

Prophetic Insights

5. Do You Have Ears to Hear? *Or, Has the Messenger Become Your Enemy?*

July 24, 2013

We recently watched a 4-part mini-series entitled *Holocaust* which was first televised in 1978. Through historical fiction the series presents an accurate account of the persecution of Jews in Europe from the rise of Adolf Hitler in the 1930s to the end of World War II and the release of survivors from “Death Camps” such as Auschwitz and Treblinka in 1945.

From the time the Nazis began to gain control of Germany there were a number of perceptive individuals who warned the Jewish people to flee the continent while they could. Tragically, except for a relative few, the vast majority closed their ears to the warnings. Because of their own sense of **personal complacency** and **comfort**, they just couldn’t believe they needed to leave. Even when confronted by eyewitnesses with the reality of the horrors being done by the Nazis, they wouldn’t let themselves be convinced that *anyone* could be capable of that kind of evil.

As the Jews were loaded into boxcars and hauled off to the death camps, few could even imagine that they would be exterminated. The Nazis were surprised at their lack of resistance. They attributed it to the Jews being “inferior and cowardly”, lies which had been firmly embedded in them by Hitler’s propaganda. Yet the Jews just couldn’t get past the mental barrier that humans could treat other human beings with such cruelty. They judged the actions of the Nazis by their own sense of morality—what they themselves *would not do* to another person. But this is always the pitfall which ensnares decent, moral people when they try to

understand the actions of those who are determined to do evil.

Before being sent to the death camps many Jews were forced into ghettos similar to those the Roman Catholic Church had confined them to centuries earlier. Let’s look at the *Warsaw Ghetto* in Poland, established in 1940 and the largest of all the Jewish ghettos. It was a city unto itself of 400,000 crammed in with few resources. From there more than 254,000 men, women and children were transported to the Treblinka death camp in the summer of 1942. Throughout this period the ghetto residents received numerous warnings about the extermination camps to which they were being deported. But it wasn’t until 1943 that the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising began and the remaining 55,000-60,000 Jews took their stand to fight the Nazis against impossible odds.

Why is it so difficult for people to accept warnings of impending danger or to believe that other humans could be capable of such appalling wickedness?

“Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?”(Galatians 4:16).

There are many reasons people close their ears to warnings or refuse to believe reports of horrific evil others are doing. One sad result of this willful denial is that the hearers often turn against the person who is warning them or is exposing the particular evil they’re entertaining or excusing. I faced this situation in my early years of following our Lord Jesus. Shortly after leaving the Navy in 1978 I took a position as the Financial Control-

ler of what was then a highly rated Christian college. After several months of working there I uncovered two corrupt policies being followed by the administration, which consisted of the President and four Vice Presidents.

In an institution employing over 150 people on faculty and staff, the exorbitant salaries of *these five men* represented over 25% of the college's payroll. Many on the staff and faculty were barely making it on the relative pittance they were paid. The "fat cats" at the top had told the employees that everyone needed to sacrifice in service to our Lord. I warned the administration that what they were doing was wrong. Their response? They saw me as a threat.

The other policy I discovered was not only unjust but also illegal. The administration had misappropriated hundreds of thousands of dollars of donations which were intended to pay the expenses of students whose goal was to spread the gospel. In my own naivete I thought that somehow this misappropriation must have been an unintentional oversight.

Two days after I brought my discovery to the attention of the administration I was fired. Those who worked for me and a few others on staff knew I'd exposed an evil situation, and they offered me emotional support. A number of other employees, however, blamed me for even exposing anything! Their view was that I should have kept my mouth shut; that way I could have kept my job.

A while later I was hired by a nearby seminary as a consultant to examine their personnel and financial policies. The day before I started, an auditor/accountant who had been recently fired by the seminary came to me with a pile of paperwork. He informed me,

"They're going to tell you that I was a trouble maker and didn't fit in. But they don't know I kept copies of all the work I did. It would take you months to uncover what I found in these papers, and this information is why they fired me. Just follow the trail of these documents. It's going to break your heart when you see what people who are supposed to be 'men of God' have been doing. It's not just wrong, it's illegal!"

In a matter of a few weeks I'd verified everything the accountant had given me. He was right. I couldn't believe the depth of evil the Vice Presidents were doing *behind* the President's back. They were supported in their sinister and illegal schemes by three members on the Board of Trustees. I went to the President and showed him the documents. He was appalled by what I'd found. To protect me, he immediately hired me to work directly for him.

One of the Vice Presidents then sent out a memo to the staff and faculty ordering that no one was to have any contact with me. The situation got so bad that when I went into the cafeteria they refused me service! It was also interesting to see that none of the faculty asked any questions in response to the memo. It was the same response of "I don't want to be identified with a trouble maker" that I saw among the faculty while at the college. Self-preservation ruled among them.

But a few days after the memo went out there was a "ghetto uprising." A number of staff from different departments came together into my office. My wife happened to be there as well, though she knew nothing of the memo. The staff members showed her the memo and explained that they knew I was exposing unrighteousness. Our little group sallied into the cafeteria and sat openly together in this hub. Each of

these special people had the courage to be publicly seen with me in support of what I was doing to expose wickedness.

