

It was the Feast of Tabernacles and Jerusalem was crowded with religious Jews from everywhere. Jesus spent two days teaching in the temple. He slept that first night on the Mount of Olives and rose early in the morning to begin His teaching. The big question in Jerusalem was, "Who is this man?" I wonder if His disciples became discouraged by all the unbelief and all the accusations of the scribes and Pharisees. I wonder if they said to Jesus, "It's hopeless. This city and this religious system have shut You out. Let's move on!"

But on the second day they appeared to be a spiritual breakthrough. It seemed the Word was finally getting through: "*As he spake these words, many believed on him*" (JH 8:30). I can just see the excitement of His disciples thinking, "This is wonderful! Finally, a breakthrough! The beginning of revival!"

Today, many pastors would ask no further questions. These converts would be told that all they need to do was believe and they would be saved. They would be called "Christians." They would be told they were sons of God and on their way to heaven as fellow saints -- heirs and joint heirs!

But not so with Jesus! Jesus discerned counterfeit faith, counterfeit spirituality. He knew something was not right, not real, not truthful. It is as if Jesus said, "Hold everything! Not so fast with these "believers." They are not coming to Me with their hearts. There is a lying at work here. Let's judge it by the Word!"

The truth is, these "believers" were actually liars -- sin-bound liars! "*Then said Jesus to those Jews which*

# Counterfeit Spirituality

*believed on him...Ye have not known him; but I know him; and I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you...*" (JH 8:31,55) The Lord Jesus Christ will have nothing to do with surface faith. From John 8:31 to the end of the chapter, we see Jesus coming down on them ruthlessly, exposing their hypocrisy, showing them that their so-called "belief" in Him had not even touched their hearts.

The Lord's uncompromising stand against these Jewish "believers" has opened my eyes to what is going on in the church today. The same thing is happening in these last days: counterfeit conversions! These have resulted in bringing into the church a counterfeit spirituality that is satanic in origin. The gospel has been so watered down that even demons could belong to many churches! They could "amen" much of the preaching! James wrote: "*Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble*" (JAM 2:19)

Why is the church today polluted with rockers and punkers, wearing skin-tight spandex pants, spiked, purple hair, with sunken cheeks and demonic looks, who are bringing into the church the very same heavy-metal that is turning on a whole generation to crack and heroine? Why are they dancing in the aisles now to the sounds of

heavy metal, their eyes full of lust, calling it a spiritual experience?

Why is there no more difference between the ungodly and the religious? Christian television parades out a whole generation of celebrity believers. One day they're speaking at a spiritual convention, testifying on Christian TV of their belief in Jesus: and the next day they're seen performing in wicked TV shows and immoral movies, or playing and singing in wicked nightclubs and bars in Las Vegas!

What happened to separation and coming out from among them? Or sitting in the seat of the scornful? Isaiah, the soft-spoken prophet, would cry out today, "*Your watchman are blind... they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.Yea, they are greedy dogs....*" (ISA 56: 10-11)

There is no more "bark" in the pulpit! Too many shepherds are lazy, too pre-occupied with their own dreams and personal gain, refusing to cry out against the lying spirits, the phony faith, the counterfeit spirituality. We have lost God's holy "watchdogs," those who would chase away the demonic powers, fearlessly crying out against compromise! "They cannot bark!" These are asleep lazy on sin, and self-seeking. While they slept the enemy crept in and

planted a counterfeit gospel of mixture! What you're reading here is a "barking" message!

Jesus has revealed in this passage in John 8 how to tell what is counterfeit spirituality. It is distinguished by three distinct characteristics.

### **Blindness to Their Own Bondage And Slavery**

When Jesus told these so-called "believers" they could not be His disciples unless they allowed his Word to break their sins, they got offend. Jesus warned them: "You can be my disciples only if you continue in my Word until you are free from slavery. You are not free; you are bound. Your belief must include obeying My Word!"

They were slaves to sin, but would not admit it. Jesus said to them, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*" (JH 8:34) In Greek, it is better interpreted: "Whosoever practices (or continues) in sin is sin's servant."

The Lord tries to show them he wants more from them costless, mental belief. He wants to make them sons and daughters. In their minds they are already sons of God, saying, "God is our father! Bondage? Slavery to sin? Us? Never! We were never in bondage. How could you say such a thing?" They could say, "Master, you told Nicodemus, who is one of us, "*Whosoever believeth in (You) shall not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved*" (JH 3: 16-17) So we believed! Isn't that enough?

Jesus would have to say, "There was more I told Nicodemus. You have not taken to heart all My Word. I also said, "*Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God*" (JH 3:19-21).

