

January 26, 2012

Presumption, False Expectation, and Prophetic Witchcraft

Many evenings we watch a half-hour show called "Storm Stories" produced by the Weather Channel. Each episode deals with a catastrophe involving a flood, hurricane, tornado, etc., and the response of individuals and families before, during and after their particular calamity. Not everyone in these stories survives the disaster. While most had done nothing directly to bring about their situation, some through their own **presumption** and **false expectation** were killed or injured.

In Lesson 32 of *Discussing How to Restore the Early Church*, we discuss the evil motivations of presumption and false expectation, which are frequently the root cause for many self-identified Christians to tolerate sin in their lives. This is especially true concerning knowing the will of our Lord and doing it. Too many go about each day never seeking the Spirit of Jesus to guide them (Proverbs 16:3). Failing to confirm can leave you in grave danger!

Let's look at an example of this. In one recent Storm Story a skier with a Master's degree in Avalanche Studies ended up getting killed needlessly. He and his two buddies had gone out into the back country to ski. Each time they climbed a hill, they'd exercise prudence as they'd been trained to do: they'd dig down into the snow to check its condition to determine if it was safe to ski there. On their last run, however, this fully trained man who definitely should have known better *presumed* the conditions were safe and failed to check the snow condition. That misjudgment cost him his life. Halfway down the slope he triggered an avalanche which swept over him, breaking his neck. Tragically, he left behind his wife, eight months pregnant with a son who would never meet his father.

***"All men will hate you because of Me,
but he who stands firm to the end will be saved"*** (Mark 13:13).

"And do this, understanding the present time.

***The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber,
because our salvation is nearer now than when we first trusted"*** (Romans 13:11).

Even as the apostle Paul strongly counseled errant believers in Corinth to "*awake to righteousness and do not sin*" (1 Corinthians 15:34), so today too many who call themselves followers of Jesus are forsaking their wholehearted devotion to Him as their Lord and following their own desires. They are being lulled into compromise with the world's ways and values, and in the name of "peace and brotherhood" giving way to false beliefs and syncretistic practices. Our Lord Jesus, however, has called His people

out of the world and into Spirit-responsive holiness and obedience. This is a day by day walk of love-motivated persistence — a daily decision to choose righteousness (God's way) over *self-gratification* (man's way) no matter what circumstance you face. This steadfast choice to walk in Jesus's steps by His Spirit and do Father's will calls for a heart of repentance, willingly confessing to Him when you fall short through attitude or action, and gratefully receiving His cleansing and forgiveness (1John 1:9).

Keep in mind that as times get more evil, many who were once confident in their trust and fellowship with Him and had purposed to live righteously are now finding themselves giving way to presumption and false expectation. As a result they're finding ways to excuse themselves as they yield to more and more tolerated sin in their own lives and in their families.

- Those who give way to **presumption** view God's grace as a means to indulge a little sin here and there.
- Or, if they're going through difficult trials, they give way to **false expectation**. When God delays answering their prayers, their trust falters and they give way to doubt and unbelief. Some even blame God for letting them down.

Are you among the many who have consistently *ignored* the Older Testament, pretty much relegating it to "Jewish history"? Then you've been walking blind as to the unchanging nature of our God and the lessons He so vividly offers us today. Paul makes this unmistakably clear: "*These things happened to [the Israelites] as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come*" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Let's look at one of those warnings. At the end of their 40-year sojourn through the Sinai, the generation of Israelites who hadn't fallen in the desert finally crossed the Jordan River to enter the Promised Land. Throughout their long journey they had sought the Lord to confirm His direction for them. But that obedience gave way to *presumption*. (You can read the account in Joshua 9:3-16.) A delegation from nearby Gibeon, terrified by Israel's overwhelming defeat of Ai and Bethel through the power of their God, approached Joshua pretending to be from a land far away. Trusting in their own evaluation made by appearances (the men's clothing was dusty and ragged, their bread moldy and dry) the Israelites sinned by acting presumptuously: *they failed to inquire of the Lord*. The ruse of the Gibeonites succeeded, and the Israelites made a treaty with them—disobeying God's command to wipe out the inhabitants of the land.

Our Lord is not short on calling His people to stand firm in their obedient trust! Temptations and "ruses" lay all around His own; counterfeits, lies and schemes into which the fearful and self-focused can readily give way. This is why Paul warns the Corinthians, who lived in a society as decadent as our own, to not give in to compromise or their old sinful ways: "**Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong**" (1Corinthians 16:13). Father has anointed those in Christ to stand firm in obedient trust, in all things seeking His will because of our love for Him and for those He puts in our path. We are to be the aroma of Christ, untainted by the stench

of any sin we would give way to that would move us away from Him.

Our pilgrimage to salvation culminates at the Judgment Throne. With each passing day that moment draws closer. We need to grow in patient endurance so that we can encourage each other DAILY. Otherwise we may become hardened by caving in to sin's deceitfulness (Hebrews 3:13). So beware the Gibeonite ruse: God won't necessarily work the same way He did earlier when you faced a particular circumstance or need. Don't confine Him to a "box of expectation" in which you feel only the answer you're asking for will do!

