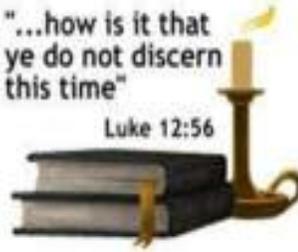


Discernment Newsletter

"...how is it that
ye do not discern
this time"

Luke 12:56



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THE TWO MYSTERIES

Pastor Bill Randles

These are interesting times! Twenty years ago, it didn't seem possible that the end of the millennium would be a time of extreme and diverse religiosity. At that time the greatest concern of Christians was the rise of secular humanism which looked with disdain on religious devotion. That was the imposing giant that was taunting the Church. But now, amazingly, we are living in the most religious time in recent history. Spirituality is now "in vogue". In this "post modern" era, all religious thought is treated equally in the name of tolerance. Eastern religions, the Kabbalah, Ramadan are all given equal treatment in our society. Within the church there is a spurt of growth of exponential proportions. PromiseKeepers, March for Jesus, the Toronto Blessing, Willow Creek Church and other expressions would seem to indicate (as many Christian leaders proclaim) that we are in the "great last day revival" and that these are the greatest moves of God since the days of the apostles! Far from being atheistic, America seems to be more spiritual and "God- conscience" than ever. The recent flood of spirituality requires all of us to make choices and to be discerning Christians. At some levels the choices for true believers in Jesus Christ are obvious. Do we choose true Christianity or blatant mystical religions such as Eastern religions or Paganism? However, the choice can become difficult as the lines blur. How far should we go in accepting Roman Catholic teachings and dogma? Should we participate in the Pensacola (Brownsville) anointing? Is the City-Wide Church something we want to join? Must I actively pursue racial reconciliation in order to be a Christian? These are some of the issues that are coming through the Christian media and requiring thousands of ministers and many hundreds of thousands of Christians worldwide to be discerning.

If you truly love the Lord Jesus Christ and want to be faithful to His call and His commands, then these are days that you must learn to be discerning. At issue

today is not (1) a new anointing to do signs and wonders, or (2) getting a "fresh" word from God, but the issue is TRUTH. Will we receive the love of the truth or will we believe the Lie?

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. II Thess. 2:9-12

Yes, there are many different "spiritualities" flourishing today, but there are in essence only two religions. *All* religious expression or experience can scripturally be placed into two categories. The Bible calls them "mysteries". There is the Mystery of Godliness and the Mystery of Iniquity. Those two types of spiritualities have forever existed.

The Mystery of Iniquity. The first mystery to appear in scripture is called the "Mystery of iniquity". It found its first expression in the Garden of God where Lucifer, the angel disgraced from the presence of the Almighty God, proclaimed his infamous "I Wills".

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou has said in thine heart, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Isaiah 14:12-14

Now this is the essence of iniquity, lawlessness that the created being can assert himself up - out of his God-assigned role, by an act of his will, to become equal with God! This spiritual principle, this essence of all false religion starts with the creature, who would "ascend up to heaven." This can be traced throughout the Bible and human history to this present day Adam and Eve, willing to believe that they could be "like God" even if it meant trampling love, loyalty, commitment and gratitude in the dirt - they chose instead their own personal fulfillment.

Nimrod, whose name means "let us rebel" organized a worldwide revolt against the binding restrictions of God and could only be stopped by the catastrophe of the confusion of tongues at Babel. He wanted to "ascend up to the heavens" and to "Make a name for ourselves". This is the ancient lie, the recurring temptation of fallen man which countless pyramids, ziggurats, meditation techniques, Masonic degrees, gurus, Christian Scientists, Mormons, New Agers, Transcendental Meditators and countless other worldly religions testify. There is the desire within the human heart to ascend up to God's level and be like God. The principle of creature ascent is at the heart of all false religions. It is the Mystery of Iniquity.

