

## **SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT LOVE**

This week I'm going to continue talking about the season of judgment we have entered. As I said the other week, there are various aspects of this judgment to be understood. **The first aspect** concerns the judgement of this world when the Lord returns. The apostle Paul asked the believers at Corinth a question that needs to be asked again of God's people today: "*Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world*" (I. Cor. 6:2)?

*To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.*

*I. Thessalonians 3:13*

*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

*II Thessalonians 1:7-8*

*And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*

*Jude 1:14-15*

**The second aspect** of this judgment is the reality that before Jesus returns, we (Christians) must be judged and cleansed, so we can be *made worthy* of the kingdom, and be made worthy to judge the world when the Lord returns, and be made worthy to rule and reign with Him during the next age. We have a choice as to whether we will judge ourselves, as Paul instructed us to do, or whether we will force God to judge us as a result of our failure to judge ourselves. But in the end, we *will* be judged—either voluntarily in this life (by ourselves, or by God), or involuntarily by God at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

*And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:*

*Luke 20:34-35*

*Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.*

*Revelation 3:4*

*So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted **worthy of the kingdom of God**, for which ye also suffer:*

*II. Thessalonians 1:4-5*

**A third aspect** of this judgment has to do with our judgment of others, now. The need for spiritual discernment is greater today than it has ever been in the entire history of mankind. Of all the billions and billions of people on this planet, there is a only a tiny, tiny remnant who have *not* been deceived by the Dragon; and I can assure you that his focus in the coming days will be on overcoming *that* tiny remnant. I can also assure you that anyone who is part this remnant who ends up deceived, won't end up in that condition because they were tricked by the likes of Todd Bentley, or Rick Warren, or Joel Osteen. Rather, they will be deceived by people just like us—people who have *left* the religious system; people we assume are *solid* Christians; who appear to be *on fire* for God; who are *totally confident* they are hearing and being led by the Spirit; and who can *expertly* (mis) use the Scripture.

If you want to keep from being deceived in this hour, you must be wary of everyone around you and everyone who ministers to you—and that includes me. I can be deceived just like anyone else. We must keep asking God to increase our discernment and sharpen that inner witness. Discerning things and people *requires* that we judge things and people. You cannot possibly discern whether or not someone is a genuine believer unless you judge them. You will have to make a moral judgment regarding their spiritual condition. In order to discern *what kind* of believer they are, you will also have to judge their spiritual condition. In order to discern whether they following the Holy Spirit, or a *mixture* of God's Spirit and some other spirit, you will have to make a judgment regarding their spiritual condition. In order to discern whether or not they promote doctrinal errors, you will have to judge what they believe. It's not a pleasant reality to live with, but because of the time we have entered, we *must* judge those around us.

Since it's crucial that we judge the spiritual condition and the beliefs of those around us in order to keep from being deceived, what would you do if you were God's enemy, and you wanted to beguile His people? Do you think maybe one of the things you might do is *distort* the Scriptural view of God's love, or maybe *over-emphasize* His love to the extent that judging others becomes *un-Christ-like* in the eyes of the people? Do you think you might try to make *judging others* a taboo in the Church? Well, that's precisely what Satan has done, not only in the Church System, but even for many who are outside the system. You would be surprised at the number of people out here who believe judging others is wrong.

The fact is, Satan *hates* true, spiritual judgment. So he is constantly attacking it and trying to discredit it. One line of attack is a *frontal* attack, where he twists the Scripture to convince us that the Bible forbids us to judge others. When dealing with the frontal attack, you will find that certain passages are always quoted. The most common one is Matthew 7:1-2: "*Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again*". Another one that's used quite often is Romans 14:4: "*Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand*". Also, another popular one is James 4:12: "*There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another*"?

When Jesus said: “judge not”, did He really mean that we should never make a moral appraisal of anyone’s spiritual condition? Clearly not, for just a few verses later He told us to judge others: “*Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you*” (Matt. 7:6). In order to obey this command, you and I will have to make a moral judgment regarding the spiritual condition of others, whether or not they are dogs and pigs. Sorry folks, it’s just not possible to do what Jesus said without judging others. Just a few verses later in that same chapter, Jesus also said:

***Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.***

*Matthew 7:15-20*

**Jesus told us to judge others** when He said we should “beware” of false prophets. You cannot possibly *beware* of false prophets unless you first make a judgment regarding whether or not they are a false prophet. And how are we to judge whether or not someone is a false prophet? By looking at their life (fruit)—how they live, what kind of doctrine they teach, etc. I say again, it’s impossible to obey the Lord’s command without judging others.