Yet the confrontation between righteousness and evil wasn't over. The illegal activity was so pervasive within the administration policies that I called four different government agencies under whose auspices the seminary came. As I explained what I'd uncovered they confirmed the criminal nature of what the Vice Presidents had been doing.

But it was also as though God wanted to give the perpetrators an opportunity to repent. Each of the four agencies told me that if I could correct the illegalities, they wouldn't file charges. I then met with all the Vice Presidents together. After showing them the documentation, *none of them* repented or had any change of heart. Some even left the meeting with plans to discredit me.

After the meeting I went out onto the grounds of the seminary to cry because of their hardened hearts. In the garden was a young woman I knew who had recently returned from the mission field. She was crying too. When I asked her about her tears, she told me, "I was here praying and I saw the *shekinah glory of God* leave this place. He is not with this seminary any longer." A few weeks later I left a copy of all the documentation with the President and resigned my position to care for my father until he died. Even when I came back to the seminary a year later to visit a friend, few on staff greeted me—and I was still "blacklisted" from purchasing anything in the cafeteria.

For the next 11 years I counseled church leaders throughout New England, finding the same depth of rationalized corruption being tolerated and practiced within many congregations. Many of those who tried to expose and address sin-

ful practices were either ostracized or thrown out. The congregations were then told that these men and women were "trouble makers" and therefore not welcome. The real heart-breaker for me was that the majority of the people in these faith communities never asked questions or even wanted to know the truth. From Catholic priests abusing young boys, to Protestant ministers committing adultery or embezzling funds, few in their congregations or denominations wanted to hear or believe what was really going on.

Soon after I started counseling clergy in 1983, a leader from a major Protestant denomination told me that over half their clergy were actively involved in adultery. He admitted with shame, "We keep it covered up because if the truth got out people would leave us in droves." During that same period the Roman Catholic hierarchy acknowledged that they'd spent over \$400 million in out-of-court settlements because of the pedophilia by their priests. (Remember, this was 30 years ago! The sexual abuse exposed since then has created a public relations firestorm for the Vatican, yet countless millions within its ranks just *don't want to hear* about it.)

Those 11 years of observing such unabashed evil as well as the ever-growing spiritual lethargy and complacency which keeps pewsitters from standing up to confront unrighteousness brought me to tears on many occasions. And sadly, the tolerance for sin within Christendom has only gotten worse.

"Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law" (Proverbs 29:18).

"The days are coming,' declares the Sovereign LORD, 'when I will send a famine through the land — not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD'" (Amos 8:11).

There's an important reason I shared some of my past history of exposing evil and warning people. First, it's a thankless, often fruitless call of God on me as a messenger. Some of you know what I mean. Without a focus on repentance from the pulpits, the vast majority of contemporary self-proclaimed Christians have cast off the perceived "restraint" of God's righteous commands, treating them like they're a burden.

No one wants to hear any warning about sin, and clergy abound who never confront the sinful compromises the people enjoy. Instead, they preach messages of a perverted grace which has nothing to do with God's holy nature. Their "grace" offers a license to pursue worldly values and goals because "God's laws don't apply to Christians. That's Old Testament stuff, and we're New Testament people." What a deception, as though there's *a different God* in each Testament!

The prophet Jeremiah could have been speaking about the Christianity practiced in the USA today: *"The prophets prophesy falsely, the priests rule by their own authority, and My people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?"* (Jeremiah 5:31). The "end" will find Dark Days of Chastisement in this land.

Since God's laws are being cast off as irrelevant, there is an increasing famine in the land for hearing the words of the Lord. We're referring to the prophetic warnings our Father was giving to *Christians* decades in advance of Him bringing judgment as voiced in 1Peter 4:17: *"For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now if the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"* (apperceiving Proverbs 11:31—the He-

brew text still applies to followers of Jesus today.)

When David Wilkerson died two years ago, one of the last national harbingers of warning who exposed sin within Christendom left this planet. There was no one else like him who faithfully warned God's people repeatedly for decades. Even in our own ministry we're like a dying echo off the canyon walls of godly warning which David Wilkerson declared to this land.

So often we try to help Christians get past the self-satisfied, self-focused complacency of their religious practices and make our Lord Jesus foremost in their lives. And when we reveal to them their need for repentance so they can be set apart for our Father's use and live according to His holy ways, **a demonic veil remains over their minds**. The veil is like a concrete wall made up of strongholds and their symptoms which keep them from hearing *only* from the Holy Spirit. Our hearts are heavy as we realize our time to warn is quickly coming to an end. We're a dying echo on the canyon wall.

"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world"
(1John 4:1).

While authentic prophetic warnings are diminishing in this nation, many false prophets are arising. Some, in the guise of clergy, offer entertaining messages and pleasant platitudes which keep people complacently comfortable in their unbiblical, self-satisfying lives (see 2Timothy 4:3). Other false prophets want payment for their services (2Corinthians 2:17) or enjoy being flattered and praised

as they deliver words they've not heard from God (Luke 6:26). These too are being used by Satan to make people feel comfortable in their sinful darkness.