The Mystery of Godliness. This Mystery is the exact opposite of the Mystery of Iniquity. The Mystery of Iniquity proclaims that Man can ascend and be like the Most High. The Mystery of Godliness says that God must descend and

become like a man in order to save us who are lost, bankrupt and unable to save ourselves. This is true spirituality that originates from heaven and required an incarnation; “God was manifest in the Flesh.” There can be neither compromise nor mixing of these two religions. The scriptures warn us that the two would coexist, mature and come to their fullest expression in the last days before the bodily return of Jesus Christ. The spirituality of iniquity, whose motto could be “Let us (creatures) ascend” or the spirituality which produces godliness which would have the opposite motto, “He (God) must descend to us.”

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven. John 3: 13

The Mystery Applied. Between 1992-1994, as a pastor of a small Pentecostal church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, I was made aware of a new surge of interest in spiritual warfare. The Biblical concept that as believers we are engaged in a tremendous spiritual battle continually was quite understandable. The Church of Jesus Christ has always accepted that truth. However, in the new super-spiritual warfare there was something weaving its way into the fabric of the Church that was different than anything found in the Scriptures. Christians were being told to “rise up into the heavenlies and do battle with the strongman” over the cities and even nations. A popular song was being sung, “We are making war in the heavenlies, we are tearing down principalities.”

Contrast this with the orthodox Christian view of spiritual warfare, which is a battle of cosmic proportions indeed, but which is in the realm of ideas, thoughts, belief systems, etc. The Word of God teaches that Satan binds men through “vain imaginations, high things, that exalt themselves above the knowledge of God,” and that Christian warfare is to dismantle these mental “strongholds” through the truth of the Word of God. This takes time, patience, love, dedication, prayer, commitment and humility. We see Paul engaging in spiritual warfare.

And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures. Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you, is Christ. Acts 17:2-3

Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Acts 17:17

And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. Acts 18:4

This is spiritual warfare according to the Bible, teaching, discussing, arguing, and reasoning scripture, dismantling the intellectual and philosophical barriers to faith in Jesus Christ. If Paul had the modern teaching of spiritual warfare, he would have been researching the history of the respective cities, trying to identify the spiritual entity, which controlled it. He no doubt would have discerned a spirit of adultery in Corinth, witchcraft in Ephesus and a spirit of religion in the city of Jerusalem. Acts 17 says that when Paul arrived at Athens, “His spirit was

stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry...” What was his response? Did he gather a citywide meeting of the Greeks and apologize to them on behalf of the Romans? Did he march around Athens and plant stakes at the four corners of the town to claim it for God? These are just some of the recent “revelations” that have come forth and which are being practiced in the name of the “new” spiritual warfare. Paul knew that there was only one method of doing true warfare.

He disputed daily in the synagogue with the Jews and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Acts 17:16-17

In the new method of “spiritual warfare” the Mystery of Iniquity is present. The Mystery of Iniquity wants to “ascend to God’s level.” Note again the song: “We’re making war in the heavenlies, We’re bringing down principalities!”

Of interest is a story that Kenneth Hagin tells about a visitation he had with “Jesus”. He says that “Jesus” came to give him some directions and instructions, but a demon imp materialized between Hagin and this “Jesus” and began to raise such a racket that Hagin couldn’t hear what “Jesus” was saying to him. Hagin says that he waited for “Jesus” to rebuke the demon and he observed that there was no response from “Jesus”. Hagin then rebuked the “imp” and sent him away. Then this “Jesus” told Hagin, in effect, “If you hadn’t done that, I couldn’t have!” This new “Jesus” doesn’t presently have all the power and authority for He has, according to Hagin and others, delegated it to us, the believers. Therefore it is up to us, not Jesus, to complete the plans of God. This thinking is also articulated in the book entitled THE ETERNAL CHURCH by Bill Hamon:

“Jesus is waiting on the church. All that the fall of man and sin has taken away from humanity, Jesus through His church shall restore. . . When the church has put under it’s feet all enemies of Christ. . . then Christ can be released from Heaven to return as the manifested head of His physically resurrected and translated church.”

