



One Insanity is but a Reflection of the Other

*But realize this, that in the last days **difficult times will come**. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these. For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Timothy 3:1-7)*

This is probably one of the best biblical description of what is taking place spiritually with the *Occupy Wall Street* and similar movements of unrest in the Western world. I cannot begin to number the editorials, news reports and articles in every form of media that has crossed my path which espouse disbelief and incredulity at what is taking place, both secular and Christian. Repeatedly we receive reports that even when the protestors finally articulate some kind of demand, position or statement that can be understood, it is in direct contradiction to their actions and attitude. Their hypocrisy puzzles just about everyone. They claim to be holding to the finest traditions of America and the Civil Rights Movement, but their actions certainly do not prove it. By most third-party accounts the participants are insane, claiming things which directly conflict with their subsequent words and actions. This is supposed to be something *new*? I'm supposed to be *surprised* at this? For years prior to the *Occupy* movement anyone could have reported the exact same things about the church and those calling themselves "Christian": it is hard to know what they stand for, their actions almost always contradict their words, and they do not seem to bear any resemblance to the legacy and heritage they claim to come from. The hypocrisy and insanity in the world is merely a reflection of the hypocrisy and insanity in Christendom.

The description of unbiblical behaviors in the Last Days which Paul lists for Timothy have first materialized and permeated the institutional church before joining together with identical patterns in the world. One is a reflection of the other. I am supposed to be

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surprised by statements by both the saved and unsaved alike that America is no longer a Christian country following the biblical principles on which it was founded? Wake up and smell the coffee in any one of the imitation Star Bucks that have sprung up at churches across your city and state. If churches are no longer following the Bible, why should anyone else? If people calling themselves “Christian” do not practice what they preach, why should the demonstrators be held to a higher standard? America and Western countries once considered Christian are merely a reflection of the state of the church within them. Why should *Occupy Wall Street* protestors be held to a different standard than the hypocrites who claim a form of Christianity that has no resemblance to that practiced as recently as by their parents and grandparents? If they have abandoned the Word, why should a political movement try to return to its influence?

“Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?” (John 5:45-47)

Just as Jesus set the record straight for the so-called believers of His day, so I have come to believe it will be precisely the same thing for the believers of these Last Days. Can you imagine what our grandparents’ and their grandparents’ generations would say if they returned and visited their old churches today? In this present generation, *every* denomination is going to be convicted by its founders because this last generation has vacated practically every written standard originally established, much less abandoned Scripture along the way toward the present decline. Do today’s Baptists practice and live up to the standards established by its founders? Or the Methodists? Or the Assemblies of God? Can you name a denomination which is *fully* following the standards originally established by their founders, much less the Bible they each allege to be foundational to their beliefs and ways?

As one example I am personally familiar with, I think it will be Phineas Bresee, the primary founder of the Church of the Nazarene who will be that denomination’s chief accuser. To the current generation I would paraphrase Jesus as saying, “Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Phineas Bresee, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Bresee, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

How can I be upset with protestors who do not understand the true beliefs and attitudes of historical American figures and movements when so many claiming the label Christian do not know or believe the same as their own members of just one generation ago, much less the true counsel of God's Word? *Both* parties are openly redefining every term and every historical reference to conform to their own wishes and desires; one insanity is merely a reflection of the other.

Like "*the sons of Issachar, men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do*", (1 Chr. 12:32) so should we likewise be. If we truly understood the bigger picture, we would not be operating "business as usual" and neither would we be trying to rescue institutions to the neglect of souls.

As Jacob details to a far greater degree in his book, *Shadows of the Beast*, Revelation 13 speaks of two beasts, one "*coming up out of the sea*" (Rev. 13:1) and the other "*coming up out of the earth*". (Rev. 13:11) The world stage is being set for the arrival not just of the final person of the Antichrist, but the False Prophet as well. They embody not just an attempt to consolidate the world politically, but to unify it religiously. They are therefore not simply working to deceive the world, but to deceive the church or anyone with a religious predilection. The insanity in the institutional church which is finally being reflected in the insanity of the outbreaks of political unrest is the rise of the Antichrist, bubbling ever closer to the surface, soon to be in plain, open view of all. *Both* groups are ripe for the pickin'.

