

5 of Satan's Greatest Threats to Modern-Day Christianity

Sid Roth looked at me and asked, "Larry, what is the Lord saying to you right now?" I did not expect *this* to come out of my mouth.

When bringing a "hard" prophetic word, I believe there needs to be a few elements involved in the presentation. Of course, the content needs to be accurate. Secondly, the content must be paired with the "tone" of the Lord. God's heart breaks over these things, as should ours, as the Lord does not want "any to perish but all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

With every warning, confrontation and challenge should come a *redemptive solution*. It doesn't take a prophet to call out obvious problems. It does demand true prophetic acumen, however, to hear heaven's solutions on how to reverse the problem, be it anything from personal sin, to church compromise or some kind of impending global catastrophe. Prophecy, in short, is never delivered for the purpose of being able to deliver a spiritual "I told you so" when a negative reality comes to pass. My prayer is that we would release and heed prophetic words of the more confrontational nature, not so some prophet can read disaster in the news headlines and claim, "I told you so!" but so that the body of Christ can receive assignments to reverse the schemes of Satan.

Debate or Distraction?

This word came to me in the midst of frustration.

I have noticed, more and more, that particular movements in the body of Christ that place a biblical emphasis on gifts of the Spirit (continuationism) along with experiencing "manifestations of the Spirit" (physical evidences of people

being touched by the Holy Spirit's power) are under fresh attack by both "heresy hunters" and some reputable evangelical leaders. This is unfortunate. Not because we shouldn't discuss or debate these items. I think we absolutely should. And not in the shadows, but in the public square. But we should discuss and passionately debate these topics *as family*, not foes intent on destroying or demonizing one another. The family conversation is not taking place. In fact, we're not seeing intelligent discussion or well-researched debate going on; we are witnessing hate-speech turned demonization, which is really poor taste for any self-proclaimed Christian to resort to when it comes to lambasting fellow believers engaging in charismatic practices. We need to stop this adolescence immediately, as it wars against the very high priestly prayer of Messiah Jesus from seeing fulfillment: "that they may be one as We are one" (John 17:11b).

What's the big deal? Our inability to discuss and debate as brothers and sisters in Christ has ultimately played into Satan's objective for America (and ultimately, other nations). While we are engaged in petty arguments over differences in the non-essentials of the faith, I believe there are at least five insidious weapons the devil is aiming at modern Christianity. He'd love to keep us distracted squabbling amongst ourselves while he literally reinvents and reconstructs the Christian faith, and thus, renders the church ineffective to help bring about kingdom transformation in every cultural sphere.

While we devote endless hours to propagating articles, blog, videos, audios, interviews and, yes, entire websites and "discernment ministries," the devil is quickly becoming the architect behind the cultures, moral values and belief systems of nations. Nations are being discipled, yes—just *not* by those who were anointed and commissioned to disciple the nations.

This is not exhaustive. But these are five the immediate strategies that come to mind.

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1. **Universalism:** This is the belief that everyone gets into heaven regardless of their response to the gospel. There are multiple dimensions to this destructive heresy. Some claim that the atonement is all-encompassing, and thus, every human being throughout history experiences immediate salvation because of Jesus' work. Yes, His atoning work on the cross was more than sufficient to cover all the sins of all of humanity throughout all of time. However, in order to *receive* this glorious gift, we need to place *saving faith* in Jesus. I can side with both my Reformed and Arminian friends here. Whether God gave you the ability to place faith in the gospel, or you exercised some kind of free will, either way, the gospel demands a choice, and that choice should be evidenced by a transformed life.

2. **The “Deconstruction of the Christian faith”:** This “deconstruction” terminology is relatively new language, but I am seeing it more and more prevalent among young people. There are two dimensions here. For one, there is a healthy form of deconstruction, where we take inventory of what we believe, measure our beliefs and theology besides the Bible and make sure what we believe lines up with what is written in Scripture. We are conforming our beliefs to the Bible. Ultimately, religion is not our foundation. Tradition is not our cornerstone. The way we've always done things does not have the final say, *unless* our religion, tradition and methodologies are in pure agreement with the Word of God. The second dimension, however, is where the devil is using this language to his advantage right now. In this age of increasing compromise, I am seeing more and more self-proclaimed believers actually deny or reject certain cardinal tenants of the Christian faith, not because they have disproved them from the Bible. The opposite. Truths like eternal judgment, hell, sin, gender, sexual standards and other more uncomfortable

realities are not politically correct today. They are not comfortable, and thus, because they do not align with where culture is going, we decide that Scripture has become irrelevant to speak to these certain matters. As a result, we “deconstruct our faith,” adjusting the Bible to accommodate our preferences.

3. An imbalanced gospel: I want to tread very carefully here. In Romans 12:1, Paul tells us that in view or consideration of God’s mercy, we should offer up our lives as living sacrifices. A weightless, ambiguous, flighty “gospel” message does not provoke us to offer up our lives; if anything, such a message can easily breed complacency and compromise. At its core, the gospel is the message of salvation from our sins. Ephesians 2 provides some of the most compelling and striking language of what’s at the heart of this glorious gospel. We were dead in our sins and trespasses (Eph. 2:1), hopelessly cut off from the life of God (Eph. 2:12). We were doomed and damned, not because of an unloving God, but because our hearts were infected by sin and deserved judgment. While we were yet sinners, God still loved us and Christ died for us! (See Rom. 5:8).