According to the Mystery of Godliness – we the church are waiting for Jesus to come to “redeem the purchase possession” and to complete our salvation. But in the Mystery of Iniquity, all is reversed. Jesus has to wait for us, the CHURCH, to rise up in OUR POWER and OUR GLORY to take DOMONION over all and when we get to that place of UNITY and POWER, RULING and REIGNING, then He can come back so that we can hand the kingdoms of this world over to Him. In England in 1990 John Wimber poignantly said the same:

“There is something higher than being a {denomination} and that is to be the end time army and involved in this greater prize of bringing everything on earth and above the earth and below the earth to the feet of Jesus.”

This dangerous doctrine has far-reaching implication. It seriously alters the worldview of all that submit to this kind of thinking. Popular teachers are widely influencing the church by confusing Jesus Christ, our Savior with the Church becoming the Salvation of the earth. Where does Scripture give the Church this

mandate? 1 Corinthians 15, Psalm 110 and Psalm 2 clearly point out that Jesus is the One who will do these things, or that God will do them for Jesus. Nothing is mentioned of a Great Last Days Church rising up performing wonders only attributed to Christ.

The affect of this rapidly spreading delusion is to exalt man and confer upon man the prerogatives that belong to Christ alone.

The Latter Rain Movement taught that the last days church would be the greatest expression of the Body of Christ – even on the face of the earth. Through the “last days outpouring of the Holy Ghost” the church was supposedly come into the time of its greatest power, unity and effectiveness. The Manifested Sons teaching came out of this and taught that Romans 8:19 would be fulfilled to become the literal coming of Jesus Christ. The Sons that would be manifested would be an elite group of Christians that would be so perfected by revelation that they would come into the complete “manifestation of their sonship” and overcome even death, before the Lord’s return. This is the Mystery of Iniquity taken to its fullest.

This whole teaching was soundly denounced, but it has never disappeared. It has reappeared in many forms over the past fifty years and is now back in full vengeance. Today we are seeing a Restored Apostolic Movement that is based upon the same premise. The Apostles being the elite company, are moving into the deeper levels of revelation knowledge to lead the Church “higher”. Note the teaching of a present day “anointed” prophet:

“The President of the United States and heads of nations will begin to seek out the Christian prophets and prophetic ministers. . . to know what to do. . . The Joseph and Daniel Prophetic Company will arise with supernatural answers for the Egyptian Pharaohs and Babylonian emperors of this world.” (Rick Joyner Prophecy)

“The feet of the Body of Christ will carry the credentials for all those who have gone before them. They will be joined to each other like no other body of people have ever been joined. . .in the near future the church will not be looking back at the first century church with the envy because of the great exploits of those days, but all will be saying that he certainly did save his best wine for last. The most glorious days in all of history have now come upon us. You who have dreamed of one day being able to talk to Peter, John and Paul are going to be surprised to find that they have been waiting to talk to you.” (The Harvest, Rick Joyner, Page 26)

Is the church getting better and better over time? Are we evolving? Are we about to “break through” to the greatest church in history? According to the Mystery of Iniquity we are, but the Mystery of Godliness does not teach us this. The Church has always been composed of individuals who are in various stages of personal growth in Christ. Do we need spiritual mapping, identificational repentance and commanding the Holy Spirit to “come” to us? Have we moved beyond the apostles?

Can you define which spiritual principal is being operated in the following quote?

“But more than in any other place I know, the most prominent Christian leaders in Argentina such as Omar Cabrera, Carlos Annacondia, Hector Giminez and others, overtly challenge and curse Satan and his demonic forces both in private prayer and on public platforms. The nation as a whole apparently is engaged in a world class power encounter.” ENGAGING THE ENEMY, C. Peter Wagner, page 46

What does the Word of God say?

Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. Jude 9

Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. 2 Peter 2:11

The effect of this “new revelation” puffs up with pride and blinds to reality. The Mystery of Iniquity is always like that. “Let us Ascend” sounds better to man that were are hopeless and helpless creatures. God has descended to save us...Jesus has warned, “Take heed that no man deceive you.”

The very essence of the Mystery of Godliness is: God had to come down to us, in the flesh, God became a man to save us from sin. The opposite is the Mystery of Iniquity – Man tries ascending to God.

