

WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL

Fundamentals of the Faith

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LESSON #12 — THE EFFECTS OF FALSE DOCTRINE (PART 2)

But let's look at another effect of false doctrine. And that is, it destroys those who believe it. Not only the false teacher is in trouble, but the one who believes that which the false teacher teaches is also in trouble. So that's a sobering thought. Not only do they have a responsibility to teach that which is true and accurate, but you and I have a responsibility to check what they're teaching. Because if we believe and practice that which is wrong, it'll destroy us too.

Let's look at several verses that will verify that fact. The first is in the book of Matthew. Matthew's account of the gospel. In Matthew chapter 7, verses 21-23. Matthew chapter 7, verses 21-23. Here the speaker is our Lord Jesus Christ, as he spoke to those who are around Him in the first century, and what we know as, "The Sermon on the Mount." Hear the words of Jesus: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father, Who is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? Have we not cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'" Again, those are very serious words. They're very sobering words. They ought to really grab our attention, and make us think about what the Lord is saying there.

He said, it's not enough to say, "Lord, Lord." Yes, we must call upon the Lord. We must call upon Him through our obedient life. Not just with our mouth. But He says, not everyone who calls on Him as Lord is going to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Who would call upon the Lord? Who would call out, "Lord, Lord"? Do we think that an atheist would do that? An agnostic, an unbeliever, one who says, "You can't know if there is a God"? Would they call upon the Lord? No, they wouldn't do that. So who's Jesus talking about? He's talking about people who appear to be Christians, who appear to be religious. They're the ones who would call upon the Lord. But what does He say? "Not everyone who does that will enter into the kingdom of heaven." Well, who will enter into the kingdom of heaven, Lord? He said, "But he who does the will of my Father, which is in heaven." So we must be obedient. It's not enough to just call out the name of the Lord.

But look at verse 22. What are these people going to say on that last day? The Judgment Day? They're going to say, "Lord, didn't we cast out demons in your name? Didn't we prophesy in your name? Didn't we work mighty wonders in your name? By your authority? Well, who are we talking about here? We're talking about people who believe and practice that which is false. They believe they're doing what is right. They appear to be sincere, but they're not doing what is right. They're claiming to do great religious acts, but they're practicing that which is contrary to the sound gospel, the sound doctrine of Christ. And what does Jesus say? On that day, He will say, "I never knew you, depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." Do you want to hear those words on that day: "I never knew you, depart from

Me”? I don't believe you do. If you did want to hear those words, you wouldn't be here at this time studying the Bible with us. Well, if we want to avoid those words, then we need to avoid believing and practicing that which is false doctrine, that which is not according to the glorious gospel of Christ. And this passage of Scripture makes it absolutely clear that those who believe and practice that which is not sound doctrine, will be separated from God in eternity. They will have to depart from the Lord, on the Judgment Day, go to the place of punishment, hell, where the flame, the fire, never stops, never is quenched, where the worm never dies, and where their torment never ceases, according to the Bible.

But again, that's not the only passage of scripture that we need to rely upon to know this fact. Let's look at another. This one also found in the book of Matthew. But this one is in the 15th chapter. Matthew 15, verse 13 and 14. Matthew 15, verse 13 and 14. Again, the speaker is Jesus. “But he answered and said, ‘Every plant which my Heavenly Father has not planted, shall be uprooted. Let them alone, they are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.’” Here the Lord uses a technique that was common with him. He uses something that is earthly to teach us a very important spiritual principle. He wasn't talking about agriculture here when He mentions plants. He was just using a principle that would help us to understand the spiritual point that He's making. When He said, “Every plant which my Heavenly Father has not planted, shall be uprooted,” He was talking about something other than plants. But what happens to a plant when it's uprooted? It shrivels up. It dies. That's the point the Lord is making. But, who's He talking about? In verse 14, He says they are blind leaders of the blind. So He's talking about people here, not talking about plants. He's talking about people. They're blind leaders. And He said, “If the blind lead the blind, both will end up in a ditch.”

