

Flood of Aberrant Doctrines Endangering True Faith

I am burdened with concern right now for the body of Christ. The days are urgent, and time is limited. We need to be ready, alive and alert to the Spirit. People around us are hurting, the world rushes toward coming catastrophes, and yet I see too many believers who should know better falling into self-centered emotional turmoil, moral compromise and inconsistency at just the time when we need to be at our finest and most focused. Lives are at stake.

I'm not just talking about my own flock. I see this in too much of the wider body of Christ, even as a remnant sharpens its hunger and passion for God. In my book *Visions of the Coming Days*, I wrote of the preparation we need to be making, but I despair that few have read it and that even fewer understand the urgency of what they're reading. I wrote of a sense of hope for the economy from 2012 into 2013 and said that it could not last. This current period of relative improvement has lulled many of us into complacency, a sense that it's all going to be all right. It isn't. We've been given a limited season of grace in which to prepare for difficult times, more than just economically, and we must use it.

In these days, if we take our eyes off our Savior for even an instant, the enemy of our soul will access our vulnerabilities and weaknesses and use them to drag us down. We will be scattered from one another, isolated and disconnected at a time when our relationships need to be firm and strong. First Peter 5:8-9 says, "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith" (NASB).

The big cats hunt by separating their prey from the flock or herd so that they can be brought down and devoured. Think of Peter's concern as a significant part of the force behind Paul's exhortation in Ephesians 6:18: "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints."

"Alert" and "perseverance" work with greatest effectiveness through solid relationships in which we see and know what is happening in the lives of our brothers and sisters. We strengthen our relationships through faithfully worshipping together in larger gatherings (Sunday or Sabbath), through teams doing ministry together, through cell groups meeting faithfully in homes and by guarding the health of our families.

In the midst of this, a flood of aberrant doctrines threatens to destroy the very foundations of our faith. I won't name them here. I've done that in other places. These become possible when the body of Christ becomes more interested in spiritual experience than in biblical grounding and when ignorance of what the whole Word of God has to say opens access points for deception. Interest in responsible Bible study has tragically waned in recent decades until the average Christian has become functionally biblically illiterate, effectively disarmed against lies wrapped appealingly in kernels of truth. Let's keep the experience, but let's ground it in responsible study of the whole counsel of God once delivered.

Rise up, saints! Whether you feel it or not, this is the hour of our exaltation, the day of our destiny in Him, a strategic moment in history! Don't miss it!

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