Jesus poses a question that is directed to His Church. . .

“When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8

SATAN'S ANGELS

Johan Malan

It is quite obvious that in his war against the saints Satan has a very active department of religious affairs. He and his accomplices (demons as well as deceived human beings who act as false prophets) pretend to be angels of light who come from God with special powers and a message of peace and goodwill. They cleverly disguise themselves as prophets and Christian leaders who came to bring to the world spiritual renewal through signs and wonders.

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

Deception of this nature has occurred since the very beginning of the church age. According to the Bible, it will vastly increase during the end-time. Special efforts are now made to deceive all people by way of signs and wonders, as well as a message of world-wide peace and unity, into accepting the coming universal Messiah of all faiths. He will be the Antichrist who will unite all religions. Jesus earnestly warned against this satanic deception.

Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many... For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” (Matthew 24:4-5, 24)

Spiritual deception in the name of Jesus Christ is rapidly on the increase in the world. In the light of this very common strategy of the devil we are admonished not to accept any person or his message on face value. Investigate the matter thoroughly in order to expose its roots. Jesus said: “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matt. 7:15). Outwardly they pretend to be true prophets who serve the church in the name of the Lord Jesus, but inwardly they are completely unsaved and false. Money and fame are their gods, and they don’t have true Christian principles.

Jesus describes the final exposure and eternal doom of these deceived hypocrites on judgment day. Although they even cast out devils as practicing ministers of religion, they are agents of the kingdom of darkness with the assignment to mislead and confuse people.

Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out devils? And in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:22-23)

The deception of false prophets amounts to a complete misrepresentation and falsification of Jesus. His name is used but another doctrine is attached to it under the direct influence of deceiving spirits from Satan, The result is a great falling away from the true faith.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy.” (1 Tim. 4:1-2)

How are people who hold traditional Christian views being deceived into believing false doctrines? Paul clearly answers this question and indicates that Satan’s deception is the motivating force behind the distortion of the Bible.

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his [craftiness], so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.” (2 Corinthians 11:2-4)

The following are examples of the false Jesus’ that are proclaimed these days, as well as the false gospels associated with them.

False Jesus	False Gospel
A Jesus without the cross. He is only a good spiritual leader and a moral example that we should always follow.	A gospel in which the atonement for sin on the cross is not emphasized. Rebirth is substituted by baptism and good works.
A Jesus who only delivers people from political oppression, social injustice, and economic suffering by means of human reforms and even revolutions.	A liberation theology (contextual theology, social gospel, or revolutionary theology) in which political liberation and social justice are the main objectives.
A Jesus who is a sinner. He does not call people to repentance and can’t save them from their sins. This falsification of Jesus is evident in film shows such as <i>Jesus Christ Superstar</i> , <i>The Last Temptation of Jesus</i> , and <i>Jesus of Montreal</i> .	A humanistic gospel in which sin is explained as human freedom of expression, and not as something inherently evil. Repentance is unnecessary. Jesus is not God and is humanistically depicted on the same level as sinful and mortal man.
A Jesus whose main mission is to heal people and make them rich and prosperous to live a trouble-free life on earth.	A prosperity gospel and kingdom now theology in which believers become like little gods who can manipulate cosmic powers.
The universal Jesus or cosmic Christ of all faiths. He will unite Christianity with Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and all the other religions by claiming their messianic titles.	A gospel of universalism which teaches that all religions worship the same Creator God. They also await the same cosmic messiah who will unite humanity on a spiritual level.

The above-mentioned false Jesus’ and false gospels are quite clearly not promoted by the Holy Spirit but by deceiving spirits from Satan’s kingdom. They disguise themselves cleverly and imitate the work of the Holy Spirit. Their

strategy is that people should not recognize them and remain under the false impression that the power of the Holy Spirit is manifesting among them. The deceiving spirits work through false prophets who outwardly seem to be godly men who can also preach very well. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

These spirits and their human agents frequently use the name of Jesus, but they disregard the cross and do not convict people of their sin. They will rather make them laugh and do all sorts of funny things. Jesus is depicted as the one who can do mighty works for them and also give His healing and reigning power to them. Different kinds of spiritual gifts are indiscriminately offered to entire audiences.

