

RT Kendall: Why God Hates This Divorce More Than Marital Breakups

Why be a Christian? This question is of utmost importance. Do you have an answer? Some would say, "You should be a Christian because you will be a happier person." Really? The first person I baptized in London was a Los Angeles Jewish businessman who was converted one Sunday evening at Westminster Chapel. We later became friends—even spent parts of holidays together. He was wonderfully converted, but he said to me one day, "Before I became a Christian, I was a happy man." He wasn't complaining; he was admitting that being a Christian was costly—and sometimes painful. None of his family or his friends became Christians.

Some might answer this question, "You should become a Christian because it could help your marriage." Really? Divorce rates might prove otherwise. I have found that marriages are helped when couples put Jesus Christ first in their lives; they are not only faithful to each other but stop pointing the finger and mutually forgive each other for the other's faults.

The reason a person should be a Christian, says Paul, is because of the wrath of God (Rom. 1:18, 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10). Most Christians can quote John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall *not perish* [meaning that they will *not go to hell*] but have eternal life" (NIV, emphasis added). Once a person is a Christian, he or she becomes a part of the body of Christ—the church. God wants the church to be the salt of the earth. We become salt and light when we uphold the Scriptures and manifest the power of God with equal force. The last thing we want is for those two to become separated, and yet they

have been.

This is about a divorce between the Word and the Spirit. I believe God hates this type of divorce as much as He hates the divorce of a husband and wife (Mal. 2:16, see footnote in ESV)—even more so, if that is possible.

It was a silent divorce. It is impossible to know precisely when it took place. It may have happened many times in the course of church history. Sometime before A.D. 65, Paul wrote of a future “rebellion” (2 Thess. 2:3). The King James version calls it “a falling away.” Between A.D. 90 and 100, Jesus speaking from the right hand of God in heaven, said that the church in Ephesus had “abandoned the love you had at first” (Rev. 2:4). What was their first love? The gospel. Read the book of Ephesians alongside Acts 19 and 20. The gospel was paramount at Ephesus. So too was the evidence of power.

What is more, when you read the earliest writings of the apostolic fathers (people such as Ignatius and Polycarp from the second and third centuries)—as I show in *Whatever Happened to the Gospel?*—the gospel seems to have been replaced by moralism and emphasis on good works. The gospel is the “power of God for salvation” (Rom. 1:16). But Paul said that in the last days there would be people “having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power” (2 Tim. 3:5a). That is the Word without the Spirit.

It is a gospel sometimes upheld by cerebral teaching that intentionally rejects the gifts of the Spirit. Often it is good sound doctrine, but it lacks power. Paul calls this quenching the Spirit or putting out the Spirit’s fire (1 Thess. 5:19; see ISV). An example of this is cessationist teaching, as I show in *Holy Fire*. Such teaching—which has utterly no foundation in Scripture—quenches the Spirit before the Spirit is allowed to manifest His power.

When there is a divorce, sometimes the children stay with the

mother, sometimes with the father. In the divorce between the Word and the Spirit, you have those on the Word side and those on the Spirit side.

I believe that revival is coming—an unprecedented outpouring unlike anything our generation has seen. The question is, Are we ready for it? Have we been trained? Have we been taught? The people God will use most are those who have sought His face (getting to know Him and desiring more of Him) rather than His hand (what they can get *from* Him). He is looking for a people who have searched His Word and stood in awe of it.

This unprecedented awakening, which I believe is coming, will come when the Scriptures and the power of God come together. When these two—the Word and the power of the Spirit—are brought back together, a remarriage will occur. The simultaneous combination will create a spontaneous combustion. The day will come when those who come to see will hear, and those who come to hear will see.

✖ *Adapted from Word & Spirit by R.T. Kendall, copyright 2019, published by Charisma House. Are you anticipating the next great move of God? Have you been praying for revival? R.T. Kendall sees it coming once those who live by God's Word only but oppose demonstrations of the Holy Spirit and those who seek signs and wonders but have not hidden His Word in their hearts unite in the truth of both the Word and the Spirit. This book helps prepare you for what's coming. To order your copy, click on this link.*

Prayer Power for the Week of Jan. 19, 2020

This week, continue to seek God's face through His Word, praise and adoration. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in your prayers as you intercede for our nation, its leaders and our military. Remember Israel as you pray for our allies and worldwide revival. Ask the Lord to connect you with those of like faith for unity in prayer and ministry. Read: 2

Chronicles 7:14, Romans 1:16, 2 Timothy 3:5, 1 Thessalonians 5:19.