



**F**OR there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: 11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. 12 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. 13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; 14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. 15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. 16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. (Titus 1:10-16)

For some reason unknown to man nor beast, there are far more wagging tongues in churches than in brothels. Why could this be the case? In my opinion, it all boils down to false pride of righteousness. Many in church believe the length of their membership, their much giving, and their social status qualify them as members of the disciplinary committee of the church. The damage done by loose tongues and uncharitable gossip would exceed that of the bubonic plague. But the far greater danger arises from those who are false teachers – wolves in sheep’s clothing - posing as preachers of the Word which they subvert. 15 ¶ *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.* (Matthew 7:15)

Christ warned us of false prophets, and we may have considered them to be more rare than common; however, our Lord also warned that these false prophets would not be few but MANY! 11 *And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.* Matthew 24:11 Not only will there be MANY false prophets, but MANY who are deceived thereby. Mass deception builds without logical consideration.

Even in the mouth of an idle tale-bearer is much poison, but that poison is multiplied by dark spiritual powers that embody false prophets.<sup>6</sup> *And the tongue is a*

*fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. (James 3:6)*

They present us with these facts:

1. The evil false prophets oppose truth. (v 10-12)
2. Such men must be rebuked (v 13-14)
3. They are totally impure (v 15)
4. They profess belief in God, but deny Him by their works. (Jesus said, *By their fruits ye shall know them.*

Those deceived by false teachers, such as Osteen and Meyer, will suffer the same fate as their teachers. *13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. 14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.* (Matthew 15:13-14) These are the words of the Lord, not my opinion! (see 2 Pet 2:1)

What defense do the people have against such false preachers of our day? The key is knowledge! The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. If you fear your standing with the Lord of Heaven, learn all that you can from His word. *Study to show yourselves approved of God.* A daily study of the Word of God will open the mind of the reader to such truth as cannot be overcome by deceiving charms of false ministers. Being well acquainted with the true Word, counterfeit gospels cannot deceive you. You will immediately know the false from the genuine. Every word you hear preached from the pulpit must be confirmed by a reference to Holy Scripture – and that will come from informed and conscientious study.

We read of the many heresies that arose in the first century almost like wild flowers on the desert scape after a spring rain. Those heresies were fought against by the early fathers; yet, they have a frequent re-introduction in preaching of our own day. Though they were plentiful in the early church, they will be just as plentiful in the latter church. *13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.* (2 Timothy 3:13)

False prophets teach a works-oriented religion – not one based upon grace and faith. The false prophet teaches that our salvation is based on our works and not upon the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we could be righteous by our works, why would our Lord have come to suffer for our redemption? *8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* Ephesians 2:8-10 In plain bold-faced letters, the Lord has told us that we could do NOTHING to awaken ourselves from the death of sin – it was unmerited grace that called through our stone-walled tombs to arouse us to the Lord's call. Our good works are only filthy rags. We must come before the Throne of Grace by Faith, and that salvation will then be evidenced by good works. Those good works will then belong to our Lord working in, and through, us – not works of our own good pleasure.

*15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.* A glass of pure water is pure until polluted by some mixture of poison. One drop of strychnine will render the glass deadly even though the volume of pure water has remained unchanged. A glass of strychnine will remain deadly regardless the pure water added. But the blood of Christ purifies, and it is that purifying blood that provides a constant cleansing to the

redeemed. The outward works of the defiled is also impure. Their outward appearance belies an inward filth. It is for this reason that salvation ALWAYS begins in the inner man – in the heart! Before the outside of the cup is cleansed, we must first clean the inner part. *7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* Hyssop is a green plant which is used, even today in Asia, as a purgative to cleanse the alimentary canal.

Digestive health must precede a complete bodily restoration in times of illness. God cleanses the heart first before He washes our outward appearance – *wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* This is one of the most impressive text in the Old Testament. Its science is golden. How can we be whiter than snow? Any reader of my devotions will know the answer to that question since I have written often about it. Every flake of snow has a tiny impurity at its core. In order to crystalize in the upper atmosphere, there must be a tiny point of dust or smoke around which the forming flake can coalesce. So, there is a tiny speck of dust at the center of every flake. But when God washes your soul, you will be whiter than snow because the inner core is free of dirt.

*16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* If so much harm were not done by false scientists and philosophers of our day, their actions would be humorous; but they deceive and mislead the simple who have lost the gift of logic and reason. *20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:* You can command multitudes if you convince them that it is science that motivates your commands. There is no conflict between God's Word and science – in fact, God is the Author of science. God would have men and women to be true scientist, not dabblers in the politico-science of our day. Remember the four Israelites chosen by King Nebuchadnezzar to be trained in his royal court: *4 Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.* These were well-versed in science, wisdom, and practical knowledge, yet, they were pure and without blemish of character – Godly. Thus should we be. Our failure to know the wisdom of God and His will has led to a great vulnerability to deception. We see it in all churches of our day. Good conduct, wise reason, righteous character – these all require cultivation. But sloven ignorance and deluded faith require no such cultivation, but spring up everywhere as the wild weeds of the wilderness.