Apart from the fact that the deceiving messages are proclaimed by false prophets who were never Christians (Matthew 7:23), the Bible also indicates that certain Christian ministers will depart from the faith that they previously confessed, and that for the sake of popularity and special spiritual gifts they will give heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4:1).

Peter refers to these fallen pastors who will bring in damnable heresies, thereby “denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of” (2 Peter 2:1-2).

The shocking fact is that the false teachers are not rejected because of their heresies, but they will enjoy considerable public support. Because of their popularity and ‘success’ they will become puffed-up and arrogant, and ridicule the evangelical preachers who do not support the new movement because they still uphold the sound doctrine of the way of the cross. The false teachers of our time even go as far as to say that those who oppose them are resisting the Holy Spirit and are provoking the anger of God.

There are a number of reasons why the false teachers enjoy large public support. Many of them do spectacular signs and wonders, thereby leaving the impression that they have been specially anointed by God for their ministry in these crucial last days. They promise the most tremendous powers and gifts to all people, and draw large crowds with their sensational statements and promises.

Another reason why people like the false teachers is because they all have sub-Christian standards for salvation. It is not made difficult for members of the public to become Christians and enjoy the blessings of God. In most cases they don’t even have to confess their sins. These lies and Christian fables suit most of the people. They quickly adapt to the distorted views and lowered standards, and strongly support the popular false apostles who comfort and entertain their audiences without disturbing them about their sins.

Paul exhorted Timothy to keep on proclaiming the true gospel, and endure the afflictions and tribulations that will be imposed upon him by the false teachers who are deceiving the people with their many lies and false doctrines.

“Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make a full proof of thy ministry” (2 Timothy 4:2-5).

A person who stands firm on his Christian convictions and engages in spiritual warfare will endure afflictions and persecution because of the truth. Confrontation with the forces of darkness is inevitable if you do the work of the Lord. Paul says, *“Fight the good fight of faith”* (1 Timothy 6:12). Take up the sword of the Word and the shield of faith, and keep on resisting the devil and all the plots and lies that have been devised to undermine the kingdom of God.

This article was an excerpt from the booklet entitled, SPIRITUAL WARFARE – available through this ministry.

FOLLOWING AFTER TRUTH

Jewel van der Merwe

The simplicity of the truth of the Gospel has kept the saints down through the ages. While theologians have argued and kingdoms have risen and fallen, the Pearl of Great Price has continued to glow in the embers of time beckoning those who are willing to walk in the Light and accept that which has value above all the treasures of earth.

Most of us have to deal with the “real world” every day. The things that we have to spend so much are those things that are transient. They will soon pass away. Yet those are the things which the world systems are taken up. God, in His great mercy, has given us space to repent, to turn from our foolish ways and cleave to Him and draw strength from the Fountain Head.

Unfortunately the Church has also become enamored with the World System. Human response to subjective experience is given validity over objective truth based upon the Word of God. The Scriptures are being twisted and used to manipulate folk into believing they are being “touched” by God, when in fact, they are being led on a Gnostic journey into self. Why are pastors waffling in the wake of the rising tide of paganism, neo-orthodoxy and pseudo-religions? Could it be because they have left their First Love? Has their hooking up via satellite to “participate” in a localized “move of the Spirit” become more important than leading a congregation before the Lord in righteousness and girding the loins with truth?

Confusion is reigning! Why can't we question? Has the momentum become so great that there is no place for sanity? Has truth fallen in the streets? (see Isaiah 59:14). Jeremiah describes the false prophets of his day:

Their tongue is as a arrow shot out: it speaketh deceit, one speaketh peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait. Jeremiah 9:8

You may say, "but it all sounds so spiritual" or "perhaps God is doing a New Thing"! Better still, "the wineskins are being renewed for the new wine"!

Rather, there has been an unleashing of something so powerful that will result instead in many turning away from the truth – rather than coming to an understanding of the truth which sets men free unto salvation.