It is easy to see how both the political and religious arenas are being prepared to accept a single, unified leader. The rank and file members of the institutional church have established the same agenda as their counterparts in these political movements, making it all about "me". Both groups are seeking someone else to take care of them, someone else to provide the answers, someone else to make life easier. When that "someone" comes along with the ability to provide (at least temporarily) those solutions, they will follow him, quite literally, all the way to hell. It will not matter whether they started their journey in an absurd political movement or a church originally not compromised by the world.

There are Christians who are putting all their efforts into saving America, toward reestablishing the Judeo-Christian ethic on which it was built. And there are Christians who are putting all their efforts into saving the denomination they grew up in, toward

reestablishing the principles for which it once stood and upon which it was originally established. (In my previous example, just take a look at the website "[Concerned Nazarenes](#)". Do you think there is really hope for a return?) Unfortunately, the truth is that those institutions are gone forever and they are never coming back because they are being absorbed into the final Babylon to come described in Revelation. They are not salvageable because, as the Lord said through Jeremiah...

*Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken;
Wail over her! Bring balm for her pain;
Perhaps she may be healed.
We applied healing to Babylon, but she was not healed;
Forsake her and let us each go to his own country,
For her judgment has reached to heaven
And towers up to the very skies. (Jeremiah 51:8-9)*

It is a recurring theme in Scripture, that Babylon is fallen and cannot be healed, (Is. 21:9; Jer. 50:2; Rev. 14:8, 18:3) along with the repeated admonition by the Lord to come out of her. (Is. 52:11; Jer. 50:8; 51:6, 9, 45; Rev. 18:4) We are not witnessing the fall of something so it can be rebuilt properly as much as we are being presented with the rise of something else in its place, something which seeks to replace not just the position of religion in our life, but everything else to boot.

Unfortunately, there is another great deception that is working in tandem with what we are seeing both in the secular and religious realms which is specifically targeting the faithful remnant. There are a great many authentic Christians, even perhaps the majority at this very hour, who do not believe in the need to prepare for the rise of Babylon and its leaders the Antichrist and False Prophet because of their belief that the faithful Church will be raptured away before they make their appearance and rise to power. What is going to happen to the remnant when so many in it are unprepared to enter the Tribulation and endure the persecution to come before the Rapture does come? Pre-Tribulationism can no longer be viewed as a "difference of opinion" among scholars and authors as to the timing of the Rapture and the mechanics of the End Times—there are going to be severe consequences for ignoring the plain teaching of Scripture not only of what is to come but what is currently taking place. I am not railing about the *timing* of the Rapture, but the false notion that it will exempt us from all the persecution and events heralding its arrival.

Let no one in any way deceive you, for it [the Parousia, or coming of the Lord] will not come unless the apostasy comes

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first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

The Holy Spirit through Paul warns us not to allow **anyone** to deceive us that we will not first see the apostasy—the great falling away from the faith by many, and then witness the arrival of the Antichrist. Those espousing a position that the Rapture will come before we witness the arrival of the Antichrist play all sorts of monkey tricks with this verse, deceiving themselves and others into believing Paul is not plainly saying what he is saying. **“Let no one in any way deceive you”**. **NO ONE**. There is no place for “friendly, scholarly debate” where the plain truth of God’s Word is so unambiguous. These words are just as clear and plain as those of John 3:16. Do not allow **anyone**, regardless of how noble their intentions, sway you otherwise.

If we truly understood the times in which we live and therefore fully appreciated how what is happening in the streets is but a reflection of what has been going on for a long while within the church, we would not be directing our efforts to save a nation, a denomination, or way of life. We would take Jesus at His Word when He stated, *“But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved”*, (Mt. 24:13) to know it will be exactly as Paul also described this time in history, *“But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come”*. (2 Ti. 3:1)

Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, (2 Timothy 3:12-14)

The call for faithfulness during this time is not a call to go back and rescue an institution but to continue the daily pursuit of faithfulness in what we already know and believe from God’s Word. Neither do we need anything new, but to put into practice what we have already been given. These are but the birth pangs, each one more violent and closer together than the last. What is about to give birth has severely opposite effects on those who are going the world’s way, be they churched or otherwise, versus those who will *“continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of”*.

In Him,

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