**Paul told us to judge others** when he said: “*Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision*” (Phil. 3:2). Again, you cannot possibly *beware* of these kinds of people without judging their spiritual condition. You must judge whether or not they are in fact a dog, or a worker of evil, or one who promotes legalism (concision = circumcision), before you can know whether or not to avoid them.

**John told us to judge others** when he said: “*...believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world*” (1. John 4:1). In order for us to “test the spirits”, we will have to make a judgment regarding what kind of “spirit” a particular teacher is moving in. Is it the Holy Spirit, or is it another spirit? We will have to make a moral appraisal of that person’s spiritual condition.

Not only did Jesus and the apostles command us to judge others, they practiced what they preached. Consider the following examples:

*Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. **Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.***

*John 8:43-44*

*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous. . .Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, **how can ye escape the damnation of hell?***

*Matthew 23:29 & 33*

Notice that on two different occasions, Jesus judged others. He judged the spiritual condition of the those He was addressing, and both times He judged that these people were spiritually lost. In the one instance, He judged and denounced *whole classes* of people. He didn't say: "...I know some of you Scribes and Pharisees are hypocrites"—He just denounced the whole bunch of them.

Paul and John clearly judged others when they named false teachers who should be avoided (*See: I. Tim. 1:19-20; II. Tim. 2:16-18; 4:10; III. John 1:9*). The apostles had to first judge the spiritual condition of these men before exposing them as false and warning the churches concerning them. Also, Paul talked in several places about "false brethren" (*II. Cor. 11:26; Gal. 2:4*). He could not have talked about false brethren unless he had first judged their spiritual condition and concluded that they were not saved.

Unfortunately, those who are under the influence of Satan's counterfeit love, usually think that naming those who pose a threat to the body of Christ is unloving and un-Christ-like. I find it ironic that the ones who cry "judge not" the loudest, seem to have no problem judging others. One "Bible teacher" out here wrote an article admonishing other ministries not to publicly name those they feel are in error:

"It is my belief, if Jesus said we should not judge lest we be judged, that we have the right and responsibility to judge the message - **not the messenger**. The Bible also says that we should avoid those in error. We can separate ourselves from the error, but **should we be the judge of the person we perceive to be in error?** I do not believe that is the will of God. . .**Are 'hits' on our web sites of such value that we must stoop to judging others in order to draw traffic** to our sites with juicy, "fact-filled," tidbits aimed at satisfying the flesh-based 'hunger' of those who feast on gossip?. . .**So much of the criticism** that is out there **comes from a lack of understanding of where others are** in their walk with God. . .We all have our own beliefs, which are a carry over from our past and the belief system in which we were taught, depending on our church affiliation. **If we do not fully understand where a person is in his relationship with God, do we really have a right to name that person's name publicly** and cause others to judge?"

You may not understand my reaction to this, but it makes me sick to my stomach because it's the voice of Satan speaking, not the voice of the Holy Spirit. It's the false love of Satan being manifested, not God's love. But since it sounds humble and gracious, it will probably *fool* the majority of those who read it. Therefore, I am going to dissect it for you and show you how Satanic it really is.

First of all, this writer says that while we do have the right to judge the message of preachers and teachers, we do not have the right to judge them personally. The plea is to judge the message, not the messenger. However, this is a *direct contradiction* of the Scripture. It's the *exact opposite* of what Jesus and the apostles practiced; and it's the exact opposite of what they commanded us to do! Now think for a minute,

people. What kind of “spirit” would council those who are watching out for the safety of the body of Christ to *not* name the ones who are deceiving them with false doctrine? Do you think the Spirit of Christ would lead this “Bible teacher” to brazenly contradict and oppose what He Himself commanded?