A hint of the confusion is coming through in letters we receive and phone calls that come in to Discernment Ministries.

Here is a sample:

Thank you so much for the last article in DISCERNMENT. You truly spoke to my heart. I so yearn for the old ways, the simple ways, that sometimes I go to the Baptist church my daughter and her husband attend just to sing the old hymns that actually say something!

Like most pastors, ours went to – where else? [name omitted]. He came back with rock and roll choruses and then sent the church into debt some \$100,000 to remodel the sanctuary. Now we are supposed to walk into it tomorrow morning and have instant revival. This is based on the scripture that you can't put new wine into old wineskins. . . .

. . . he seems to care more for the sheepfold than for the sheep. . .

. . . I am so glad I don't stand alone in what I feel these days. Looking about, you sometimes feel you are alone, when everyone else applauds all the garbage.

Another letter:

This dimension of time we live in is so limited. I have a bright anticipation of the timelessness of Heaven. . . portions of your newsletters often come to mind as I sojourn in the last days church. I have refused to participate in the religious parade – the latest fashion in ministry, church gimmickry, and outrageous behavior in the name of our Lord. I am in the local church, but not of it. Try as I may to dialogue with the would-be kindred souls, I usually find my self disappointed and grieved. Right now, I am supposed to be excited about the [names omitted] visit to the Church. . . . Why isn't Jesus enough?

Recently, two women came to our church to minister, and at one service I missed, they had a three-wheeler driven into the Church and everyone was to "pop a

wheelie” or some such nonsense, and in the prayer line that was the blessing said over people who wanted “more from God”. Also, I understand the congregation was told you can address God by simply saying “hey” (very short & clipped “hey”). My son-in-law noted no Word was fed to the people.

My one or two cohorts in the church felt a while ago the outrageousness would increase, and it has! We are chagrined and wonder why so much given to the Church has turned into “vain show” and such licentiousness.

Of course, it is always an unholy mixture. And that is what can confuse a person. At times I think I am judgmental and overly concerned, especially since we are aware of the wheat and the tares. We have a solid moral pastorate, no scandals. But their faith is “wanting” faith – believing God for – on and on and on. It’s Jesus Christ, the object of our faith, who gets put in the waiting room, all too often.

A ministry like Discernment is quite difficult. There are many who think they are exercising “spiritual discernment” and use it for an occasion to give vent to criticism and venomous attack on fellow Christians. This is grievous and causes utmost harm to the body of Christ. It is usually when we have a beam in our eye we attempt the hardest to cast the mote out of our brother’s eye.

Yet, it is so important that the doors to our fellow Christians remain open. We need to be able to question and hopefully receive a satisfactory scriptural explanation to our queries. If Christians move into a “spirituality” where one does not, or cannot question, then they are wide open to deception. It is very tragic when one is marginalized just because he questions what is happening.

A wounded lady recently wrote:

“Recently at our church the emphasis has been on “revival”. The pastor went to [name intentionally omitted] and came back with the anointing. For us it was like being in a foreign church. We questioned the 10 new manifestations we were told to believe. . . . The Board voted to take us off membership unanimously. We were not allowed a meeting with the Board. We were not asked what we believe. Not one board member has called us to see how we are.

This is a small town. . . we constantly run into Church members and board member. . . It has been a frightening and devastating experience for all of us. . . we do believe the Scriptures would teach that we should be reconciled. . we have felt lied about, feel raped and alone and powerless.

The rest of her correspondence was just as heart rending. This is not an isolated incident. Many have written that they have had to leave their church as the result of their questioning what some determine to be revival. There have also been pastors who have been voted out because they did not “go with the flow”. According to today’s paradigm thinking, the old must make way for the “new”.

The horizon may look bleak. However, the Child of God is not to worry about becoming more and more estranged from the world and even from some other Christians. Instead, he rests in His Lord. He has peace that the world cannot give, so by the same token, can not take away. His mind and heart is fixed upon Jehovah, The Word of God is daily manna.

Jesus says:

BE OF GOOD CHEER; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD

LO I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN TO THE END OF THE EARTH.