

SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION – ITS CAUSES AND CURE

CHAPTER 13 – FALSE TEACHING

GALATIANS 4:15

I. REVIEW AND INTRO

II. THE GALATIAN CHURCH

III. WHAT CAUSED THE CHANGE? A COMMON AFFLICTION

The history of the Christian Church since the New Testament canon is full of the same thing. It began at the very beginning and it has continued more or less ever since, and there is a sense in which it is true to say that the history of the Church is the history of the rising of many heresies and the battle of the Church against them, and the delivery of the Church by the power of the Spirit of God.

IV. FALSE TEACHING – BLATANT DENIAL

Sometimes it takes the form of a blatant denial of the Truth and of the cardinal principles and tenets of the Christian faith. Let us be quite clear about the fact that sometimes it can take that form. It may represent itself as being Christian but in actual fact be a denial of the Christian message. There have been, and still are, teachings which call themselves Christian which even deny the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and other cardinal and basic tenets of our faith

V. FALSE TEACHING – ADDITIONS AND SUBTRACTIONS

Here it is not so much a denial of the faith, not so much a contradiction of the cardinal elements, as a teaching which suggests that something else is required in addition to what we have already believed.

A. LESS THAN THE APOSTOLIC MESSAGE

This is something which misleads so many Christians today. If a man says something flagrantly wrong they can see at once that he is wrong, but they are not so quick to see that a teaching may be wrong because it is less than the apostolic message, because it does not say certain things.

It may be denying His Incarnation, it may be denying the two natures in the One Person; it may be denying the Virgin Birth, it may be denying the miraculous in His life it may be denying the literal physical resurrection. It calls itself Christian, but it is less than the Truth. Again it may deny at some point the work of Christ. It may deny the fact that 'God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him'. It may describe the death of Christ as being nothing but a marvelous exhibition of love. It may deny that God punished our sins 'in His own Body on the tree'. That is what the apostles preached, that Christ died for our sins. If, therefore, a teaching leaves that out it is less than the Apostolic Truth. It is the same with the rebirth. So often this doctrine is not taught and its absolute necessity is not emphasized. Again, we find the same thing even with respect to conduct and behaviour although the New Testament emphasizes conduct and behaviour. People may say they believe on Christ, but then they tend to deduce that if you believe-in Christ you. are safe and it does not matter what you do. But that is the terrible error of antinomianism. The New Testament teaches the importance of works saying that 'faith without works is dead', the danger of adding to the Truth and, while acknowledging the apostolic message to be right, of suggesting that there must be something added on to it...

B. ADDING ON TO THE TRUTH

The second danger, as we have already seen, is the exact opposite, namely, the danger of adding to the Truth and, while acknowledging the apostolic message to be right, of suggesting that there must be something added

on to it. Now that is the thing we are dealing with in particular. Once more we must remember our first principle, that every teaching is to be tested by the teaching of the New Testament, not by feelings, not by experience, not by: results, not by what other people are saying and doing. Here is the test, Apostolicity-the New Testament teaching

C. ADDING ON TO REVELATION

This preaching about circumcision is not a part of Christ's message,' says Paul in effect. 'These people preach that but they did not get it from Christ. Christ when He gave me the message did not say all people must be circumcised. It is something apart from His revelation, it is an addition to the apostolic message'

D. EMPHASIS/PREEMINENCE OF ONE THING

Here in the case of the Galatians it was circumcision. But whatever it may be it is this one thing that has led to the special teaching, this one thing is the mainspring of the entire movement. They allow that you are a true believer, but in addition you must have this one thing-the seventh day, or the immersion of believers, or tongues, or healing or something else. This one thing is essential. That is the big thing. It is always in a prominent position, at the centre, and you are more conscious of that one thing than you are of Christ because the emphasis is on that. You cannot account for the Movement apart from that one thing, circumcision or whatever else it may happen to be.

E. ADDITIONS TO CHRIST

The Roman Catholic says, 'Of course we believe in Christ, but you must also believe in the Church, you must believe in the Virgin Mary, you must believe in the saints, you must believe in the priesthood in addition

F. FAITH ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH **GALATIANS 5:6**

G. NOT MATCHING EXPERIENCE

'Where is the blessedness ye spake of?' You know what he means by that. He says, in effect: 'Foolish Galatians, beloved Galatians, are you really telling me that what you experienced when I first came among you was of no avail, was all useless? Where is the blessedness ye spake of? O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you ? You know that as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. You know that you have received the Spirit. Come back, remember that you have received the Spirit. Did you receive Him by the works of the Law? Of course you did not. Cannot you see that you are denying your own past experience ?'

VI. HOW TO DEFEND YOURSELF **GALATIANS 6:13-17**

Let me put it plainly, I will not make my boast, I will not glory, even in my orthodoxy, for even that can be a snare if I make a god of it. I will glory only in that Blessed Person Himself by whom this great thing has been done, with whom I died, with whom I have been buried, with whom I am dead to sin and alive unto God, with whom I have risen, with whom I am seated in the heavenly places, by whom and by whom alone the world is crucified unto me and I am crucified unto the world. Anything that wants to come into the centre instead of Him, anything that wants to add itself on to Him, I shall reject. Knowing the apostolic message concerning Jesus Christ in all its directness, its simplicity and its glory, God forbid that anyone of us should add anything to it. Let us rejoice in Him in all His fulness and in Him alone.