Secondly, when this writer asks: “...*should we be the judge of the person we perceive to be in error*”?—the implication is that nobody can really be sure who is in error and who is not because truth and error are matters individual perception. Sorry folks, the apostles didn’t talk this way. They didn’t talk about not judging those we “perceive” to be in error. They talked in terms of *knowing* who was in error and who was not in error because truth and error are *not* matters of individual perception. Truth and error are clearly defined by the Scripture. Just because there are a million people running around promoting their own religious opinions, that doesn’t mean we can’t know the truth.

Thirdly, notice how this person accuses all who run discernment web sites of exposing and naming wolves to increase their web traffic: “*Are ‘hits’ on our web sites of such value that we must stoop to judging others in order to draw traffic to our sites with juicy, “fact-filled,” tidbits aimed at satisfying the flesh-based ‘hunger’ of those who feast on gossip?*” Don’t be fooled by the soft tone, or the fact that the accusation is framed as a question, rather than a statement. It’s still an accusation—and in many cases, it’s a false one at that! Now tell me, please: exactly what is this person judging? The message of these discernment web sites, or *the people* who run them (ie: the messengers)? You see, what’s being judged by this person are the *motives* of those who run those web sites. They are being accused of intentionally catering to the flesh-based hunger of Christians who feed on gossip, in order to increase the size of their ministries. Well, maybe this “Bible teacher” should do a word study of the term “*hypocrisy*”.

Fourthly, this person makes another double-accusation against those who run discernment web sites by saying: “*So much of **the criticism** that is out there comes from a **lack of understanding** of where others [ie: wolves and deceivers] are in their walk with God.*” So first this writer has decided (judged) that all the information which exposes the wolves in our midst is just “criticism”. Next, the judgment has been made that the people who run these web sites just don’t understand where all those false teachers and prophets are in their walk with Christ. Since they are ignorant of the facts, they criticize without knowledge.

I ask again, exactly what is this person judging? The message or the messengers? Let’s do a little test. What if I very politely, and with great love, told all of you in this room that I have to share something with you, but I’m not judging you personally. Then, what if I told you I believe you are all criticizing other people because you are ignorant? Would you feel I was judging your “message”, or would you be smart enough to know that I just judged (and falsely accused) you personally.

Lastly, this writer says: “*If we do not fully understand where a person is in his relationship with God, do we really have a right to name that person's name publicly and cause others to judge?*” Once again, what is inferred is that nobody can really know for sure who is a wolf because we don’t know what’s going on between them and God. And since we all have our own beliefs, which are a carry over from our past and the belief system in which we were taught, how can we possibly sit in judgment of each other? I mean, we’re all growing in our understanding of God, aren’t we? We’re all growing in our understanding of the Scripture, aren’t we? We’re all on the same path, aren’t we? Why should we publicly denounce a fellow traveler just because he believes a little differently, or is at a different spot on that path?

Well, I have news for this “Bible teacher”—most of the people who are exposing these false teachers are doing what God called them to do. They are exposing them because they love the brethren enough to warn them and protect them from the ones who seeking to devour them. In addition, most of the ministries who are being exposed ARE wolves. They are not sheep. They have no relationship with Christ because they are not walking with Christ. How so we know they are not walking with Christ? Because the outrageous teachings and blasphemies they spew out every week is *evidence* they are not walking with Christ. It’s not just a matter of perception.

Unfortunately, when people are under the influence of Satan’s false love—like this “Bible teacher” is—they view those who expose the wolves in our midst as unloving and un-Christ-like. Many times, they will accuse those who expose others by name of being critical, or of walking in the flesh, or of indulging in sensationalism. Sometimes they even resort to calling them names—like fault-finders, nit-pickers and heresy-hunters. Suddenly, all the LOVE these people talk about, vanishes into thin air. Suddenly, the very ones who cry “judge not” are judging all over the place and making all kinds of accusations, many of which are false. Yet they never seem to realize the hypocrisy they are moving in.

It’s always interesting to compare the statements of those who walk under this false love, with the statements of the apostle John because John is their hero and their example. John talked about love more than anyone the New Testament, except maybe for the Lord Himself. Indeed, John talked so much about God’s love, especially in his First and Second epistles, he’s often called “the apostle of love”. But when you look at some of the things John actually said, it becomes obvious that the love he was talking about is not the same kind of love these people are involved in at all.

