

Widespread Corruption

by Steve Gallagher

The Church is spiritually polluted and contaminated, leading to a lack of godliness and a hunger for entertainment.

Scripture: Genesis 6:5, Genesis 13:13, Matthew 24:12, Luke 17:30, 1 Corinthians 5:6, Ephesians 5:3, 2 Timothy 3:13, James 4:4, 1 Peter 5:8, 2 Peter 2:10

Topics: "Last Days", "Spiritual Deception"

Description

Steve Gallagher preaches about the corruption and spiritual pollution that will prevail in the Last Days, likening it to the wickedness of Noah's time and Sodom and Gomorrah. He emphasizes how evil men will deceive and be deceived, leading to perilous times. Gallagher highlights the danger of backslidden preachers indulging in corrupt desires, contaminating true believers with their wicked deeds, and causing a spiritual miasma that blinds many to their true spiritual condition.

Transcript

Biblical prophets are all in agreement that the Last Days will be a time of unprecedented evil upon the earth, and even within the professing Church. Jesus compared that time to what it was like when Noah lived: "...the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually... all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth." (Genesis 6:5, 12) He also associated it with the pervasive immorality of Sodom and Gomorrah: "Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD." (Genesis 13:13) "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed," He said. (Luke 17:30)

Paul said that the Last Days would be a time when "evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived." (II Timothy 3:13) He called it perilous! (II Timothy 3:1 KJV)

When Peter addressed the spiritual condition of backslidden preachers during the end-times, he used a term that is very interesting. He wrote that they "indulge the flesh in its corrupt (Gk. miasmos) desires..." (II Peter 2:10) Other Bible translations bring out the full meaning: "Those who walk after the flesh and indulge in the lust of polluting passion..." (AMP) "Those who go after the unclean desires of the flesh..." (BBE) "Those who follow their filthy bodily lusts..." (GNB) "Those who are abandoned to sensuality--craving, as they do, for polluted things..." (WEY) "Those who have indulged all the foulness of their lower natures..." (PHP)

Thayer's Lexicon defines miasmos: "that which defiles; vices the foulness of which contaminates one in his contact with the ungodly mass of mankind." One can only imagine how much true believers are being spiritually polluted by those in their midst who are regularly engaging in deeds of wickedness. What is interesting about this Greek word miasmos is that it was later transliterated into the English language. The Webster dictionary defines this old term as: "poisonous vapor formerly supposed to arise from decomposing animal or vegetable matter, swamps, etc. and infect the air..."

The Old World idea behind this term was that there were swamps that would emit noxious, poisonous vapors. If one wandered into one of these bogs, the deadly fog hovering in the area would not only hinder him from finding his way out but would slowly poison him.

What an apt picture of the spiritual atmosphere you and I live in every day. We continually breathe spiritual pollution and have become far more contaminated by it than we realize. How could we be surrounded by a virtual Sodom and Gomorrah and be so unconcerned about it? Because we ourselves have been terribly corrupted by it. The American Church is engulfed in a great miasma and cannot find her way out. Most Christians are not nearly as connected to God as they imagine.

We have become blinded to our spiritual condition because it has come upon us so slowly and subtly. It is the frog in the kettle phenomenon.

Just consider the epidemic of sexual sin that has raced through the Church. If statistics are accurate at all, a huge number of men and women are regularly viewing pornography but attending church every Sunday.

How is this affecting the Body of Christ? When Jesus warned us to "beware of the leaven of hypocrisy," He was communicating to His listeners that even though a hypocrite hides his sin from those around him, it still has a detrimental effect on the lives of others. The metaphor of leaven is used to illustrate the corrupting influence of a small ingredient upon the rest of the dough. Unfortunately, in the case of the 21st Century Church, we are talking about the influence of millions of men who are outwardly presenting themselves as religious while inwardly maintaining a virtual mental library of pornographic images.

Despite the soothsayers who minimize the damage being done, pornography is a spiritual disease poisoning the Christian community.

If it is true that one out of every five men sitting in America's pews is saturating his mind with the evil images of pornography, how does this affect the overall level of godliness in the Church? The answer is devastatingly obvious: The general urgency to live a consecrated life is now at an all-time low. Self-centered living has all but replaced true sacrificial love. A hunger for God has been supplanted by a lust for entertainment. While the Church is weathering a fierce spiritual onslaught from without, the godly character needed for this battle rots within.

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