Well, the blind leaders then, obviously, are people who are religious in nature, who are blind to the teaching of God's Word. They close their eyes and their mind to the teaching of God's Word. But who are the blind that follow them? They're the people who listen to that false teaching. They're the ones who practice and put into effect those false teaching of the blind leaders. And Jesus said, “Only the blind leaders will end up in the ditch,” right? No, that's not what He said. He said that both end up in a ditch, those who teach that which is false, those who believe that which is false, are going to end up in a ditch. And obviously, ending up in a ditch is not the result that any of us want. It's used to portray a bad end; something that is not desirable from our standpoint.

How do we know for sure that He was talking about religious leaders? Look at the context. Let's go back and read the context, verses 7-12, and see what the Lord said. He said, “‘Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying, ‘This people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ Then He called the multitude and said to them, ‘Hear and understand: Not what goes into the mouth defiles the man, but what comes out of the mouth, defiles a man.’ Then His disciples came and said to Him, ‘Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?’” And then we have verse 13, and 14.

So who are the blind leaders? They are the Pharisees. Other religious leaders who teach and practice that which is contrary to the will of God. They're the people who are hypocritical,

who say one thing and inside are entirely different from that. They're the people who worship God according to the doctrines and commandments of men, not the Word of God. They lay aside the commandment of God, that they might do their own doctrines and practices. So, false teachers and those who believe false teachers will be uprooted, they'll die spiritually be separated from God in eternity, they'll end up in a ditch.

Then let's look at another passage along these lines. This one is found in 2 Thessalonians. Second Thessalonians, chapter 2, verses 10 through 12. 2 Thessalonians 2, verses 10 through 12. Hear the Word of God contained in these verses. "And with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason, God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned, who did not believe the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." God talks here about unrighteous deception among those who perish, who are destroyed, who are separated from God. Why did that happen to them, God? He said, "Because they did not receive the love of the truth." What is the truth? The truth is the Word of God (John 17:17). So if you and I do not receive a love of this precious volume, the truth, the Word of God, we are going to perish. And if we want to be saved, according to verse 10, we need to love the truth. Love the truth enough to spend time in the Bible, studying, meditating and implementing, and then teaching what we know to be right. That's very serious.

And He says in verse 11, if I don't have a love of the truth, and demonstrate that on a continuous basis, God's going to send me a delusion. Something that I will not believe the truth, I will believe a lie. He will make it possible for me to believe that which is wrong, because I have the wrong attitude. I don't love His truth. I don't love His work. I don't love Him enough to search His Word to see whether those things are true. And what is the ultimate end of that kind of attitude? Condemnation, who love unrighteousness, rather than righteousness, and the truth. So, if I don't love the truth, I don't practice that which God says in His Word, I believe that which is false, the result is I'm going to perish. I'm going to be condemned. And those aren't my words, my friends. Those are the words of God.

And then another passage on this subject. 2 Peter, chapter 3, verse 17. 2 Peter, chapter 3, verse 17. You'll remember that we had read verse 16 in the last section, talking about those who are false teachers, those who bring in destructive heresies, and twist the Scripture. In that context, we find verse 17. "You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand, beware, lest you fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked." That surely tells us, that you and I, if we're not careful, if we don't beware, can be led away, led away by the error of the wicked. And if we do that, we're going to fall from our own steadfastness. We can fall from grace. That passage and others show it very clearly. These verses then tell us, false doctrine is so horrible, because it destroys those who believe it.

So we've seen false doctrine destroys those who teach it. And false doctrine destroys those who believe and practice it. That ought to make an impression upon my mind and upon your mind. May we ever dedicate ourselves to knowing the truth, and teaching the truth, and if we're authorized by the Word of God, preaching the truth to others.

In our last class, we saw that false doctrine destroys those who teach it, and it destroys those who believe, and practice, or obey it. Today, we want to continue looking at a third effect of false doctrine. And that is, that it causes division among those who claim or profess

to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we want to verify that fact, as we have the others that we've talked about, by looking at a passage of Scripture.

