

Perilous Times in the Last Days
Religion in the Last Days
2 Timothy 3,4
Lesson II

To anyone who has read the K.J.V. of the Scriptures, the opening words of *2 Timothy 3:1* are well known. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.” J.B. Phillips translation of this verse reads: “But you must realize that in the last days the times will be full of danger.”

We believe those dangerous times and perilous times are here .Especially for the Church of Jesus Christ. We make that statement in the light of history.

“During the eighteenth century a marked change came over the Scottish Pulpit .The Moderates came into the pulpits. First, there was made by them a modification of Christianity, so as to harmonize it with culture. This was followed by a merely moral teaching, in which all doctrine was ignored, and dissertations on the virtues took the place of the exposition of the Scriptures. For the preaching of virtue, alas! did not make men virtuous, and those vices which are said to be most common among the lower orders of the Scottish people, became more prevalent than ever under such instructors. There were dissertations on “The Disorder of the Passions”, on “The Importance of Order in Conduct”, on, “Candor”, on “The Love of Praise”, on “Envy”, on “Friendship” and the like; but we have not a word on Repentance, Regeneration, or Faith.....”Such brought the decline of evangelicalism in Scotland.”

About one hundred years ago, in the days of C.H. Spurgeon, those moderates invaded the Baptist Union in England, and the “down-grade” as Spurgeon called it, began in that country. And according to one writer, the Baptist Union never recovered. At the same time the Moderates came to the United States and Canada. This movement found its strength in questioning the **authority of Scripture**. Thereby giving Scripture a secondary place. The Modernist preachers said: “The Bible is not supernaturally inspired. Genesis is a lie. Evolution is true. Christ’s blood means nothing. Jesus Christ was not Virgin born. He did not resurrect from the dead.” They rejected the teaching that the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice for the believer.

And we fear that this is happening again. We have a quote from a former Dallas Seminary professor who is quoted as having said: “In order to fulfill God’s highest purpose for our lives we must be able to hear his voice both in the written Word and the word freshly spoken from Heaven. Ultimately, the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture is demonic.” We believe such a statement is a direct contradiction of *2 Timothy 3:16-17*. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable...that the man of God may be perfect, **thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**” In that passage the sufficiency of Scripture is plainly stated. If Scripture will not furnish us nothing else

will. Until a little more than two-hundred years ago, no one who claimed to be a Christian ever questioned the supreme authority of the Bible.

Because of this questioning of Scriptural Authority, at the turn of the century, some godly men, unnamed to this day, published a series of books entitled “The Fundamentals.” At their own expense thousands of these books were not only printed but sent free of charge to preachers and Sunday school teachers in the English speaking world. And according to history, saved many from modernism.

Modernism began a world-wide movement to form a United Church *of the world*. At that time the cry was, “Christians unite.” To speak against the movement was to bring the wrath of men upon ones head. In Canada the first major step was taken when, in 1926, the United Church of Canada was formed. The cry at that time was “less doctrine and more unity.” It soon became evident that not only Bible doctrine but the Bible itself became less important. The result being best described by Malcom Muggeridge who said of his Church, “they agreed on almost everything because they believed almost nothing.”

At the close of 1997, we saw the fruit of a union not based on doctrine. I make reference to statements made by the then Moderator of the United Church. According to the reports the Moderator said: He did not believe that Jesus is God or the unique Son of God. He did not believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and was not sure if there is either a Heaven or a Hell.

There are basic facts in the Bible about Jesus Christ that one *must believe* in order to become a Christian. **Romans 10:9,10** says: “that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Thus anyone who does not believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is not saved, which means he is not a true Christian believer.

No Church or Church Organization sets the standards by which we measure who is or who is not a Christian. We must let the **Bible** and the Bible *alone* set the standard. As there is no Christianity apart from Christ, so there is no Christianity apart from the Bible. Christ and the Bible stand or fall together. It is not Christ *or* the Bible but rather Christ *and* the Bible. Only a Bible Christ can make one a true Christian.

We cannot pick and choose the words of Jesus we want to accept. It was Jesus who said to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” **John 3:3** It was Jesus who said: “I am the way the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the father, but by me.” **John 14:6** *These are teachings of Jesus*. To “live according to the teachings of Jesus” is to begin here. To reject Jesus as *the way, the only way* to the Father is to reject Christianity.

But a *greater peril* now faces the Church. As we have stated, less than 100 years ago the cry was, “Christians unite.” Today a giant step is being taken demanding that *all religions* unite.—not only Christians but Christians and all other so- called faiths.

We have in our possession a 40 page report of a Conference held in Melbourne, Australia, July 28-30 1997. The purpose of the Conference was to bring all religions together. If I have read these papers correctly, the reasoning of the Conference-Leaders seems to be somewhat as follows: We *all* want World peace. Wars have been caused by religious divisions. Therefore, world religions must unite to produce the peace we all want!

True Christianity is not a religion and therefore it cannot unite with any religion. But the move is on to unite Christianity, which is considered to be just another religion , with all other equally important religions. And we would ask the true Christian, “what will our position be when we are being forced to unite with Islam? Or Hinduism? Or with Buddhism? Or Mormonism? Or the Jehovahs’ Witness? Or Aboriginal spirituality? Or Roman Catholicism ? Or in Bible language, Old Babylonianism? The list goes on and on! And beloved, these are serious questions.

The Global Plan Agenda is to be set up by the year 2000 and fully in operation by the year 2005. And it is our opinion that this will bring the greatest peril the Church has ever faced. All who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12.

At the Religion and Cultural Diversity Conference Dinner all prayed a “Prayer of Togetherness.” Here it is:

The lights were dimmed, there was only the illumination of one candle at each table, approximately 250 dignitaries and delegates bowed together to this prayer; “Let us focus on the candle, the small quivering fire the light in the darkness , the call to evening prayer, the call to thanksgiving—for our togetherness for our unity, as sons and daughters of the earth in this vast and ancient land, this sacred soil of the Dreamtime. In the presence of the ineffable Other, the Holy Being of Infinity, the Numinous Beyond, the One and the Ultimate, the Alpha and the Omega, The unknown and unknowable, Lord of Cosmos, Center of Creation, God, the God of power and righteousness. We pray to you in the immensity and grandeur of the world.”

That prayer reminds one of the men of Athens, 2000 years ago, who had erected their altar “to the unknown God”. Acts 17 This kind of religion will lead backward to the worshipping of the creation and not the Creator as in Romans chapter one. These are dangerous trends of our times.