Discerning those who are speaking prophetically with messages that align with God's Word versus those who speak whatever people want to hear is an age-old need for God's people. God has a very specific purpose for true prophecy: to expose sin and stir people to turn away from it and turn back to Him. Delivering His messages is a painful business when the people are unresponsive! The lament of Jeremiah represents a sorrow that penetrates the hearts of anyone today who has received the gift of prophecy from the Spirit: *"To whom can I speak and give warning? Who will listen to me? **Their ears are closed** so they cannot hear. **The word of the LORD is offensive to them; they find no pleasure in it**"* (Jeremiah 6:10).

Jeremiah suffered greatly not only because of the sins of those who thought they were God's chosen yet who compromised with idolatry and evil pagan practices. He also bore the brunt of the false prophets around him who so greatly influenced the religious and political leaders. After the fall of Jerusalem Jeremiah summed up the fruit of false prophecy which had so tickled the ears of those who rejected truth: *"The visions of your prophets were false and worthless; **they did not expose your sin** to ward off your captivity. The oracles they gave you were **false and misleading**"* (Lamentations 2:14). Jeremiah would say the same thing about false prophets within Christendom today!

Throughout Acts chapter 7 we hear from Stephen, who out of love for his people revealed how they repeatedly sinned against God and attacked the very ones He had sent to warn them. But Stephen's listeners didn't want to hear.

*"**They covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him**"* (Acts 7:57). Many Christians respect Stephen for his courage in wholeheartedly representing the God of the Bible. But how many are honest with themselves and are willing to face that *their own ears* may be closed to similar warnings?

*"**You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered Him**"* (Acts 7:51,52).

As we post this Prophetic Insight we're concerned that you may be one of the deceived who hides in your sin by closing your heart and ears to our Father's perspective of it. Maybe it's become your kneejerk response to exposure of your sin that you attack and discredit the messenger. God's Word is being intentionally misinterpreted today to appease the church that anything that "seems right" to them to do is fine with God because they're "already forgiven."

But there is a *famine for the truth* which is found in hearing and doing the words of the Lord. Preacher and prophet alike neglect exposing sin: *"From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, **all practice deceit**"* (Jeremiah 6:13). If they indeed are practicing deceit, who are they deceiving? Have *you* been deceived by teachings which excuse your willful disobedience to God's Word? Do *you* rationalize the worldly values and goals you're infusing into your children and grandchildren? Are *your* ears closed to the true

words and warnings of our Lord?

Recognize that the need to expose sin and turn from it applies to *all* our Father's children for *all time!* If you follow Jesus as your Lord, you're personally commanded, *"Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them"* (Ephesians 5:11). You can only expose darkness if you don't have any reservations about your own spiritual health and relationship with our Lord—and if you aren't involved or excusing "fruitless deeds of darkness" in your own life and family.

We recently sent out ***A Spiritual Symptoms Checklist*** so you can discern your spiritual health:

www.restorationministries.org/pdf/hebraicArticles/Spiritual_symptoms.pdf.

We also sent out a one-page list of strongholds and symptoms entitled, ***Do You Suffer The Effects Of Demonic Strongholds In Your Soul?***

www.restorationministries.org/pdf/hebraicArticles/StrongholdSheet1page.pdf.

- **Did you use these materials yourself and then share them with your relatives and members of your faith community to discern any demonic darkness that's causing any of you to close your ears?**
- **Did you give copies to the leaders of your faith community so they could make a two-sided handout for people to fill in? That way the leadership could see for themselves any demonic veil over the minds of their flock.**
- **If you didn't do anything with these materials, why not?**

There's a battle raging over souls! And the battle within Christendom deceives people into lives of personal comfort and complacency. We've provided you powerful, freedom-producing handouts to help you and those close to you in the

faith to be free from the deceit of demonic influence. If you haven't done anything with these tools, then you're like a soldier in a foxhole who ducks low to keep himself safe but lets his comrades die. This person doesn't deserve the soldier title.

It's the same if you claim to belong to Jesus. By remaining in demonic slavery to your sin nature and not helping others close to you be free, are you really living as one of His own? Was Lord Jesus speaking of you when He said, *"Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the manure pile, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"* (Luke 14:34,35)?

• **Complacency and self-deceit are more the hallmark of modern Christendom at all levels than is wholehearted devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ and to truth. The veil of demonic imprisonment produces deaf ears and ultimately, spiritual death.**

• **The Lord Jesus is the ONLY source of spiritual freedom, and THE source of all truth. If you truly belong to our Lord, you must pursue truth and stand up for it, fully realizing that you will be rejected and persecuted. Rejection and persecution are the fruit of your devotion to Jesus and to truth:**

"If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you" (1Peter 4:14).

"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps" (1Peter 2:21).

Do *you* have ears to hear? Then use the two handouts so you and those close to you are free from all demonic enslavement and influence. Without the veil of deceit over your mind, you're free to serve our Lord with all your heart and soul!