As a matter of fact, it’s almost comical because when people who are *not* under that false love say the *same things* today that John said in his day, the ones who are under that false love accuse us of being harsh and critical and judgmental. Their minds are so clouded and befuddled, they don’t realize we are saying the same things John said. For instance, in one place John said:

*For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever **transgresseth**, and **abideth not in the doctrine of Christ**, hath not God. **He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ**, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and **bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house**, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

*II John 1:7-11*

Here, John tells us that we should be judging the *doctrine* of those who claim to be fellow believers. Why should we judge their doctrine? Because the Christian faith is not in experience (ie: relationship) alone. It’s also in doctrine. Doctrine and experience go hand in hand. Both are *equally* important. Yet there are ministries *out here* who say and teach that it’s only our *relationship* with Jesus that counts. But as you can see, this was not the view of John. He placed great importance on doctrine, so much so that his *criteria*

for accepting someone into the intimate fellowship of home meetings was *not* a person's claim regarding their *relationship* with Jesus, but whether or not they walked in *the doctrine* of Jesus! Do you know why? Because anyone can say they have a relationship with Jesus, when in fact, they don't. Also, people can have a relationship with a *counterfeit* Jesus and not realize it. However, if you have a relationship with the *real* Jesus, you won't be propagating major doctrinal errors or blasphemies because your relationship with God will keep you "abiding in the doctrine of Christ".

The apostle of love had no problem saying that if someone didn't agree with *his* doctrine, they shouldn't even be allowed into the home to eat, let alone be made part of the fellowship. He had no problem saying that those who didn't agree with *his* doctrine, did not have God. Got that? The person who didn't *agree* with the doctrine John preached (ie: the doctrine of Christ), was not even to be considered a believer! That's pretty narrow and judgmental by today's standards. Consider the following statement:

*They went out from us, but **they were not of us**; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that **they were not all of us**"*

*I. John 2:19*

If you or I made this same statement today, it would be viewed by most Christians as narrow-minded and un-Christ-like. In fact, if you were to make such a statement today, the "Bible teacher" I just quoted—and all those who walk in that same kind of false love—would be saying: "*How can you say that? How do YOU know they weren't Christians, just because they left YOUR little group?*" You see, when you say the things John said, people who walk under this false love get very indignant and offended. But when John says the things John said, they say Amen! and have no problem with it. Duh!

Would you like to take a guess as to what most of today's Christians would call a *religious group* who claims that if you leave their group, that just proves you were never a real Christian to begin with? Does the word "*cult*" ring a bell? That's right. If the apostle John were alive today, and he said the same thing he said in I. John 2:19, most of today's Christians would accuse him of not only of having a spirit of criticism and of walking in the flesh; they would also say he was the leader of a religious cult. Consider what he said in the following passage:

*I wrote unto the church: but **Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them**, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, **prating against us with malicious words**: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.*

*III. John 1:9-10*

Wow! Is this the same John, the apostle of love, talking? So much for the idea that we should not name names! So much for the idea that we can judge the message but *not* the messenger! John not only publicly named Diotrephes, he exposed publicly the wicked *motive* of this man's heart. There wasn't even a

“message” in this particular situation to judge. It was all about the messenger. So either our illustrious “Bible teacher” is following the wrong spirit, or else John was—and I don’t think it was John.

I’ve said this before and I’m going to say it again: Satan knows the Scripture better than any mortal man; and he knows how to *mis-use* it better than any of us know how to properly use it. Every false (Christian) doctrine ever invented has been based on some verse of Scripture. So one of the *stupidest* things people can do is walk around *assuming* that because they read or study God’s word they won’t be deceived—and that includes studying the Greek and the Hebrew as well, for Satan can twist those languages just as easy as he can twist the English language. To demonstrate how easy it is to confuse people with the Scripture, consider the following two passages:

***Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:***

*Luke 6:28-37*

According to what Jesus taught here, what is the proper *response* to those who sin against us? Don’t judge them; don’t condemn them; bless them; pray for them; turn the other cheek; be merciful; and forgive. How then does this fit with His other teaching regarding those who sin against us?

***Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.***

*Matthew 18:15-17*

Here, Jesus doesn’t tell us to bless, pray for, forgive, or turn the other cheek regarding the one who sins against us. Rather, He tells us to judge him guilty and confront him regarding his sin. When we confront him,

if he doesn't repent, did Jesus say we should just let the whole thing drop because we must forgive and show the brethren mercy? No. He said we are to take one or two others (who must *also* judge him guilty) and confront him again. If he still doesn't repent, he should be taken before the entire church (who must *also* judge him guilty). If he still doesn't repent, he is to be treated like a Gentile or tax-gatherer. But what about Jesus' command not to judge? What about His command to turn the other cheek? What about His command to be merciful and forgiving?

Well, obviously there are times when God expects us to turn the other cheek and forgive the one who has sinned against us. But there are other times when He tells us to confront the one who has sinned against us and not to let the issue drop *until* there has either been an admission of guilt and repentance, or a spiritual separation. How do we know when to turn the other cheek and when to seek justice? We have to be led "by the Spirit". Paul said we are to be led by the Spirit of God, not by the Bible: "*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God* (Rom. 8:14).

Another example of this can be seen regarding the idea of covering your brother's sins. A favorite verse of those who walk under Satan's false love is I. Peter 4:8: "*Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because **love covers a multitude of sins**."* This is one reason people who walk in a false love have no desire to name publicly those who are teaching error. They think they are manifesting God's love by covering their identities.

How does this square with Paul's instructions in I. Timothy 5:20: "*Them that sin **rebuke before all**, that others also may fear.*" Paul said that when someone sins, haul them out in front of the entire congregation and publicly rebuke him so the rest of the people may learn to fear. Fear what? Fear the *consequences* of sinning. Who in their right mind would want to be hauled out in public to have their rebuked before everyone for what they have done.

So now, the next time you know someone has sinned, what will you do? Will you obey Peter or Paul? Once again, we have to be led by the Holy Spirit in these issues. The Bible is not a rule book or a how to manual. My point is, people can deceive us very easily with the Scripture by mis-applying it. And the same is true of seducing spirits. They are expert at mis-applying the Word of God in people's minds. All they need is half a chance and they will do it, I assure you.

Okay, let's look at the second way the enemy attacks the command to judge others. This line of attack is more *covert*. It's like the back door approach. Rather than claiming *the Scripture* forbids judging others, Satan simply over-emphasizes love to the point where people become convinced that judging others is *incompatible* with love. It moves from a doctrinal issue to an emotional issue. Someone who has come under the influence of this false love will get up and testify how they were a "Pharisee" for many years, judging everyone and making themselves miserable. But then they got a revelation of God's love, or they had some awesome experience of that love, which delivered them from their critical spirit. Now they live in the wonderful love of God and have no desire to judge others. So instead of coming right out and saying that judging others is unscriptural, they *infer* that judging others is *inferior* to loving them.

Those who step onto this Yellow Brick Road gradually develop *an aversion* to any kind of Spirit-led confrontation, or defense of God's truth, or judging of others. They begin to believe that only carnal or immature believers go around judging others; and they usually view these kinds of believers as those who

“walk in the flesh”. However, those who are spiritual (like themselves) have grown out of that type of thing, and now they “walk in love”. What most people who get into this trap can’t see is that they are hypocrites, for they are constantly “judging others” of not walking in the kind of love they think they have arrived at. *They judge* the ones who judge others as “fleshy”. *They judge* the ones who judge others as critical. *They judge* the ones who judge others as harsh and unloving. *They judge* the ones who judge others as immature. *They judge* the ones who judge others as fault-finders and nit-pickers. But somehow, in their warped little minds, they don’t believe they are judging others.

Of course, there *is* a difference between true, spiritual judgment and fleshy or hypocritical judgment. There is a difference between true judgment and criticism or gossip. But if we are dying daily, if we are *judging ourselves* daily, then our judgment will probably not be fleshy criticism, but spiritual discernment.

Before moving on, let me say a few words about public ministries. If you teach publicly—I don’t care how big your ministry is: whether you are a Benny Hinn with millions of followers, or a home Bible study teacher, or a Dan Mace with an itty-bitty chat room—if you teach publicly, then you are in a *different category* than the rest of the brethren. Those who teach publicly *become answerable* to the rest of the body of Christ. What is taught publicly is to be judged publicly by ALL the members of Christ’s body. You don’t need a degree or ordination papers before you can judge the teachings and the fruit of religious teachers. You don’t have to ask their permission to discuss what they teach in a public forum. And you certainly don’t have to consult them first, before publicly refuting any error they may teach. So don’t ever let anyone scare you or bluff you into keeping silent when you know God want’s you to expose the error or the name of someone who is doing harm to the rest of the body.