However, we were dead in our sins, and if that’s true, well—dead people don’t have much decision-making capability. We don’t wake up one day and have the bright idea to simply “Go with God.” Salvation is a profoundly supernatural work wrought by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. This is the gospel. Yes, our response to the gospel produces many amazing blessings such as freedom, deliverance, healing, abundant life, joy, fulfillment, satisfaction, God’s presence in our lives and so on. But at its core, the gospel is *not* “I’ve been saved from a mediocre life and now, because of Jesus, I’m happy and satisfied.” This is imbalance. Jesus didn’t die for me simply to live a happy or “full” life; He died so that a doomed, hell-bound sinner could be redeemed from the eternal punishment that my sin deserves. He shed His

precious blood so that a new temple could be established—not one built by the hands of men, but one fashioned by the hands of the Creator: you and I. He purified this temple with His blood and, thus, made our physical bodies a compatible resting place for the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence.

4. Redefinition of sin: We are no longer calling sin what it is: *sin*. This is exactly what Satan wants. We don't preach sin to make people feel bad; we preach sin to make people recognize their state of absolute spiritual bankruptcy and desperation, for which Jesus' blood is the only remedy. Sin is *not* an "oops" or a "fail" or a "boo boo." We cannot trivialize sin. All sin is damning and destructive. What happens, though, when we start redefining sin, calling that which is destructive progressive, tolerant, acceptable and culturally relevant? We begin redefining sin to meet our current cultural preferences. Whether it's the redefinition of marriage, gender or even life, we have no right to move the ancient boundary lines—those standards and definitions that the Creator established as life-giving and life-enhancing. To believe we have any right or ability to redefine sin is to play God and become guilty of blatant idolatry.

5. A disconnected and disengaged church: The present state of society should tell us that something is wrong when it comes to the church's impact on the world. We *need* the church, now more than ever. Buildings are fine! Programs are great! Delivering excellent production value is totally acceptable! But let's be totally honest: Four songs, entertaining production value, 20 bucks in a bucket and inspiring life lessons *alone* will not shift society. We have church buildings on every street corner, but how many cities have actually experienced true revival, awakening and even reformation?

Here's the deal: I know we like to evaluate the impact of our church services and gatherings based on how well the "weekend worship experience" went. Yes, we need to evaluate these elements for administrative purposes and to maintain

environments of excellence, but they are *not* the definitive measuring standards for the effectiveness of the church. It's time for a new metric of evaluation: the condition of our society, Monday through Saturday, reveals the level of impact our churches are having. What do our cities look like? How about the schools and education? What's the crime rate like? From serving the homeless with the compassion of Jesus to offering prophetically inspired business strategies in high-rise boardrooms, the church, the *ekklesia*, must be making a measurable imprint upon society; otherwise, we drift into irrelevance (regardless of how relevant we claim to be in our spiritual presentation). Simply put, church needs to arise and define itself by Jesus' standard in Matthew 16: an *ekklesia*. Ed Silvoso describes this as a mobile people movement that has impact on everyone, *everywhere*. Yes!

The Solution Is, and Always Has Been, an Engaged and Unified Remnant

When I was confronted with these five things, I felt overwhelmed. But when the Lord delivers a prophetic warning or confrontation, He never leaves us without hope. I believe an essential element of the prophetic is being able to access solutions and strategies from heaven that reverse the present conditions. So, what's the solution?

The solution is *not* prayer alone, though prayer and intercession are vital.

The solution is *not* more supernatural meetings, miracle conferences or prophetic events, though they are vital points of convergence to unite, train and deploy the people.

The solution is *not* simply laying back and accepting the horrors plaguing society as merely "signs of the end times," though we are obviously living in the "last days" as defined by the Bible (the period of time between Pentecost and the return of Jesus).

When Jesus describes His people or the entity of the church, He uses language that describes a transformational community.

In Matthew 5:13-16, Jesus describes His people as the *salt of the Earth* and *light of the world*. Note the words “*earth*” and “*world*.” The presence of a Holy Spirit-filled, Jesus-commissioned people on planet Earth should have a measurable impact. The world should be brighter and the Earth should have a lot more flavor because the Spirit of God is actively at work in society through a mobile temple called born-again believers.

The solution is the *ekklesia*, the church Jesus defined in Matthew 16, unifying around the core, non-negotiables of the faith, advancing together to see every soul redeemed and every cultural system impacted by the gospel of the kingdom.

The Lord gave me this encouragement following this confrontational prophetic word: “The solution to crisis has always been a remnant. And the remnant is bigger than you think!” It’s not a couple of lone ranger Christians here and there, hunkered down just trying to make due until Jesus comes back. The devil is aiming at the unification of God’s remnant, doing whatever he can to bring disunity to the body of Christ—using the five strategies listed above. Why? Because when we operate and function as *one*, the prayer of Jesus is fulfilled, glory is manifested to the Earth and no soul or nation is safe from the transformational power of King Jesus.

“That they may all be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You. May they also be one in Us, that the world may believe that You have sent Me. I have given them the glory which You gave Me, that they may be one even as We are one” (John 17:21-22).

Lord, raise up a unified remnant so that the body of Christ boldly arises, preaches truth without compromise, operates in the supernatural power of God and once again becomes a life-

preserving force to society! {eoa}

This article originally appeared at Larry Sparks Ministries.