

PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)

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Bogus Theology

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Introduction

Last month's issue was on Truth. What is real Truth and what we believe to be true. In this issue I would like to begin with the first of what I anticipate as several issues dealing with “bogus” theology. One of the signs of the end of this age is the tremendous increase in deception and the lack of a love for the truth.

Before we begin this study, we need to define our words so that it is clear exactly what is being discussed. These definitions are taken from Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary:

Definition of *Bogus*: not genuine : counterfeit, sham. **Synonyms:** artificial, imitation, dummy, ersatz, factitious, fake, false, faux, imitative, man-made, mimic, mock, pretend, sham, simulated, substitute, synthetic

Definition of *Theology*: (1) the study of religious faith, practice, and experience; especially : the study of God and of God's relation to the world (2) a) : a theological theory or system b): a distinctive body of theological opinion

So, *bogus theology* is a counterfeit, fake, man-made study of religious faith; that is, the study of God and of His relation to the world embodied as religious opinion and theory.

We have been indoctrinated with bogus theology in a number of areas of our understanding about God and His plan and purpose for us. One of the primary aspects of this is what is being taught by some concerning the end times and the coming of our Lord.

Like a Thief

We have been taught that the Lord can return at any moment, before we go to bed or before we rise in the morning. Since He is coming like a thief, no one knows when. While this is what is taught, what does the Scripture say? We will start with the one most quoted:

For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in

the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. (1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 NASB)

Yes, the "day of the Lord" will come like a thief in the night; but, the "day" includes more than just His return (just look up the references to the day of the Lord and you will see this). This occurs when "they are saying". Who are the "they"? These are those who are not concerned about the Lord. These are those who are going about their daily business just like the others in the world. This is made clear by the next verse:

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; (1 Thessalonians 5:4-5 NASB)

The brethren (us) are not in darkness; we are of the light. Therefore that day does not come upon us like a thief. We should understand the times and the seasons. Jesus said that His return would be just like it was before the flood in the days of Noah.

"For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Matthew 24:37-39 NASB)

The world did not understand until the flood came. Noah had prepared by building the Ark according to the instructions of God. He knew the flood was coming 7 days ahead of the time before he entered the Ark.

"For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made." (Genesis 7:4 NASB)

So, the brethren will not have the day of the Lord catch them unawares like a thief in the night as the rest of the world will. Just as Noah knew by the Word of the Lord seven days before the flood came, we, the brethren, will know by the Spirit of the Lord shortly before His appearing.

'So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. (Revelation 3:3 NASB)

If we don't wake up, Jesus will come like a thief and we won't know when. But if we are awake, there will be an expectancy of the Spirit for His immanent return and we will not be caught unawares or unprepared.

Our Escape

We have been taught that we will be raptured before the Antichrist comes. Because of this teaching we don't need to be concerned about the Antichrist and what he may do since we won't be here anyway. But, is this what the Scriptures say or do they present a very different picture?

Paul tried to explain some things to the Thessalonians because some "teacher" had miss lead

them about the Lord's return.

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 NASB)

Others had taught them that the day of the Lord had already come; that is, that His return was imminent because they were already in “the day of the Lord”. Paul proceeded to straighten out their thinking by explaining what would happen before the day of the Lord came.

Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 NASB)

Paul said the apostasy come first. This is the great “falling away”. The apostasy relates to believers who “fall away” from God. We know that these are believers because unbelievers have nothing from which to fall away. This falling away is either the result of or the revealing of the man of lawlessness, whom we call the Antichrist. The day of the Lord is not going to occur until after this.

The Great Harvest

We have been taught about the “last great harvest” and we have been urged to participate as laborers (meaning, “reapers”) to bring in this harvest or at least give our money to those who are “harvesting” for the Lord. But it is not a harvest of which Paul speaks in the Scriptures above but rather a great falling away from the Lord. So, is there a great harvest? Yes, but not as we have been taught.

First, we should understand that the “reapers” are angels and not men as Jesus explained to His disciples concerning the parable of the wheat and the tares.

and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. "So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
(Matthew 13:39-42 NASB)

In the book of Revelation, all references to “harvest” deal with beings who have sickles in their hands and who are told to reap.

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud *was* one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your

sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe." So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered *the clusters from* the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. ([Revelation 14:14-19 NASB](#))

Well, you might say, what about what the Lord said about workers for the harvest? Let's look at those verses.

Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. Then He *said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." ([Matthew 9:36-38 NASB](#))

The context for this isn't the harvest at the end of the age but rather the people being "like sheep without a shepherd". The Lord is saying that what is needed are workers who are shepherds not reapers. Shepherd workers get the field ready for harvesting. Jesus is saying that there are not enough of this type of worker.

The harvest at the end of the age is for the crop that has matured, ripened and is ready. It is not newly planted seeds that have sprouted. We have confused planting with harvesting. There will be a harvest but it is not of the newly planted seeds but for the matured crop. We need workers to help the crop grow up to maturity.

Again, we have been indoctrinated with bogus theology.

The Lord willing, our next issue will continue this theme with more examples of the bogus theology that we have been taught.

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