You must seek *His* will each time, because His plan and response may encompass purposes you can't perceive. Remember, His will is revealed "step by step", which is far enough for faith to see. One of the most important realizations many come to is that our Lord didn't change your situation but gave you the grace to go through the trial. Isn't this the understanding of the poem "Footprints in the Sand"?

We've made available David Wilkerson's teaching letter of 11/28/1994, "[Corrupt Christians.](#)" If you're finding your trust slipping, your soul growing too weary to press on, or you're tolerating and excusing personal sin, this teaching may be the catalyst the Spirit uses to return you to that responsive love Lord Jesus is waiting for.

A warning:

- *Stop being anxious about future outcomes!*
- *Avoid wearying yourself with concerns about what present situations may lead to!*
- *The future is our Lord's domain!*
- *TODAY is the only day He is giving you His daily grace!*

In other words, don't give a foothold to fear and worry about the future; only our God knows what that holds. Don't let your love for Him or your obedient trust be hindered by fretting over the relationships you might lose if you live true to Jesus. And beware of false prophets in the media who speculate about the future. Authentic biblical prophecy does *not* conjecture about verses, trying to make them fit some possible event in the future. For instance, recent "prophetic conjecturing" has proclaimed that the planets will align in 2012 and worldwide flooding will occur, therefore fulfilling certain verses that supposedly substantiate their conjecture.

When Father wants to warn you about an upcoming catastrophe, He will speak through those He has called to prophesy (see Amos 3:6,7). The *timing* for the prophetic person to speak that prophecy is in His hands as well. These two elements comprise a prophetic warning: God's message and His command to the prophet when to speak. If someone claims to have a prophecy for you, you need to ask, "*Did God tell you this?*", and, "*Did He tell you to share it with me, and share it now?*" And in the scriptural pattern, you need to test what is said to determine if it truly is of God (1Thessalonians 5:19-21; 1John 4:1). God's responsibility is to reveal; yours is to confirm. Too many today don't confirm supposed prophecies; they end up in trouble, and blame God.

An old axiom guides those who've truly walked in the prophetic: **Don't prophesy on prophecy**. Every prophecy God has written in His Word has or will come true. AFTER they've taken place, you can claim their fulfillment. For example, over 300 prophecies in the Older Testament foretell the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and the details of His life. AFTER He became incarnate, it was permissible to cite these prophecies as being fulfilled, something in fact many of the Newer Testament writers do.

False prophets put words into God's mouth by conjecturing about passages in the Bible, confidently predicting a future event that God never told them. This is "**prophetic witchcraft**", exercised readily by Jeremiah's adversaries (see Jeremiah 14:14). Witchcraft tries to deceive by exercising control or manipulating outcomes outside of the will of God (see Matthew 24:24). The men Jeremiah disputed tried to gain official influence and favor by prophesying through divination, false visions, and the delusions of their own minds. Prophetic witchcraft is fed by people who are beset by **presumption** and **false expectation**! Having departed from authentic trust in Jesus and a righteous way of life approved by God, those who are addicted to conjecture give way to deceiving spirits and the doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1).

We have entered a period in which we're seeing this sorry promise being carried out within the apostate church: *"For the time will come when they will **not endure sound doctrine**, but according to **their own desires**, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will **turn their ears away from the truth**, and be **turned aside to fables**"* (2 Timothy 4:3,4). Once the clear teaching of Scripture is set aside in order to placate man's deceived rationale, any fable or delusion will satisfy the sinful desire. Especially during stressful times, **prophetic witchcraft** gives people a false sense of confidence about the future, much like the demonic delusions of Ouija boards, astrology and horoscopes.

Those who have turned aside from the Bible as God's only written revelation and refuted Jesus as the only way to be reconciled with the Father are open game for prophetic witchcraft. False prophets claim they know in advance how and when a particular biblical prophecy will be fulfilled; thus they receive acclaim and fortune for a while (see Matthew 7:15). Much of the current wave of prophetic witchcraft was fanned into flame by Hal Lindsey in the 1970s and 80s, who conjectured about when and how end time scenarios would play out. These prophecies boxed in the ways in which God (and world leaders) would supposedly work, planting interpretations into Scripture that can't be defended. But multitudes of books were sold and Christian speaking circuit venues were filled.

Please, read the attachment and ascertain if you haven't slipped into what Wilkerson calls a "Corrupt Christian." Especially focus on his last page in which he pinpoints how to respond if you've lost your trusting devotion to Jesus and given up waiting on Father to intervene in your life.

We encourage you to turn your heart to your Father right at this moment, proclaiming your hope in His wondrous loving power on your behalf: *"To Him who is able to keep*

you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen" (Jude 1:24,25).

Mike & Sue