The reason I am talking about Satan’s false love is because it’s a very dangerous deception. If the enemy can get us involved in his false love, we will never be established in the real love of Christ. This goes a lot deeper than just doctrine. Being taught wrong doctrine about God’s love is not necessarily deadly to our walk—though it can be. Wrong doctrine can be corrected or un-learned as we grow spiritually. What I am talking about is people having *intense religious experiences* that they believe to be God’s love, but which is a counterfeit. What I am talking about is people receiving *supernatural revelations* regarding God’s love that are false. These kinds of things are much more deadly because they are coming from seducing spirits. This is one of the “wiles” Satan is using on people in this hour.

We all know that God is love; and we all know it’s imperative that we be established in that love. The need to come forth in the love of God has been taught in every Bible believing fellowship for centuries. But our God has *other* attributes, and without these other attributes He would not be God; without them, Jesus would not be Jesus; and without them, we will never bear the full image of Christ. One of those attributes righteous judgment. What Satan is trying to do right now is keep God’s people from having His righteous judgment established in their lives. The main way he does this by getting ministers to continually focus on the love of God because he knows that a continual focus on love will eventually produce a *strong aversion* to judgment, and especially to judging others.

Those who over-emphasize love are quick to point us to passages which support their view. They say, didn’t Paul tell us to speak the truth “in love” (*Eph. 4:15*)? Didn’t he say we should show “forbearance to one another in love” (*Eph. 4:2 NAS*)? Didn’t he tell us to “walk in love” (*Eph. 5:2*)? And didn’t he say we should “increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men” (*I. Thess. 3:12*)? Yes he

did—and we should already be walking in that love and manifesting it to those around us. The problem is, that's not the *whole* story. The apostles also exercised judgment because judgment is also part of God's divine nature.

James rebuked those in the congregations whose faith has produced no works. He said: "*Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?*" (James 2:19-20) The term "O vain man" is equivalent to the English term "fool". So under the unction of the Holy Spirit, James told these people in a sarcastic manner that their faith was no better than the faith of demons. Then he called them *fools* for believing they could have faith without works. When James called his fellow believers fools, do you think he was manifesting the nature of God; or was he walking in the flesh?

Listen to how Peter describes false teachers: "*But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption*". (II. Peter 2:12) In modern terms, Peter is calling these people "irrational animals" who were born to be caught and destroyed. What think ye? When Peter called other people animals, was manifesting God's character; or was he walking in the flesh? Can you picture yourself talking this way about today's false teachers? Can you imagine yourself telling other Christians that someone like Benny Hinn is just *an animal* who was born to be destroyed?

Listen to Stephen, as he stands before the recognized religious authority of that hour and says: "*You stiff necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. . . which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?*" (Acts 7:51-52) You do realize that telling the Jewish leaders of Israel they were "uncircumcised in heart and ears" and that they do "always resist the Holy Spirit" was a monumental insult to them. It was the same as saying they were not saved. When Stephen said those things, was he manifesting God's nature; or was he just walking in the flesh? How about you? Could you stand before any of today's deluded religious leaders and say what Stephen said? Could you stand before the Kenneth Copelands or the Todd Bentleys and tell them they are uncircumcised in heart and ears, and that they do always resist the (true) Holy Spirit?

Listen to Paul, when talking about Jewish believers who were demanding that Gentile believers be circumcised. He is so frustrated and upset (in the Spirit) at what these people are doing he says: "*But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. Would that those who are troubling you would even mutilate themselves*" (Gal. 5:11-12 NAS). Paul said he wished those Judaizers would emasculate themselves! Now I ask you: can you reconcile these words with the other things he said about love? Can you reconcile them with he said about "charity" in First Corinthians chapter thirteen?

Do you think that when Paul said he wished some of his fellow Jews would *castrate themselves* he was manifesting God's nature; or do you think he just lost his temper and got in the flesh for a few minutes? Can you accept the fact that he was being led *by the Holy Spirit* to talk that way? And what about you? Do you believe God would ever ask you to say something like that about someone? And if He did, could you do it? If your answer is "No", then maybe your view of God's nature is a little lopsided. Maybe you are walking under the influence of the Dragon's false love.

