

SATAN'S MINISTERS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Let me start out by confessing that this week, my spirit has been very grieved, so much so that I feel incapable of expressing it in words. It's frustrating and depressing to see so many of God's people so confused and deceived. I'm coming to the conclusion that the many of those who consider themselves part of God's "remnant" out here really do think Satan is powerless and *stupid*. How else can you explain the fact that so many of them are walking in religious confusion, deception and hypocrisy?

*But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; **for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light**. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

II. Corinthians 11:12-15

I want to talk about the way Satan attacks the truth of God. When most of us read what Paul said in this passage, we automatically think of *people* like Todd Bentley, Benny Hinn, Patricia King, Paul Cain, Bob Jones, and all the prosperity preachers on TV. But I'd like you to look beyond the names and faces that pop into your mind when you read this passage, and consider *the principle* Paul is talking about. He is telling us that Satan has the ability to "wear two different faces" so to speak. He doesn't just cause people to rape and murder and do all manner of vile things to each other. He also has the ability to pose as an angel (messenger, preacher) of "light". He can transform people into "ministers of righteousness".

In Paul's day, the issue of "righteousness" revolved the Law of Moses. The big debate was the place obedience to the Law had in the life of a New Testament believer. At that time, Satan's *ministers of righteousness* were those who came to new Gentiles believers and told them they had to keep the Law of Moses—particularly the rite of circumcision. The point of contention was the Law, but the *real issue* was the question of *how* we are made righteous. There were two different kinds of Judaizers who plagued Paul's ministry, and they reveal the two different lines of attack Satan constantly uses to deceive people. One line of attack is overt and the other line of attack is covert. He used *unbelieving* Jews for his overt attack, and he used *believing* Jews for his covert attack.

The *unbelieving* Jews completely rejected Jesus as Israel's Messiah. They would follow Paul from town to town and denounce him as an apostate who was preaching a false Messiah, and who was speaking against the Temple, against God's *righteousness* (as described in the Torah), and against the nation of Israel. They would stir the people of a city up and Paul would be driven out of that city. On one occasion, they stirred the people up so much they stoned Paul and left him for dead.

The *believing* Jews were another story. They did not reject Jesus as Israel's Messiah. They accepted the Lord as their Savior, but they wanted to cling to the Law of Moses too. They are described in the book of Acts. Paul comes to Jerusalem and he is informed that there are many Jews who believe, but who are also zealous of the Law:

*And when [Paul] he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, **how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law**: And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.*

Acts 21:19-21

The *unbelieving* Jews attacked the work of Paul from the OUTSIDE. They worked on the people of the city where Paul was planting a congregation. Then, the people of the city would drive Paul away and persecute the new fellowship. This line of attack was *overt*.

The *believing* Jews attacked the work of Paul from the INSIDE. They would insert themselves into the fellowships Paul raised up and, as fellow believers, they would persuade the people to remain under the Law. This line of attack was *covert*.

Now, do you think the believing Jews who worked on the Gentile congregations from the inside, *knew* they were doing wrong? Do you think they *realized* they were actually fighting against the Holy Spirit? I don't. I believe those men were very sincere (in their own eyes). They were convinced the things Paul taught regarding the Law were not only destructive to the new Gentile converts who believed him, but to the Jewish nation as well. They sincerely believed Paul had been deceived in this regard and that he was working against the *righteousness* God had revealed to the nation at Mt. Sinai. In their minds, they were defending God, and the truth God revealed to them.

What exactly do you think these Judaizers said when they went into the new Gentile congregations? Do you think they walked into those assemblies and said: "Brethren, don't believe the lies of that deceiver, Paul. He's an apostate, an agent of Satan. Jesus, the carpenter from Nazareth, is not Israel's Messiah! He's dead. He did not leave the tomb. Moreover, his blood can no more wash away your sins than our blood could". Do you think that was their approach? Not on your life.

Satan's ministers of righteousness went into the assemblies and *confirmed* everything that Paul said about Jesus being Israel's Messiah, in order to throw everyone off guard. Then, they proceeded to inform the people that even though Paul was a good man, and no doubt called of God, still, he's just a man; and being human, we are all prone to make mistakes. After all, none of us has *all* truth, do we? So, as wonderful and sincere as Paul is, you need to understand that he is a little confused on this one point regarding obedience to the Law. You see, Jesus didn't come to free us from the Law. Jesus came to enable us to obey the Law *perfectly*. That's right. Jesus came to enable us to do what we tried to do all those hundreds of years, but couldn't—which is perfectly obey the Law. That was the approach *these* ministers took.

Of course, today, there is still a debate raging about the relationship between obedience and grace—and there are still plenty of Judaizers around who believe Jesus is the Messiah. They are called "Messianic Jews". They do the same basic thing the believing Jews of Paul's day did. They say: "Yes, Jesus is the Messiah. But He did not come to free us from the necessity of obedience. He came to help us obey God perfectly—and *the way* you obey Him perfectly is by keeping the Law of Moses.

