

The Sins of the Church

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Scripture References: James 3:1-2, Revelation 2:1ff, Acts 9:31, Matthew 7:19, 21-23, I John 1:5-2:1, Luke 12:2-5

This teaching may jar you a bit and I hope that you will read it prayerfully and meditate on it with appropriate spiritual fruit and make any changes in your behavior that need to be made.

I've just returned from my annual spiritual *checkup* with the Lord that I recommend all Christians take every year – I mentioned this in *Mysterious Secrets* back in 1991. You take time off to be by yourself with the Lord with no distractions from family, work, etc., as you seek His Face. I normally do this in September. I take 3 weeks, camp and sleep in a tent – tabernacles – to coincide with the Feast of Tabernacles which is this time of year while spending quality time with Him asking Him questions and listening for correction, discipline, revelation, etc. I believe that Jesus will return during the Feast of Tabernacles and Tabernacles, by dwelling in tents, emphasizes the fact that, like Israel, the Church only has a *temporary* home here on earth.

For many years I've been astonished very often at how certain Christians and ministers live their lives, what they say and how they act. I often say, "They must be serving a different God than the One I know – I'd be afraid to do that (or say that, etc.)."

One of the reasons this occurs is because most churches and the Church in general today are *not* New Testament as they claim to be. I've proven this in many churches today. Recently this month the Lord gave me a message that I ministered in Montana titled, "Having a Kingdom Attitude." Our attitude is important to God and it should be important to us, especially if we expect to minister the Gospel to a sin-sick, crying, dying world. This message deals with much of what I am sharing in this article.

One of the great failures of most churches in the world today, especially here in America and in the U.K., is that they are selfish and self-centered. This leads to an *attitude* of being self-absorbed; it's all about *me!* How can I get *my* needs met? How can *I* be more prosperous? meaning more money because we're not taught what *true* prosperity is. Do we see the early Church acting this way? Unless our attitude changes, if we're guilty of this, then we are in danger of "being cast into the fire" as worthless branches.

Remember this scary thought. Jesus Himself said, "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." (NIV)

He also said, "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evil-doers!'" Notice Jesus said there would be "many" and not just a few of these Spirit-filled Christians (we know this because they could not drive out demons or perform miracles without the Holy Spirit) who called Him, "Lord."

You may not be aware of it but there are angels – messenger angels – assigned to every true church established by the Lord. Now many people may believe this is what Revelation 2-3 refers to; however, that is not the case. The Greek word means "messenger" and can be either spiritual angels or human and these "letters" were clearly sent to humans, probably the Bishop of that church because of the wording such as "you are enduring patiently ...". They also refer to

letters or messages to the Seven Church Ages, of which we are now living in the Seventh Church Age of Laodicea.

But there are actually angels in charge of churches. I have seen these angels on several occasions when ministering at a church. They move around but mostly they stand right behind the pulpit (behind where the preacher would be standing) with their arms folded over their chest watching everything that is going on.

These angels work under the authority of the Lord and Gabriel, the archangel over all the messenger angels. These angels are responsible to write down and keep track of everything that goes on in that church, the prayers, the service (attitude, thoughts, etc., of each parishioner during worship and the other parts of the service), giving of tithes and offerings to the Lord, etc., and it also includes the *sins* of the church. This should *scare* most pastors and other *elders* of each church – knowing that they will be held accountable for what happens in that church, including sins. If you're an elder in a church and you *allow* sin to go on and don't deal with it then you have a serious problem and it will be more serious on the Judgment Day if you don't do the right thing and deal with it now.

It should also scare most Christians out of the cavalier attitude they have toward sin and holiness. Do you believe the Bible? The Word says, "Without holiness, no one will see the Lord."

One of the major differences in this regard between most churches today and the genuine churches of the New Testament is that there was a fear of God in the early Church that we do not have today, mainly due to so many different *types* of *false* gospels being preached in churches today. Christians are not *taught* to fear God; they're not taught anything about the *Lion*, except as it pertains to His judgment upon non-Christians, but only taught that "God is love" so He will overlook all your sin. There's even a very large ministry in Colorado Springs that teaches once you're a Christian you don't have to worry about sin nor repent of it – every future sin

is already under the Blood. This is very dangerous teaching and does not agree with the Bible. Remember, Jesus Himself said we are to fear God – “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hidden, that shall not be known ... but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.” There are few ministries today preaching against sin because the emphasis is on making people feel comfortable in church and not wanting to embarrass or offend anyone. Clearly one of the main reasons there is no power – a sign I might add of the *true* gospel – in most churches is because, unlike the early churches, most churches today are full of sin. This is clearly not a picture of the early churches where there was an emphasis on fear and holiness – we must be holy when we come before the Lord to worship Him in church.

Notice Acts 9:31, “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up.” *Why* was this happening? This verse goes on to tell us: *because* they were “walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.”

When we fear God, respect His holiness and seek to live holy lives ourselves being quick to repent of any sin so that we are “walking in the light” (I John 1:5-2:1).

I’ve said many times over the last 20 years something I’ve learned from many years of ministry and standing in God’s counsel – there are only *two* things that can keep you from receiving the blessings and promises of God. One of these is sin. I want to encourage you this week to repent of any sins in your life and make a quality decision to refrain from sin. In addition, if you’re a church elder I want to warn you and encourage you to deal with sins in your church according to the Scriptures because you will be held accountable yourself for these sins if you continue to tolerate them

in your church. Remember, the angel in your church is watching and recording everything that goes on.