

Message #14 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

“Ministers of Death”

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about ministers of death which are taking over the churches. Jesus prophesied of these ministers in the gospels, calling them false Christs and false prophets. The ministers of death are masquerading as ministers of faith, but they are not ministers of faith in God, but are ministers of faith in the Devil. Satan is their father, and they are worshiping Satan and encouraging today's church to also worship Satan.

Listen to what the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, concerning the mystery of iniquity. This mystery of iniquity is very important, especially for the people who make up today's Christian church, because the mystery of iniquity is here now in the church. Notice that this mystery of iniquity is a mystery, and therefore it is not easily seen. In order to see it, you have to look beneath the surface of the scripture and ask God to reveal it to you.

Let me read to you a portion of 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. I'll read some, and then we'll take a closer look at what these verses are telling us. Starting with verse 1 it says, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 That you not be soon shaken in mind, or troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as if from us, that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition.

Now notice that verse 3 states that two things will take place before Jesus comes back. First there will be a falling away of Christians from the truth of God, and secondly, that man of sin

will be revealed to God's people. Verse 8 calls this man of sin the wicked, or wickedness, and verse 7 calls him the mystery of iniquity.

Now, these two concepts, the falling away, and the revealing to the church of that man of sin, are important to Christians today. Not just because of the sorrow this will cause, but even more importantly, because these two events are taking place right now, in this current time, in today's current church. There is a great falling away in the church today because many Christians have forsaken the truth and have exchanged the truth for a lie. The lies have started to sweep over the church from one end of it to the other. The lies are in the church, and the ministers of death are preaching the lies from the very pulpits which were originally intended to be for delivering the truth of God.

Now let me start again in verse 3. It says, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition. 4 Who opposes, and exalts himself above, all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he, as God, sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

Did you catch that? Did you hear it? It says that the man of sin, who is the son of perdition, will sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." That man of sin is Satan. He's the son of perdition. He opposes God, and apposes anything and everything which is called God or is worshiped. He sits in the temple of God, showing himself as God. He's taking God's place on the throne. He's being worshiped instead of God. Verse 7 calls this man the mystery of iniquity. And this man of sin who is sitting on the throne of God in the temple is referred to as a mystery because he's not easily recognized. In fact, most Christians do not have the foggiest clue that the one sitting on the throne in many churches is not God, but Satan.

Let me read again, starting with verse 4. It says, "Who opposes, and exalts himself above, all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he, as God, sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was yet with you I told you these things? 6 And now you know what restrains that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity already works: only he who now restrains will restrain until he is taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Do you hear it? Can you see it? Do you have ears to hear? The Bible always says, "he that has ears to hear, let him hear." You must have ears to hear what the Bible is telling you, or you will continue to be deceived by the ministers of death in today's church. The Bible is telling us that there is a mystery of iniquity. It is a mystery. It is not easily seen. A mystery must be revealed. It must be discovered. A mystery doesn't lie around on the surface in plain sight. It takes spiritual ears to understand God's word, and God's word is telling us that there will be a mystery of wickedness which is nothing more than Satan himself who is masquerading as Jesus Christ and has taken God's place in the temple and is seated on the throne. Christians are worshiping Satan IN THE CHURCH, and they don't even know it!

But there's a reason that they don't know it. There's a reason that many of the ministers today are ministers of death and getting away with it. And the reason that the church is becoming overrun with these ministers is that the people of today who make up the body of Christ have been deceived. They are deceived because they have lost their first love. They have lost their love of the truth. The truth of God has been exchanged for the lies of Satan in order that the delicacies of earth can be had.

But then, how can Christians be so deceived? How can they be led away from Christ? Verse 10 tells us that it is because they do not have a love for the truth. They like the lies better. In the history of the church, Christians have always talked about the warnings of the man of sin and the mystery of iniquity sitting on the throne in God's temple, trying to show himself as God. Most of the ministers have tried to preach that these verses are referring to a physical temple, and that a literal, physical, temple would have to be rebuilt in Jerusalem and then the anti-Christ would occupy that physical throne. But this is the problem with the preachers of end time prophecy. The temple of God is not a physical temple made with hands. The temple of God is you and me. The temple of God is God's people. Jesus told us this. He said, "Know ye not that ye are the temple?" We are the temple that Christ dwells in, and the throne that God sits on is the throne of our hearts. The prophecy of 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, is a prophecy of today. Not a prophecy to be fulfilled some day in the future, but is being fulfilled right now at this very time.

