

## THE OFFICE OF A PROPHET : PART ONE

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : July 4, 1998

Last Updated : February 15, 2012

Human Fallibility, Seriousness Of Being A Teacher, Scoffers, The Lord's Vessels, Jeremiah And Hananiah, Micaiah And False Prophets, Modern False Prophets, Accuser Of The Saints, His Word Endures, Moses And Other Examples Of Godly Humility

If there is one thing I would like to make clear to anyone who chooses to study my writings, it is that I recognize my own fallibility. I realize that I could be wrong about some things. This is particularly true regarding my personal understanding and interpretation of the Endtime prophecies. At this point in time, there are simply too many unknowns which prevent all of us from being overly adamant in some of our views concerning the final events which will soon bring this current age of man to a close. As much as we each would like to be right, and even now believe that we are right, we must humbly admit that until these things actually happen, we do not know with one hundred per cent certainty. Lord help me if I should ever boast that I know it all. To make such a preposterous claim would undoubtedly be the epitome of self-righteous pride. To teach the Word of God is a very serious responsibility which should not to be taken lightly by anyone; for as the Apostles Paul and James wrote in their Epistles:

". . . we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

1 Corinthians 8:1b-2, KJV

"My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."  
James 3:1, KJV

In the above verse, the word "masters" is derived from the Greek word "didaskalos", pronounced did-as'-kal-os, which actually means a teacher of God's Word. Due to some of the controversial and passionate topics which I have chosen to write about, my humility may not always be apparent in some of my articles; however, you should realize that to expose the lies and hypocrisy of the modern-day political, economic and religious systems of man requires a certain amount of personal conviction; and it does not indicate that one has denied or forgotten his own weaknesses and sinful condition. Let me assure you that I am most certainly fully aware of my status before the Lord. I am reminded of the following words spoken by King David and the Apostle James:

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me."

Psalms 51:2-3, KJV

"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."

James 1:23-24, KJV

Being a bearer of the Word of God is a two-edged sword; and sometimes the enemies of Christ try to soften the conviction they feel in their own hearts by using the one edge of that sword to try to invalidate what one of God's children is saying to them. The way they normally do this is by accusing the Lord's emissary of being proud, or self-righteous, or boastful, arrogant, hypocritical, judgmental, irrational, etc. These hard-hearted people feel that if they can make the messenger look bad enough, or silly enough, or perhaps uneducated and not in agreement with scientific "fact"; if they can simply ridicule him enough; it will neutralize the word of the Lord which the messenger is sharing with them. Unfortunately, they fail to realize that the person who is speaking to them is only serving as the Lord's vehicle. He is simply a vessel in the Hand of the Potter to be used as the Lord sees fit. Consider what the Apostle Paul wrote in several of his Epistles:

"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

Romans 9:20-21, KJV

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

2 Corinthians 5:20, KJV

God can use whosoever He sees fit; and as I point out in "The Only Credentials You Need!", He usually chooses those who are least likely to meet with success in the eyes of the world. Throughout the Bible we find examples of God's chosen man of the hour being harassed and questioned by those who refuse to heed the warnings of the Lord. The basic attitude of these gainsayers always seems to be "By what right to you say these things to us? What makes you think that God sent you? God hasn't spoken to you!". Consider, for example, the Prophet Jeremiah, who for forty years faithfully warned the ancient Israelites to humbly submit themselves to the forces of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. On one particular occasion, Satan raised up a false prophet by the name of Hananiah in order to contradict Jeremiah, and look what happened to him:

"Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way . . . Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest

this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD. So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month."  
Jeremiah 28:10-11, 15-17, KJV

Shortly after the above event, the Lord further exposed the lies of the false prophets of Israel who dared to mock the true messenger of the Lord, when He again spoke through the mouth of the Prophet Jeremiah saying:

"For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD."  
Jeremiah 29:8-9, KJV

Later, when Jeremiah tried to warn the remaining Jews not to flee down into Egypt in order to escape the judgments of the Lord via the hand of the invading Babylonian forces, he was again accused of being a liar and a false prophet:

"And it came to pass, that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, even all these words, Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshai, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there:"  
Jeremiah 43:1-2, KJV

As both the Bible and secular history indicate, the forces of King Nebuchadnezzar did indeed go into northern Africa in order to subdue Egypt and her allies. Another good example of God's true Prophet being maligned by the false prophets can be found in the story of King Ahab of Israel, and King Jehoshaphat of Judah. Evil King Ahab had determined to fight against Ben-hadad, the king of Syria whom he had defeated in battle on several previous occasions. Being a righteous king who feared the Lord, Jehoshaphat suggested that they inquire of the Lord first regarding the matter. Upon seeking counsel from about four hundred of Ahab's politically-correct false prophets, notice what they say to king:

"Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."  
1 Kings 22:6, KJV

Not being satisfied with their response, King Jehoshaphat made further inquiry. Ahab then informed Jehoshaphat that there was another Prophet by the name of Micaiah whom he didn't particularly care for, the reason being that he never prophesied anything good for the king:

"And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah

the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so."  
1 Kings 22:7-8, KJV

The fact that Micaiah was a true Prophet of God was not the least bit important to King Ahab. He preferred to be lied to by his politically-correct false prophets. He had absolutely no interest in the truth because his mind was already made up. Regardless of what the Lord may have thought concerning the matter, Ahab was determined to go up and fight against Ben-hadad. At first, Micaiah was somewhat hesitant to reveal the truth, and thus he lied to the two kings; however, after being prodded by King Jehoshaphat, he finally told them that Ahab would be defeated and killed. King Ahab's response to this un nerving prophecy was the following:

"And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?"  
1 Kings 22:18, KJV

King Ahab's reaction is typical of some people today who likewise hate God's true messengers, and who accuse them of being false prophets of doom and destruction. These people also prefer to be lied to by their phony psychics and New Age false prophets and gurus who continue to promote the lies of peace and safety and human enhancement to a "feel good" materialistic society. Because they dare to speak the truth, God's messengers of today also face persecution and ridicule, just like Jeremiah, Micaiah and many other true Prophets of old. However, notice what the Apostle Paul wrote regarding the false prophets of the Endtime who prefer to lull everyone to sleep with their words of comfort and well-being:

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."  
1 Thessalonians 5:3, KJV

In fact, if we make another comparison to ancient Israel before Jerusalem was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar, we discover that the people purposely wanted to be deceived by their political and religious leaders. Is it possible that a similar situation exists in the world today in a country which claims to be God's people? Notice the similarities between the words of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Apostle Paul:

"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"  
Jeremiah 5:31, KJV

"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 Timothy 4:3-4, KJV

In the case of King Ahab, Micaiah then went on to reveal how the Lord had purposely sent a lying spirit to speak through the mouths of the four hundred false prophets. Why would the Lord do such a thing? Well, as the old saying goes, a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still. The Lord knew that it was useless to try to change Ahab's mind. I am sure He could have if He had really wanted to, but that would have interfered with King Ahab's freedom of personal choice. Thus, just as the Lord had spoken through the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah many years before, He chose Ahab's delusion for him:

"I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not."  
Isaiah 66:4, KJV

After being further abused for daring to speak the truth, just like the Prophet Jeremiah, Micaiah was also thrown into prison. In fulfillment of the words of the Lord's messenger, the story ends with King Ahab being slain in battle, thus verifying the status of Micaiah as a true Prophet of God. Not only was Ahab's blood lapped up by the dogs as it was washed from his chariot, but his evil wife, Queen Jezebel, was also eaten up by dogs a short time later. As I have pointed out before, the criteria for determining who is a true Prophet of God can be found in the following words spoken by Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy, as well as in those spoken by the Prophet Ezekiel some nine hundred years later:

"And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."  
Deuteronomy 18:21-22, KJV

"And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them."  
Ezekiel 33:33, KJV