Let's look in 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verses 10 through 13. 1 Corinthians 1, verses 10 through 13. God says, through the apostle Paul, "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Now, I say this, that each of you says, 'I am of Paul,' or 'I am of Apollos,' or 'I am of Cephas,' or 'I am of Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

Here we have God's condemnation of division. And he begins, Paul begins, by pleading with his brothers and sisters in Christ, there in Corinth, and with you and me today, that we be joined together perfectly, or completely, in the same mind, and in the same judgment. He says that we ought to speak the same thing, and there are not to be any divisions among us. How are we going to speak the same thing? How are we going to have the same mind and the same judgment? The only way we can do those things, is to speak the word of God. We know that's a safe standard. If we speak it, and don't add to or take away from it, then we'll speak the same thing we'll have the same mind, and the same judgment.

And he says that he had heard from a reliable source in the church, that there were contentions or divisions among the Corinthian Christians. What were they doing? They were dividing up into groups following different men. One group would say, "I'm of Paul." Another group would say, "I'm of Apollos, so I'm following him and his teachings." A third would say, "I'm of Cephas," which is another name for Peter. So what did they do? They divided the body of Christ by following men. This was within the body of Christ, because obviously, Peter and Paul and Apollos were all teaching the doctrine of Christ. But the point is that they were divided.

And in verse number 13, Paul asked them a series of questions for which no answer was expected because the answer is obvious. He said, "Is Christ divided?" What's the answer? No, Christ is not divided. He's one. He's whole. Then he says, "Were you baptized in the name of Paul, or Was Paul crucified for you?" No, Jesus was crucified for us, and we were baptized in the name of Jesus. Well, how do we apply this to our current situation as exists in the religious world today? There are hundreds of denominations that have been founded by men, different men throughout history.

And all we have to say today is, some people are saying, "I'm following Charles Wesley," or "I'm following John Calvin," "I'm following Charles Taze Russell," or "Joseph Smith," or any other originators of manmade denominations. And what does that do? That divides those who say that they're following Jesus. So they teach different things. One group over here will teach that you sprinkle babies. There's no authority for that in the New Testament of Christ. Babies can't meet the conditions that are required to be baptized scripturally. There's another group over here that says you can take the Lord Supper once a month, once a quarter, once a year, where the Bible teaches once every week, on the first day of the week, when we gather together to worship God.

And that's just an example. They teach different things and thus divide those who would be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. So false doctrine, causes division among those who want to follow Jesus. And that's another reason that you and I must avoid false doctrine. Study the Bible carefully so that we can handle it properly (2 Timothy 2, verse 15), and teach only those things which adorn, which beautify, sound doctrine (Titus chapter 2, verse 1).

Let's briefly now review the major points that we've seen concerning the effects of false doctrine. First of all, we've seen that false doctrine destroys the false teacher. We looked at several passages, showing first of all, that it results in the false teacher being accursed, or devoted to God for his destruction. Then in 2 Peter chapter 2, verse 1, we saw that it brings destruction on the false teacher. And in 2 Peter, chapter 3, verse 16, we saw the same thing, it brings destruction. Then in 2 John, verse 9, we learned that if we don't abide in the doctrine of Christ, we do not have God. So false doctrine destroys the false teacher.

Secondly, it destroys those who believe in false doctrine. We saw that in Matthew chapter 7, verses 21-23, when He said, "Those who believe such things will not enter the kingdom of heaven," they will have to depart from Christ. He'll say, "I never knew you." Then in Matthew chapter 15, verse 13 and 14, Jesus said, "Every plant, every religious group, every religious leader, that my Heavenly Father has not planted, will be rooted up, will fall in the ditch, both those who lead and those who follow." Then in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, verses 10-12, we learned that those who receive not the love of the truth will perish. God will send them a strong delusion, that they might be damned or condemned by God because of their bad attitude towards His Word. Then in 2 Peter chapter 3, verse 17, that we have to beware, lest we be led away with the error of the wicked, and fall from our own steadfastness. So false doctrine destroys those who believe in it.

And thirdly, false doctrine is bad because it causes division, as we've just studied in 1 Corinthians 1, verses 10-13, where those Christians were breaking themselves up into groups, following men, rather than following the Lord Jesus Christ.

May we ever be careful, beware, be on guard, that we don't teach, or we don't accept that which is false, that which is contrary to the sound doctrine of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.