

DANGER OF FALSE TEACHING

By Keith Greer

Since the days of the early church, men have always opposed truth to further the teaching of men. If the writers of the New Testament had a "common" rule concerning error and the false teachers, it was to **STOP THEM!**

When the Jews were trying to bind circumcision upon the Gentile converts, the apostles met in Jerusalem to discuss the matter. "Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, You must be circumcised and keep the law"; to whom we gave no such commandment;" {Acts 15:24} The letter was sent out to stop the error being taught.

Paul came into the city of Ephesus. He found some disciples and asked if they had received the Holy Spirit. Following a discussion Paul understood they had only been baptized into "John's baptism". "Then Paul said, 'John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.'" {Acts 19:4} They were baptized into Christ!

Paul brought the elders of Ephesus down to Miletus. He instructed them of a coming danger following his departure. "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves." {Acts 20:29,30} Notice the danger was from within the church. Still true today!

In Corinth Paul pleaded for Bible unity. How? "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." {I Corinthians 1:10} Corinth was divided because Christians were following men instead of Christ! This letter was to combat the error being practiced at that church. According to the second letter, it worked!

The churches of Galatia, in a letter written by the apostle Paul, were warned against the direction they were following. "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." {Galatians 1:8,9}

Timothy was encouraged by the apostle Paul in his work as an evangelist. "Holdfast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." {2 Timothy 1:13} Men would wax "worse and worse", and Timothy must hold the line!

Titus was also instructed by Paul concerning those who would try to subvert truth. "Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain." {Titus 1:11}

Why was it so important to stop the teaching and teacher in their tracks? "Your glorying is not good Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?" {I Corinthians 5:6} It will spread like cancer! Stop the bleeding!

Sadly, the same is still true today. Error has no stopping point if it goes unchecked. Methods have changed, different issues have arisen and men once strong in the word have begun to drift away from the truth. Unfortunately, we live in a time when some brethren have been "sitting" too long at the feet of the false teachers of the day. All this is leading to weak brethren and weak churches. Let us always hold the line! ***