The stories of Jeremiah and Micaiah are just two examples of how God's true Prophets and Messengers have always been questioned, scoffed at, and vilified by those to whom they have been sent to warn. You might also be interested in reading the story of the Prophet Elijah and the four hundred and fifty false prophets of Baal, which is found just before the story of Micaiah. By the time of the New Testament, the self-righteous leaders of Israel had become so haughty and lifted up in their pride, that they thought it a small thing to question and accuse the very Son of God time and time again. Consider this classic example where Jesus left them totally speechless due to His quick thinking and Wisdom of the Spirit:

"And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto

them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."  
Matthew 21:23-27, KJV

In these Last Days in which we are now living, the situation has not changed. If anything, the devil has become much more bold and vicious in his accusations against the true Saints and Messengers of the Most High God; after all, as we are told by both Jesus and John, he is the Father of Lies and the Accuser of the Saints:

". . . He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."  
John 8:44b, KJV

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."  
Revelation 12:10, KJV

Those who reject the vehicles whom the Lord has chosen to use in order to warn this final perverse generation, need to remember that they should not be looking at the messengers themselves, but rather they should be listening to the message that the messengers bear. These enemies of Christ can howl and scream and yell all they want. They can scoff at and ridicule the messenger, and debase and humiliate him in the company of their anti-God friends; but in the end, the Truth of the Word of God will indeed prevail; for as we are told in His Word:

"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven . . . Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever."  
Psalms 119:89, 160, KJV

"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."  
Psalms 138:2, KJV

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"  
Numbers 23:19, KJV

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"  
Isaiah 46:9-10, KJV

I daresay that despite the way that some of them have been glorified and glamorized by modern organized religion, as well as by the cinematographic industry, all of the true Messengers of God since ancient times, were aware of their lowly condition. They were all conscious of the fact that it was only the anointing of God upon them which made them who and what they were. While we are told that Moses originally relied upon his own strength and wisdom in order to liberate the Hebrew captives from Egyptian bondage, after forty years of being molded in the Hands of God, we are told that he became the meekest man upon the face of the Earth. When the Lord called him through the burning bush, Moses did not want the job. In fact, he questioned how the Lord could possibly use him; and argued that the people would never believe him. He even argued that he was too slow of speech, which some people have interpreted as meaning that Moses stuttered. In short, Moses told the Lord to go and use someone else. All of this is clearly evident by the following verses:

"And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not."  
Acts 7:22-25, KJV

"And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"  
Exodus 3:11, KJV

"And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee."  
Exodus 4:1, KJV

"And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue."  
Exodus 4:10, KJV

"And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send."  
Exodus 4:13, KJV

"(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)"  
Numbers 12:3, KJV

Despite Moses' pleadings, the Lord placed His anointing upon him, and used Moses to deliver the nation of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. In another example, we are told that the fiery Prophet Elijah fled from evil Queen Jezebel; despite the fact that he had just slain four hundred and fifty false prophets of Baal with the sword. In the First Book of the Kings, we find the following verses:

"And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal

how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant" there."

1 Kings 19:1-3, KJV

John the Baptist, the Lord's flaming evangelist of the New Testament, also recognized that by himself he was nothing; and humbly bowed himself in submission once Jesus Christ had revealed Himself to the nation of Israel. Consider some of the things that he said regarding himself:

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:"

Matthew 3:11, KJV

"He must increase, but I must decrease."

John 3:30, KJV

Looking at another example, the Apostle Paul was clearly one of the most influential and powerful leaders of the First Century Church. Despite the important position which he occupied, Paul was quick to admit his human weaknesses and shortcomings. He readily recognized that without God's Divine Anointing upon him, he was absolutely nothing :

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

1 Corinthians 15:9, KJV

"For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."

2 Corinthians 10:10, KJV

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Romans 7:24, KJV

Despite their elevated position over humanity, we are told that even the Angels of God refuse to accept recognition, or to be worshipped by we humans. The following sets of verses are particularly useful for sharing with those of the Roman Catholic faith who have erroneously elevated Mary, the mother of Jesus, to the supposed status of "co-redemptress" or "mediatrix", thus making her almost equal to Jesus Christ Himself. I encourage you to read the article "Mary Worship, Christianity and Roman Catholicism":

"And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?"