How about when Jesus called the religious leaders of Israel a “brood of vipers” (*Matt. 2:34*) and “hypocrites” (*Matt. 5:7*). Do you think He was being led of the Spirit to say those things? Was Jesus being harsh when He looked at Peter and said: “...*Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me...*” (*Matt. 16:23*)? Do you have any idea how much that must have hurt Peter?

Peter loved Jesus. When the Lord said He was going to be rejected and killed by the leaders of Israel, Peter thought he was showing the Lord his love and devotion by telling Him He must never let such a horrible thing happen. The problem was, Peter’s emotions were not under the government of the Holy Spirit; so Satan was able to use them to get Peter to go against the perfect will of the Father for Jesus—which was that He die on the Cross.

What about *you*? Do you think the Spirit of God could ever lead you to look at someone who loves you, someone who is trying to protect you, but who is (without knowing it) interfering with God's perfect will for your life, and say to them: “Get thee behind me Satan; thou art an offence to me”?

Consider how harsh the apostle Peter must have seemed to those who watched in horror, as God judged severely a man and wife who were part of the Jerusalem church, through him (*Acts 5:1-10*). Ananias and Sapphira were not drunkards or murderers or extortioners or drug addicts. All they did was lie to the apostles about the actual price they got for some land they sold. But God slew them for that sin—and Peter was the vessel God *moved through* to execute that judgment.

How about you, brother? How about you, sister? Could God ever use *you* in such a way? Could He ever judge people like that through you? Could you ever *announce the death* of someone you know, of someone you love, of someone who’s been a part of your fellowship, who has committed a sin that doesn't even seem that wicked?

Consider how judgmental Paul must have seemed to those who watched him publicly rebuke Peter: “*When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. . . when I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?" (Gal. 2:11&14 NIV)* Paul’s first allegiance was to Jesus Christ and His truth; and because it was, God was able to judge the hypocrisy of Peter through him.

Take a fresh look at the Old Testament prophets. Consider carefully the things God said and did *through* these men. Much of their ministry was *negative* and *divisive* and they were often used by God to pronounce devastating judgment on His own people. Now then think about how they would be judged by today’s Christians. Most of us would view them as divisive, rude, obnoxious, and lacking in love. If they walked into our fellowships today they would be labeled sensationalist, fleshy and judgmental.

You see, when it comes to manifesting God’s character, there is more to it than just being kind to everyone. Certainly no one can accuse Jesus, Stephen, Paul, Peter and James of being unkind or of lacking God's love! These men possessed and shared the love of God with those around them every day. But they also had the righteous judgment of God worked into their personalities—and because they did, they could say and do things that today’s Christians can’t relate to or even comprehend.

Listen my friends. We have entered the season of God's judgment. In the not to distant future, God is going to pour His *wrath* out on secular and religious Babylon (*See: Rev. 19:1-3*). When He does, entire nations are going to be obliterated. Millions and millions of people are going to die. John said when this happens, those who are "in heaven" will rejoice.

This is more than just a reference to those who have died physically and are now in the spirit realm. It's also talking about those who are alive and are seated with Christ in heavenly places. It's talking about believers who are not minding earthly things. It's talking about believers who are walking in the spirit. These believers will be able to say "Alleluia" with those in heaven when they see God pouring out His wrath because they will have had the righteous judgment of God's character worked in them.

How much of that righteous judgment have *you* allowed God to work in your life? Do you have enough worked in you that you could *rejoice* if God's wrath were to be poured out tomorrow? What if our nation was destroyed by nuclear terrorist attacks next week? Could we say "Alleluia" with those who dwell in heaven? Would we remain on God's side and say: "...*true and righteous are His judgments?*"

What if we had to watch God's wrath come upon those we love? What if we had to watch it come upon our unsaved wife, or our backslidden husband, or our rebellious children, or our parents who are just religious? What if we had to watch it come upon our friends and acquaintances? Would we be on God's side? Would we be able to say: "...*true and righteous are His judgments?*"

Because we are in the season of judgment, God's focus is on judgment. It's not on love. It's not on evangelism. It's not on revival. It's on judgment. It's time to let Him work His righteous judgment into our lives. Amen?