According to Jesus, no one is a true believer until the Word has "place in his heart." Until the Word is both a hope and a terror to his

soul -- until he is committed to obey every Word proceeding out the mouth of God -- until the Word exposes and breaks the bondage of all sin, all tradition, all false doctrines! To these believers Jesus said: You seek to kill Me... because My Word hath no place in you". He is the Word. The Word was made flesh. If you kill off the Word of God in you, you are crucifying Christ! You are rejecting the demands of his Word. You are rejecting Him! Jesus is saying to them: You can't be a doer of my Word because you have never laid down your sin. You still take your orders from Satan. "*You do that which you have seen your father, the devil*" (JH 8:38-47)

### **A Great Majority of Church-Going Believers Have Never Been Saved!**

So many churchgoers have never been touched by the convicting Word of God. They are still slaves to old ways, old habits, old friends. They still have not changed one iota. They still have one foot in the world. They are living a lie and putting Christ to open shame. They do Jesus more harm than all the Hollywood mockers combined. Under the direct control of lying spirits, they are unable to see they are bound. And they become angry if you try to show them that they are going to be cast out as unprofitable servants. They are going to hell, thinking they are believers! They are damned by deception, trusting in false doctrines of security. These are more deceived than half-dead street junkies -- for they've allowed satan to hook them on a lie through a lying spirit from hell.

Here is the lie that ensnared Jews of Jesus' day and of certain "believers" today: "God is with me! All I have He gave me! All my talents and abilities are His gifts to me! I'm doing exactly what God wants me to do. God and I are on good terms! I'm a child of the King. God opened all these doors for me. Sure, perform in nightclubs. Yes, they drink and curse there. Yes, I am out there in the middle of wickedness. But God put me there. I am His representative. God told me it's all right. Bars and clubs? Yes! I take Jesus with me. Sure I play roles in off-color TV and

movies, but that's not real me! The real me is a lover of Jesus!"

It's all a big lie and it's the worst kind of counterfeit spirituality. There has been no surrender, no separation, no heartbreak over sin, laying down the past life! Jesus tells it like it is: You people really don't hear it. You don't stop and let it sink in. It means nothing to you! You people think you are my disciples, but you're not. "*If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him*" (1.JH 2:15) God said through Malachi: "*...If then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?...*" (MAL 1:6)

They had no sense of need then or now. To them there is no need to repent or to change -- nothing to lay down or forsake. They simply pick up all their worldly ways and follow Jesus. These kind use Jesus as an enhancer of their own selfish ways. He is seen not as an emancipator to set them free, but as one added to what they already have -- one who will enhance their talents, open doors, bless, add new dimension to their careers. They pray for God to make them successful in their careers of sin!

The great majority of so-called "Christian" rock groups could not make it in the secular world. So they use religion and Jesus to manipulate the masses of poor, misguided, shepherd-less Christian youth in order to build a name and a career. They would cross over to the secular market at the first opportunity if the devil would put a lucrative contract under their noses! Hear Christ: "*You are doing the deeds of your father the devil.*" Jesus hath nothing to do with it. It's all directed from hell!

### **They Won't Even Believe Jesus When He Calls Them Fornicators and Idolaters!**

Jesus boldly spoke out to them, "What you are doing is of the devil. All these deeds you think are God-approved are deeds of the father of lies. "*Ye do the deeds of your father*" (JH 8:41)

They became indignant: "*...We be not born of fornication: we have one Father, even God*" (JH 8:41) Listen to their excuses: "We are doing nothing wrong! We are not evil; we love God! We see absolutely

nothing wrong in doing these things. The devil is not in us. He is not directing us! We are children of God -- special, chosen." Jesus doesn't buy it! He says, "I made it clear who My children are. My sons are free from all ties to this world. My sons are not unequally yoked with unbelievers. My sons have no fellowship with the unrighteous. My sons have no communion with workers of darkness. My sons refuse to take My temple into dens of idolatry. My sons are separated from the world. They do not touch the unclean thing." (See 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

They said, "We are not committing idolatry. God speaks to us!" They were hopelessly blind to their horrible sin.

Jesus seems exasperated with them. "**Why do ye not understand my speech?**" (JH 8:43) In other words, why isn't My word convicting you? Why can't you hear such plain, simple words? "... **Because ye cannot hear my word**" (JH 8:43) They were past hearing -- their ears were shut! Why could they not hear and understand? Why could they not understand that Jesus was saying to them that they were the devil-directed idolaters? "**He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God**" (JH 8:47)

Jesus warns that all idolatry among believers is personally directed by the devil. Immediately after telling these "believers" they were not hearing truth, He tells them where their direction is coming from. "**Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do... When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it**" (JH 8:44)

I received a letter from a man crying out in desperation over a certain besetting sin. He asked in the letter, "Is this an outside influence or is it my own wicked heart?" Many Christian homes permit "an outside influence" to rule.