Judges 13:17-18, KJV

"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto

me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."  
Revelation 22:8-9, KJV

Finally, we look to our primary example of humility; that is, to Jesus Christ Himself; who also took upon Himself the lowly form of a servant, and who humbly admitted that He was nothing without the Power of His Father:

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."  
Matthew 11:29, KJV

"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."  
Mark 10:45, KJV

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."  
John 5:30, KJV

"So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."  
John 13:12-17, KJV

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:"  
Philippians 2:5-7, KJV

In the second half of this article, I will continue this discussion by contrasting the differences between the humility of the Prophets and Messengers of the past and modern man worship, as well as by delving into such topics as the various sins of the Roman Catholic church, doctrinal dogmatism, flexibility and unity, the corruption of the Gospel, spoon-fed Christians, spiritual growth through faith in the Word, the faith of our children, and the faith of gold. I trust that you will join me.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

THE OFFICE OF A PROPHET : PART TWO

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : July 4, 1998

Last Updated : February 15, 2012

Man Worship, Pope Worship, RCC And Paganism, RCC - Robber Of The Poor, RCC And Materialism, RCC And Sexual Perversion, RCC And Alcoholism, Doctrinal Dogmatism Flexibility and Unity, Corruption Of The Gospel, Spoon-fed Christians, Spiritual Growth, Faith and The Word, Our Children's Faith, Golden Faith

Sad to say, despite all of these clear examples of humility found throughout the Bible, there are some people today who claim to represent the Lord, and who claim to teach the true Word of God, who manifest absolutely no signs of humility whatsoever. As Jesus said, they love to wear long robes, and to receive the praises of men; just like the Scribes and the Pharisees of the New Testament era:

"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation."  
Luke 20:46-47, KJV

"Nevertheless 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: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."  
John 12:42-43, KJV

I am reminded of the Roman Catholic pope who is carried around on his "sedia gestatoria", that is, the portable throne which is used in certain ceremonies such as during the coronation of a new pope, during the pope's entries to St. Peter's Cathedral, and during other public functions as well. This man is praised and worshipped by millions of Catholics around the world! This act of wanting to see the pope when he is driven around in his pope-mobile is nothing short of man worship. It is putting faith in a man, instead of in God where it really belongs; but then, this is truly the way of the world as I point out in such articles as "The Only Credentials You Need!".

Knowing the evil which lurks in the heart of man, one can only wonder how the pope can possibly receive so much praise and attention without being corrupted by it. After having his hand kissed so many times, one would think that the pope would have to either find the act totally repugnant, and be totally humbled by such admiration and praise, or else he would have to be wholly given over to his pride and vanity. Personally, despite the false claims made by the Roman Catholic hierarchy of "apostolic succession", I cannot imagine for a moment, the Apostle Peter having ever sat upon such a throne. It certainly wouldn't follow Christ's example of washing each other's feet, or any of the other examples of humility which I cited previously.

What some of you might find interesting, is the fact that this custom of carrying the pope on his portable throne appears to have connections with the ancient Roman "sedia curulis" on which newly-elected consuls were carried through the streets of Rome. As I point out in other articles, many Roman Catholic traditions are adopted directly from pagan practices and beliefs which were later integrated into Christianity when Emperor Constantine the Great declared it a "religio licita", or legal religion. This was done in order to appease the masses, and to bring as many people as possible under the umbrella of the "holy mother church". Thus, contrary to what was actually taught by Jesus Christ, the Roman Catholic Church has always been more interested in power and numbers, than in preaching the pure undefiled Gospel of Salvation. Even today the "holy mother church" allows the "natives" to continue with some of their local practices, as long as the "mother church" can control their minds and hearts.

