

Carnal Pastors Are Minimizing the Grace of God

We have many self-appointed prophets, mystics and sensationalists in the church world today. They seem to always be looking for something new—a new word, a new experience, a new phenomenon. And so, those who listen to them and follow them are easily fooled. They don't have a strong foundation in the Word of God and are not familiar with the anointing that teaches them and leads them into all truth. They don't know how to build on revealed truth and mix the old and the new together.

A few years ago one church member arrogantly said to me, "Hagin is dead (speaking of the late Kenneth E. Hagin) and the word of faith is dead. God is doing a new thing."

I walked away shaking my head, appalled at the ignorance of this person.

First of all, the word of faith (Rom. 10:8) is the Word of God and that will never die.

Secondly, when the Lord restores a truth to the body of Christ you don't throw that truth away once another truth is revealed. That's stupid.

What many call the "word of faith" in its purest form was just a restoration of the integrity of the Word of God and exercising our faith in it. Were there extremes in this move and teaching? There will always be extremes.

There will always be dirty bath water, but you don't throw out the baby with it.

Thirdly, without faith we can't please God (Heb. 11:6). So to ignorantly say that the "word of faith" is dead is like saying

faith is dead or worse yet, the Word of God is dead.

The truth is that many have forsaken the strong foundational teaching that our forefathers laid down for us.

Martin Luther was instrumental in restoring the truth of salvation by faith and not by works. Puritan preachers like John Wesley and later Charles Finney helped to establish the church in holiness. At the turn of the 19th century the baptism of the Holy Spirit was restored through the Azusa Street revival. In the 1940s and '50s there was a great healing revival that restored the reality and ministry of healings and miracles. Each truth was to be laid on top of the other.

During the 1960s and into the '80s there was a wave of strong teaching where tremendous truths on faith, prayer and the authority of the believer among many others were touted from our nation's pulpits.

Understanding on the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the ministry gifts increased. In my opinion we reached a peak in the 1980s and some things were aborted or miscarried.

In the 1990s we witnessed the Toronto Blessing and the Brownsville Revival. There was holy laughter and holy fire. Both revivals and outpourings were controversial with manifestations of the Holy Spirit that many doubted. But always, the wise ones would learn to throw away the dirty bath water and keep the baby. God was showing us that He wanted us to let His Spirit move.

We should be building on each of these truths. Instead we have churches yet today who are still living in Martin Luther's day with salvation-only messages. We have electricity today that lights every home, but they are still living in the day of candlelight. We have Pentecostals who have left their heritage of the power of the Holy Ghost. And thus we have too many coming up in the young generation today who are weak in the

Word and know so little of the Spirit and His power and workings.

If we don't pass these truths and this light on to the next generation these things will die. There must be a mingling of the generations.

"You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:1-2).

TWO DREAMS

My wife was given two dreams. One had two rooms separated by dividers with teachers and students in them. The dividers were then open as teachers and students were mingling. Then the dividers were shut.

A seasoned minister who represented the older guard was obeying God in transferring responsibilities to the younger. He let go and said he had other things God wanted him to do.

But there were challenges in the transfer. There was an unbending in the mature and a lack of knowledge in the young ones. The Lord said that the Holy Spirit is the equalizer. There must be a transference of the Spirit from one generation to the next, for it is the Spirit that brings life, and not the traditions of men.

The mature refused to bend to new songs, new colors, new decorations etc., but the young thought all they needed was the flash and the glitter, but they neglected the power of the Spirit.

The Lord said that the young generation has no business telling the older to keep the Holy Spirit out. Rather, they must learn the Spirit and transfer it on to the next generation.

Each generation needs to keep imparting spiritual things into their spiritual and natural children.

SECOND DREAM

The second dream was of another elder who was turning things over to the next generation, but they were given more to entertainment and didn't have a proper foundation. In the dream the younger was trying to fit things into a house without a proper foundation. When things don't fit you can't force them in. A table wouldn't fit in the house, but the young people pushed it to try and fit it, and the house started to fall.

The Lord showed us that our own son was not called to a traditional ministry. He has to reach his generation a different way because they won't listen the traditional way. The commission remains the same, though, but it will be a different operation.

The life is in moving with the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is the One who give life to the Word. He makes everything new, fresh and alive again. Relationships and marriages are affected by the life, joy and liberty of the Holy Ghost. It even changes atmospheres in homes. Things come into order in people's hearts and lives. We must esteem these things.

The apostle Paul wrote one entire chapter to bring correction to the confusion and the disorder that was happening in the Corinthian church during their Holy Ghost meetings (1 Cor. 14). He didn't throw out the baby with the dirty bath water. He taught them. It was all for the purpose of edification. The Lord wants us to excel in the edification of His body.

By revelation the Lord showed us that carnal pastors are minimizing the grace of God because they're more concerned about self-image and how it looks and how it's perceived. We can't put young people in charge who are more concerned about image over the demonstration of the Spirit. That is the danger

and the warning from the Lord.

Ananias and Sapphira were stopped in their tracks because of the love of appearance (Acts 5). Self-worth and self-esteem keeps out the life of God and minimizes His grace.

It is time to return to our foundations so that we will not build in vain. It is time for those who are strong in the Word and who know the Spirit of God to pass these things on to the younger generation.

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