you may stay away from the Falling Away. EXHORT, EXHORT, and EXHORT; and if you can not the probability is that you should not be there in place in the first place. Although this verse of Hebrews 10:25 is used by pastors and other church leaders to promote attendance; that is really half-truth as the real emphasis of the verse is on exhortation, on exhortation that increasing will not be allowed by heaped-up teachers of itching ears and a congregation that no longer "will endure sound doctrine". What really overrides attendance in such congregations is the admonition of II Timothy 3:1-9 not to associate with those "who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof". This is when groups within the congregation as listed in those verse are dominated by things like "love of self", "love of money", "boasters", "proud", and "despisers of good": obvious signs that this congregation

has gone so far into the Falling Away of II Timothy 4:4,5 that their follies no longer can be revealed internally within the local church body.

4. Exhort one another about the wound of the hardened heart, the deceitfulness of sin that causes the Falling Away. Remember it was Jesus who said near the End that "because sin would abound, the love of many would wax cold."

2-5: Let us Exhort One Another by Adding to Our Eschatology Exhortation on the Unheard Doctrine of the Falling Away; the internal and external consequences of the wounds; and the exhortations that can prevent just a few from Falling into the trap of the church members around them. Increasingly both in and outside the church will the cause and nature of the Falling Away become more popular, so that Friends of Jesus will find it also increasingly necessary not to associate with many of their church members. It is an association that can lead to eternal death!

Who would think that the church majority could go astray; but that is exactly what the Falling Away is. Even as many as compared to a few is the majority versus the minority, when Jesus said as sin abounds the love of many will wax cold, the many waxing cold is the majority in the church body.