Returning to the previous Scriptures, notice how Jesus also said "which devour widows' houses". If there is one thing which greatly disturbs me, it is the fact that in many of the messages supposedly received by so-called Catholic visionaries and charismatics, poverty is often stressed as being an important virtue. It is also a well-known fact that a large percentage of the Roman Catholic following consists of many of the poor people of the world who basically live a hand-to-mouth existence. Despite their lowly condition, these poor people are made to feel a moral and spiritual obligation to tithe to the "holy mother church". Partially through the worldwide act of tithing, the Roman Catholic Church has grown into one of the richest financial empires in the world! Truly, she has devoured widows' houses! This unhealthy desire for worldly abundance, or power, popularity and plenty, is in direct contrast to Jesus' own teachings in the Gospels when He said such things as the following:

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Matthew 6:19-21, KJV

". . . My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

John 18:36, KJV

The Apostle Peter, from whom the Roman Catholic hierarchy claims all popes have succeeded, also wrote the following lines which clearly expose the Roman Catholic Church's sin of a love for wealth and materialism at the expense of their poor flocks:

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

1 Peter 5:2-3, KJV

How can the Roman Catholic Church possibly justify its beliefs and practices in light of the Scriptures? Surely, if ever a religious organization perfectly fit the description of the church of Laodicea found in the Book of Revelation, it has to be none other than the Roman Catholic Church. Consider part of the message delivered to John by the Angelic Messenger:

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:"

Revelation 3:15-17, KJV

James also clearly pointed out that the people who are truly rich, are those who are rich in faith, and not in material abundance. Through his words, we see that just like today, even in the First Century Church there were those who were partial to the rich, while neglecting the spiritual needs of the poor:

"My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor . . ."

James 2:1-6a, KJV

What an accurate depiction of some worldly churches today which are more concerned with appearances, than with helping the physically and spiritually poor of the world. Aside from the Roman Catholic Church, I am thinking of certain American churches which are rich, white, and very prejudiced in their views. If all of these things weren't enough, consider the shocking news stories we often read concerning homosexuals, lesbians and pedophiles which have been knowingly permitted to perform their sinful deeds within the Catholic structure for years without ever receiving any kind of reprimand or demotion in their position. Thank God at least a few of these perverts are now being brought to justice. Consider this news capsule from the American news service CNN, that is, the Cable News Network:

----- Begin Quote -----

#### PRIEST CONVICTED IN DALLAS SEXUAL ABUSE CASE

"A former priest was convicted in Dallas Saturday of sexually abusing three altar boys in a case that already has produced the nation's largest civil judgment for clergy sex-abuse allegations. Jurors found Rudolph Kos, 52, guilty of three

counts of aggravated sexual assault and one of indecency with a child. According to testimony during a civil trial last summer, Kos sexually abused boys from 1981 to 1992. That trial led to a \$119.6 million judgment against Kos and the Catholic Diocese of Dallas."

----- End Of Quote -----

All of these terrible acts could have easily been avoided had the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy simply followed some of the advice given by the Apostle Paul two thousand years ago when he said:

"But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."  
1 Corinthians 7:9, KJV

Truly, due to their willful disobedience to the Scriptures in not allowing their priests and nuns to marry, the Roman Catholic Church has fulfilled one of the very things which the Apostle Paul prophesied would happen during the Endtime when he wrote to Timothy:

"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; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."  
1 Timothy 4:1-3, KJV

Many too are the stories of alcoholic priests who have gotten drunk while at a certain feast or public gathering where they are supposed to perform a certain function. If you can believe it, some priests are even said to have performed mass while in a drunken state, totally ignoring the following sound advice given in the Scriptures:

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares."  
Luke 21:34, KJV

"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."  
Romans 13:13, KJV

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;"  
1 Timothy 3:2, KJV

"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;"  
Titus 1:7, KJV

While it may appear to some that I have a preoccupation with exposing the hypocrisy of the Roman Catholic Church, I should point out that all of these things are not limited to that

organization alone. Some Protestant and other non-Catholic denominations are guilty of the very same things. This is indeed a sad situation; for while there are some spiritual leaders within organized religion who do take their position seriously, and who do try to faithfully feed their flocks with their current knowledge and understanding of the Holy Scriptures, these problems with materialism, hypocrisy, unbridled lifestyles, and imposing a double standard upon their flocks, have given them, and organized religion in general, a bad name. Thus, it should come as no surprise that a growing number of people who have a sincere faith in God, in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Bible, simply don't want to have anything to do with organized religion any longer.