The mystery of iniquity is already sitting on the throne of God, showing himself to be God, and the temple doesn't have to be built because it is already established in our hearts. The church of today is supposed to enthrone Jesus Christ on our hearts, but the church of today is beginning to enthrone Satan, and the ministers of death in the pulpits of the church are trying to teach commandments and doctrines of men instead of teaching the sure and pure, true word of God.

And what is the doctrine that the ministers of death are teaching? It is the doctrine of mammon. It is the doctrine of the love of money. It is a doctrine of get, get, get, instead of a doctrine of giving. It is a doctrine that teaches man to become greedy of gain instead of becoming a living sacrifice.

I want you to notice something. Every major minister of radio and television who preaches the message of riches are getting rich themselves, but notice where they get their money. They get their money from the people they preach to. Now think of this. The ministers tell the people that God wants to prosper them with financial riches, but what they don't tell you is where you're going to get the money to fulfill your desires for riches. You will have to go searching somewhere else than from the body of Christ though, because you aren't a minister. You are just a member of the church. But it is the ministers who will get rich off of the members of the church. Think about it. Your tithes, your offerings, are lusted after by the ministers of death. They are trying their best to get you to give them your money.

So, how do you get rich in today's church? It's simple. You become a minister of financial prosperity and take the money away from the other members of the church. Haven't you ever asked yourself how these prosperity ministers get their money? Hmm? Don't you see the

connection there? Don't you see that what the ministers of death are really doing is trying to get your money?

Jesus said that the love of money was the root of all evil. No, not just a bad thing in itself, but the root of ALL EVIL. All evil. Every bit of evil in this world stems from the love of money. Why? Why would Jesus equate the love of money with every bit of sinfulness? And the answer is this. What you have when you desire to be rich is a desire to get more for yourself. And in this world, money is the means for power. If you have money, you can get more of everything for yourself. Notice that it is rich men who are in places of power in the world today. And just for the record, show me a prosperity minister who has become rich from some source other than the members of the church. Just show me a prosperity minister who has become rich without becoming rich from tithes and offerings given by the members of the church!

It's no wonder that Jesus overthrew the money tables in the temple and drove out the moneychangers. I wish Jesus would drive the moneychangers out of the temple today. However, the only moneychanger that can be driven out of the temple in these last days is you, yourself. You see, you are the temple. And if there's any money business, or should I say, monkey business, going on in your temple, it's because you like the doctrine of prosperity. You like the doctrine of getting riches. I hope it's not you. I hope that whoever is listening to this today has better sense than to support the prosperity teachers in luxurious lifestyles. It's certainly a fact that no prosperity doctrine minister sends YOU his tithes and offerings so that YOU can be rich. No, he just tells you to think about money, and to think about being rich, and then makes a few remarks about how beneficial to God's work a lot of money can be. And you know what? Just by sticking in a few sentences here and there about riches being beneficial to spreading the gospel, the people of the church accept the doctrine, never even thinking that their own heart is hard as stone, and that they themselves are being deceived by these ministers of death because of what 2 Thessalonians 2:10 says, "because they received not a love of the truth."

It is the truth which will set you free. It is the lies of Satan that will put you in bondage. The ministers of death are preaching lies in place of the truth, trying to encourage riches in the body of Christ instead of encouraging us to be living sacrifices for Jesus.

2 Thessalonians, Chapter 2, starting in verse 9, tells us that the coming of Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven will not take place until AFTER Satan's working of great deceptiveness takes place. Satan will work, it says, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders. Think of it. Satan working with such extreme deception with so much power and with so many signs and lying wonders that it causes great numbers of the church to fall away. How about you? Will it also deceive you? Will you be deceived because you don't really have a love for the truth?

Now, I know most of you who are listening are not in this category. Most of you love the Lord with all your heart. But there are possibly a few who are listening today who are deceived into thinking that the riches of this world is what God has in mind for us. But let's look at some scriptures concerning money. Let's see if the Bible is telling us to try to get rich.