In all kindness, I ask you, who told you it is okay to sit for hours, drinking in filth in front of the TV? Who told you it is idolatry to watch shows that are totally corrupt? Was it Jesus who told you, "It's okay to watch a few bloody violent, sensual movies? You are a mature believer

-- you won't get hooked"? Who said it? Who put you at ease? Who is it that's speaking through me right now, barking so loudly, crying out, "It's idolatry! It's not legalism! Get rid of all outside influences!" Is it the devil preaching this to you? Is this a word out of hell that tells you to wake up? If it is of God, you will hear it -- believe it -- act on it -- and be changed by it!

Who told you it's okay to flirt with another man's wife or someone else's husband? Who told you it's okay to walk out on your vows? Who told you it's okay to bring ungodly videos into your home? Who told you it's okay to slip out occasionally to go night-clubbing? Was it God? Or was it the devil?

Let me tell you what shakes my soul. Jesus is speaking to those confessing to be believers, saying, "You are of the devil. You are doing the lusts of your father." Are you blind to what you are doing, making excuses like, "That's not me! I love God. I'm not a fornicator!" How God must grieve as millions of "Christians" are sinning, flirting with the devil, becoming hard, and blindly going about their own ways, saying, "I'm okay. Everything is all right. God is still with me. I'm not wicked. I'm not an idolater!"

#### **The Hatred That Should Have Been Directed Toward Their Own Sin Was Directed Against Reproof!**

They tried to switch the blame by crying, don't judge! "**Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?... Whom makest thou thyself**" (JH 8: 48,53)

This is the device Satan still uses today to cover up sin. What they were saying to Jesus was this: "You are the one who is wrong! We are not led by Satan -- You are! It is the devil urging You to judge us. It's a sin to judge. Who are You to judge us! We know we are of God!"

This clever device is being used by devil in these last days to cover up many false doctrines. He uses it to cover up secret sins in the pulpit and pew. They cry everywhere today is, "Don't judge! Satan is trying to hinder unity. It is a sin to judge. Holiness preachers are in the wrong. They are self-styled judges!"

Jesus is the Word and the Word was judging and reproofing their sins. And instead of letting the Word purge and heal them, they protected their pride and kept their sin! Then they tried to make the prophet of God look like the sinner! Yes, the Bible says: "Don't judge." But then it quickly explains: "**Don't judge after the flesh; I judge no man** (that way). **And yet if I judge, my judgement is true...I judge many things to say and to judge you...**" (JH 8:15-16, 26) Paul said: "**Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them**" (EPH 5: 11)

Paul further said, "**I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 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 unto fables**" (2.TIM 4: 1-4)

Satan's great priority today is to silence all reproof, to shut the mouths of all prophets and watchman, and to discredit all preaching against sin by saying it is too judgmental.

If you are not on guard, the enemy or some deluded believer will try to tell you, "Don't go to Time Square Church! Their preaching causes division! They don't believe in unity. They are putting other pastors down!" We say with Paul: "...**(We) watch for your souls, as they that must give account...**" (HEB 13:17) "**For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves even a prophet of their own said, The Creteans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith**" (TIT 1 10-13)

To judge after the flesh is to judge vindictively. This is often meant arrogant, and self-righteous. This is the kind of judging the Word forbids. But to judge righteously is to judge redemptively. This is born

of love: first, of love for his precious Word -- then, of love for those you weep for because you see them in danger.

Holy judging comes from a broken heart. It says, "I tell you the truth; so you can be free and greatly used by God." Jesus had to tell them the truth that they were hypocrites, liars, fornicators, children of satan, and blind! Yet His love for them was so strong, even though they got so angry: "***Then took they up stones to cast at him...***" (JH 8:59) But Jesus, to His final day, wept over them. He kept coming

back, beseeching, begging, pleading, and wooing them!

I asked the Holy Ghost to give me the key to understanding this eighth chapter of John. It is as simple as this: The counterfeit believer is one who won't let go of his life -- while the true believer holds nothing back from Jesus! Counterfeits believe in Jesus, that He is God. They accept all the Word, but never act on it. The word does not affect them in the least!

It's possible to believe in Jesus, yet not confess Him to the world. "Among the chief rulers also many

believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue (put out of a job?): For they loved the praise of man more than the praise of God" (JH 12:42-43) May God help us to be honest before Him and give us willingness to be searched and reproved by His Word.

The world needs the witness of true spirituality -- true holiness -- without any mixture of hypocrisy.

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