As I mentioned towards the beginning of this article, another problem which currently exists within Christianity, concerns those people who have felt the call to be teachers of the Holy Scriptures. Contrary to the attitude of humility which I described earlier in this article, there are those who obviously believe that their word, or their doctrine, or their interpretation, is etched in stone, as if it were the direct Word of God. These people tend to be very rigid and totally inflexible in their views. Due to their own pride, they have elevated themselves to such a position, that if anyone should dare to question their interpretation of the Scriptures, they are looked down upon and condemned.

Personally, while I desire with all of my heart to fully understand the mysteries of the Word of God, particularly those Scriptures which deal with Endtime prophecies, and while I do my best to study and compare Scripture with Scripture, as I stated earlier, I must humbly admit that I can make no claim to having interpreted anything in the Bible with one hundred per cent accuracy. I feel that we all need to remain conscious of the fact that we are prone to error, simply because we are human, and not adopt a position of extreme adamancy as some people have done.

Of course, with everything I say, there is a balance. I am not suggesting that we should not stand firm concerning what we believe the Lord has truly shown us in His Word; however, we should possess the humility to admit when we are wrong, and the flexibility to change our views when additional study of the Scriptures reveals that we are mistaken, or a little off-center in our interpretation. No one can deny that trying to understand eschatological events is a very complex issue. I am sure that the Lord, by His Holy Spirit, tries to help all of us to understand the same things in His Word, particularly in regards to the Endtime prophecies. I am reminded of something the Apostle Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."  
1 Corinthians 1:10, KJV

Unfortunately, because we did not live during the times of Christ and His First Apostles, and because we didn't learn from them directly, and because almost two thousand years

have passed since the original Gospel and revelations were given, there has been plenty of time for many false ideas, doctrines and practices to creep into our belief system; just as I have shown with the example of the Roman Catholic Church. As I explain in other articles such as "The Book of Enoch: Truth or Heresy?", some of these things crept in due to simple human error and misunderstanding, while others were intentionally and purposely meant to pervert the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, thus making it less ineffective. Additionally, this corruption of the Gospel was a result of compromise between the political and religious systems during the first centuries of the Christian era. It is for this reason that even the writers of the Epistles issued warnings to the Believers of their day such as in this example from the Apostle Paul:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."  
Galatians 1:6-9, KJV

The end result of all of this manipulation is that today, the Truth has been buried under a lot of theological rubble, erroneous traditions of men, philosophical meanders, and in some cases, outright lies. Due to these various factors, as well as to our own pride and resistance to change, our minds and hearts are sometimes filled with preconceived ideas, long-held cherished doctrines, and influences from others which prevent us from receiving a clearer understanding of what it is the Lord is trying to show us in His Word. I can speak from personal experience regarding these matters. For many years, I too embraced certain ideas which I have since discarded. This is because, like many people in organized religion today, I blindly accepted what was being taught to me without question. I was a spoon-fed Christian; however, once I began to really study the Scriptures on my own with the Lord's help, instead of having the Truth served to me, I began to see and understand some things in a new light. At the same time, let me again remind you that there is a balance to this view; for as we are told in the Word:

"A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight."  
Proverbs 11:1, KJV

When we are still young in our relationship with the Lord, what the Bible refers to as being babes in Christ, it is only natural that we need someone else more spiritually mature than ourselves to feed and instruct us in the ways of Truth. Both Jesus and the Apostle Peter exemplified this very well when they said:

"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."  
Matthew 19:14, KJV

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

1 Peter 2:2, KJV

Eventually, however, there comes a time when all parents expect their children to learn how to feed themselves, how to clothe and care for themselves, and how to eventually go out on their own as young adults in order to start their own families. As mature Christians, the Lord also expects us to learn how to feed ourselves, or perhaps better said, how to be fed directly by Him through a faithful study of His Word, so that we can be firmly established in the faith. In other words, when we are young in the Lord, just as with physical children who accept what they are taught by their parents, we also believe and accept what we have been taught by our priest, pastor, minister or Bible teacher. In a sense, our faith is really their faith, because we are believing as they believe, and understanding the Scriptures as they understand them. While this may be good and well for a time, what the Lord really desires of us is that we are fully persuaded of these things for ourselves. We must act and work according to our own faith based upon our personal knowledge of His Word. This is why the Apostle Paul wrote the following concerning the eating of meat:

". . . Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Romans 14:5b, KJV

"Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."