1 Timothy 6:3-11 says, “If any man teaches otherwise, and does not consent to wholesome words, which are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to doctrine which is according to godliness; 4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and striving of words, of which comes envy, strife, railing, and evil surmising, 5 Perverse disputing of men with corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: withdraw yourself from them. 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And let us be content with having food and raiment. 9 But they that desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: in which some, while coveting it, have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 11 But you, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.”

Do you hear this? Men who suppose that getting gain is a Godly thing are men with corrupt minds who are destitute of the truth. They don't have the truth. So why would you want to listen to them preach?

Here's Matthew 19:23-24. “Then said Jesus to his disciples, Truly I say to you, That a rich man shall, with difficulty, enter into the kingdom of heaven. 24 And again I say to you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”

So, do you want to be rich? Do you want to have a difficult time getting into heaven?

How about Luke 1:53 where Elizabeth is prophesying in Mary's presence and says, “He has filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he has sent away empty.”

Do you want to be sent away? Luke 6:24 says, “But woe unto you that are rich! For you have received your consolation.” Also, Matthew 13:22 talks about the sowing of seed and that when the sowing of seed is among thorns, the thorns rise up and choke the word. That's what the doctrine of riches does is to choke out the true word of God and replace it with lies. As soon as a person grabs hold of the doctrine of financial prosperity, he has succumbed to the desire for gain and has allowed Satan to light a fire in his heart for the love of money.

Love of money is the root of ALL evil, and it will cause the word of God to be choked out of you. The preachers of financial prosperity want you to send them money. They know that if enough greed can be established in you, then you will send them money. You will send money to them, not because they preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, but you will send money to him because you expect to get more money in return. The prosperity preacher tells you to sow the seed, and to expect great gains. But the seed you sow will be harvested by the minister. He will get rich, and you will get poorer. And he will not teach you to BE a living sacrifice, but he will make you a sacrifice for his own greed. As it says in Ezekiel 34, God is angry with the shepherds of his flock because instead of feeding the sheep, they have been eating the sheep. The shepherds of the flock who are preaching the prosperity doctrine are not feeding the sheep words of God

that will strengthen their souls, but are feeding the sheep with the lies of Satan that will strengthen the fleshly man and strengthen the desires for the things of this world.

Please understand that not every one of you who is listening today is a greed based Christian. Greed is rampant in the church today, but God still has his quote 7000 unquote who have not yet bowed the knee to baal. But what is going on? What is happening? Why is the church teaching a doctrine of money instead of a doctrine of self-sacrifice? And the answer is simple. God is testing the people of this world to show who really is a Christian and who is not. Revelation 3:9-10 says, “Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but lie; behold, I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. 10 Because you have patiently kept my word, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation, which will come upon all the world, to try those who dwell upon the earth.” Now, the word, temptation, in this last verse, means trial. It means to prove someone. What God is saying is that in the last days he will allow a trial of our faith to come upon everyone who claims to be a child of God in order to show who really is a child of God and who isn’t. What we are experiencing in the church today is what Revelation 3:10 is referring to, “a trial of our faith.”

And the question is, “are you really the living sacrifice God has called you to be?” Are you focused on the things of heaven, or are you motivated with a desire to be rich? Are you money minded or are you heavenly minded. The prosperity preachers are telling you to sow money in order to get more money, and many people jump at the chance, hoping to get more money. Then the prosperity preacher gets rich and the people who gave their money to him are still poor, and they’re also still trying to get rich. They believe the doctrine of riches because their hearts are covetous. Galations 6:8 says, “For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” You see, if you’re sowing seed to get more money, then you’re money minded, not heavenly minded, and as this verse plainly says, you will not reap life everlasting, but will reap corruption.

God is trying the hearts of men in order to separate the tares from the wheat. This is also prophesied to take place at the end of the world. However, the separating of the tares is taking place right now, and the people who are tares don’t even know it. God is testing the hearts of people to see if their hearts are covetous or not, and if they are, then they will be weeded out. This process of testing is going on now because the day of the Lord is at hand. Therefore, if you’re hooked by the hawking of the prosperity ministers, then you better get a grip on yourself before it’s too late. You are being tried. Hopefully, you will not be found wanting. Please! Please, please, please, don’t be fooled into exchanging the word of God for a doctrine of love of money. The love of money is the root of all evil. Don’t be lead down the pathway of death by the ministers of death. Choose life, before it’s too late. There is a great falling away taking place in the church right now. Please don’t become one of the statistics.