Romans 14:22, KJV

So as you can see, our faith must not simply be based upon what we have heard from others, but rather it must be based upon a certain knowing; and the only way that knowing comes is through a personal diligent study of the Word of God. This is how we each become fully persuaded of the Truth; for real faith comes only through hearing, or reading and studying, the Word of God. If our faith is only built upon what we have heard from others, then we may falter when the storm comes. Following are a few more verses which help to clarify these thoughts:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17, KJV

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15, KJV

"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Acts 17:10-11, KJV

For those of you who have young children, this concept is

particularly important. As Christian parents, we desire with all of our hearts that our children will grow up possessing a fear of the Lord, and a love for His Word; thus, in the few short years that they are with us, we try our best to fill their minds and hearts with the knowledge of the Lord. However, despite our best efforts, we must all realize that the day will come when our children will reach the age of accountability. At that time, they are going to have to decide on their own what they choose to believe. In that day, their faith is going to have to be based upon their own belief in, and acceptance of, the Word of God, because we will no longer be standing next to them saying "This is the Truth. This is what you must believe because I believe it." They are going to have to be fully persuaded of these things for themselves of their own free will, and not just because mom and dad say so. If we have been faithful shepherds during their formative years, hopefully, our children will make the right choice despite any opposition they may receive from antagonistic school friends, atheistic teachers, or anyone else who may come along in their lives and question their beliefs. Hopefully, as it is written in the Book of Proverbs, they will not depart from the Way they have been taught:

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."  
Proverbs 22:6, KJV

Hopefully, our children will be so filled with the Word and the Spirit of the Lord, that they will easily and readily be able to humbly yet convincingly provide the proper answers regarding their faith straight from the Bible:

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"  
1 Peter 3:15, KJV

As I have now made clear, the key is faith based upon a diligent personal study of, and an understanding of, God's Word. This is truly the only way that any of us can be fully persuaded of what we believe. This is the only kind of faith which will endure the storm and pass the hardest test. It is the faith of gold tried in the fire as mentioned by the Apostle Peter:

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"  
1 Peter 1:7, KJV

With this last thought, we have now come full circle in this discussion; for you see, in order for one to be a faithful and an effective Messenger or Prophet of the Lord, he must be firmly convinced of what he believes, and in Whom he has believed; precisely as the Apostle Paul wrote in his second letter to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy:

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that

which I have committed unto him against that day."  
2 Timothy 1:12, KJV

This is why the Prophets and holy men of old were able to endure the things which they did; for they knew in Whom they believed. There must be no room for doubt or vacillation whatsoever; for if there is doubt, the enemies of Christ will surely find it out and make use of it. We must know what we believe, and why we believe it; otherwise, we may be devoured by the roaring lion:

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"  
1 Peter 5:8, KJV

"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."  
2 Timothy 4:17, KJV

If you wish to remain safe from the jaws of the lion, and his demon-inspired emissaries in this perverse generation, you must faithfully read, study, believe in and memorize the Word of God! In this way, and in this way only, you will be founded upon the Rock, and you will not be ashamed in the Evil Day. You will keep the Heavenly Vision right up to the very end, despite anything they may try to do to stop you:

"He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock."  
Luke 6:48, KJV

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."  
1 Corinthians 10:4, KJV

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."  
Ephesians 6:13, KJV

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."  
Mark 8:38, KJV

"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."  
Hebrews 11:16, KJV

He's coming soon! Be thou faithful unto death, and He will surely give you a Crown of Life! I pray that this article has been a blessing and an inspiration to many.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>