However, what we need to understand is that Satan is not limited to this particular arena of righteousness. Whenever the subject of righteousness is being taught or discussed—regardless of the theological framework or context—you can be sure Satan’s *ministers of righteousness* will be there to confuse and deceive people. You can be sure that he has people who will attack the truth openly, from the outside, and he has people who will attack the truth secretly, from the inside.

Do you want to discuss “imputed righteousness”? Well, for every person who understands the truth about imputed righteousness, there are dozens of Satan’s ministers out there teaching a counterfeit of that truth. Do you want to discuss “sanctification” (which is actual righteousness)? I guarantee you that for every person who knows the truth about sanctification, there are dozens of Satan’s ministers out there teaching a counterfeit of that truth. Do you want to discuss “death to self”? I promise you that for every person who teaches the truth about death to self, Satan has dozens of his ministers out there propagating a counterfeit of that truth.

I don’t want to sound rude, but the cold-blooded reality is that it’s we Christians who are *stupid*, because we think we can arrive at a place where Satan can’t touch us or *counterfeit* our doctrines and experiences. It’s we who are stupid, because we walk around thinking the only kind of attack Satan is capable of advancing is an obvious, frontal attack that even a carnal Christian can see through. If you want to see an example of stupidity, consider the following statements:

“There is **only one** avenue by which we come under assault, that avenue is our FLESH. It is astounding how ignorant we as believers are regarding the real enemy of our soul. We *‘think’* that we are being wise and doing God *‘service’* when we **attempt to engage in *‘spiritual warfare;*’** when we **focus on trying to figure out what is of God and what is counterfeit;** when we **build up doctrinal walls of defense by which we judge one another;** all the while failing to even come close to doing any damage to the enemy, while inflicting great harm within the Body of Christ. How so? Because we are operating according to our carnal understanding, **motivated** by our **fleshly desires to be righteous...**”

This quote is from an article written by a blogger who has been out of the Religious System for many years. This individual says those who try to figure out what is of God and what is a counterfeit are being motivated by their fleshly desire to be righteous. They think they are being wise, but in reality, they are operating according to their own carnal understanding.

This person is talking about *you*, if you are trying to discern between the true and the counterfeit. I don’t know how that sets with you, but personally, I think it’s probably one of the *dumbest* statements you could possibly make in a time when everywhere you turn, you are faced with counterfeit doctrines and counterfeit religious experiences.

This individual also says that those who “build up doctrinal walls by which we judge one another” are also being motivated by their fleshly desire to be righteous. Well, I guess the apostle Paul and the apostle John were motivated by *their* fleshly desire to be righteous, since they told us to do the very thing this blogger says is so wrong. As a matter of fact, I think we should all cut the books of Second John and Second Thessalolnians out of our Bibles and *denounce* Paul and John as self-righteous men.

*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 1:9-11

As I said last week, John said we must judge THE DOCTRINE of those who claim to be believers. He placed great importance on doctrine, so much so that his criteria for accepting someone into the fellowship was not a person's claim regarding their relationship with Jesus, or how much they loved Jesus, but whether or not they *walked in the doctrine* of Jesus. Does anybody in this room *not* see that John was doing precisely what this blogger says we should *not* do? Does anybody in the room think John *wasn't* building up doctrinal walls of defense by which he judged others? Now, do you want to take a guess as to what kind of "spirit" is telling this person we should not do what John plainly told us to do?

*Now **we command you**, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye **withdraw yourselves** from every brother that walketh disorderly, and **not after the tradition** which he received of us.*

II. Thessalonians 3:6

In this passage, Paul clearly instructed us to judge others *by* their doctrine. He said we should withdraw from those who do not hold to the tradition he taught. The term "tradition" here means *apostolic teaching*. It means the doctrine he taught the Thessalonians while he was with them. Can everyone understand that when Paul commands us to withdraw from those who do not walk in *the doctrine* he taught, he is telling us to do the very thing this blogger is saying we should not do? Can you see that we cannot possibly do what Paul said *unless* we "build up doctrinal walls of defense by which we judge one another"? So I ask again: would you like to take a guess as to what kind of "spirit" it is that's telling this person to disobey a the command of the Holy Spirit through Paul?

As I said last week, Satan hates true, spiritual judgment. He hates it when we judge *the doctrines* of preachers and teachers. He hates it when we judge *the experiences* of other Christians. He hates it when we judge *the fruit* of other people. He hates it when we judge *the testimony* of other people. He hates it because the more you discern and judge these things, the less likely you are to be deceived, and vice-versa. The less you discern and judge these things, the more likely you are to be deceived. So the *last thing* Satan wants you doing is judging the doctrine or fruit or religious experiences of other Christians. Here's an excerpt from another article this same blogger wrote:

"Often times, if the truth be known, what we call 'being right' is **nothing more than the fact that our particular point-of-view is different from another's**. It's amazing how quickly everyone becomes an authority in matters of scriptural interpretation. When someone sees things differently from our understanding, **we feel justified in charging forward with all the self-righteous bravado we can muster**. What comes from that is never even remotely 'Christ-like' or 'Spirit led' ... it is '**flesh**,' pure and simple."

Remember last week, when I quoted the “Bible teacher” who said we should not judge the ones we *perceive* to be in error? The implication was that *nobody can really be sure* who is in error and who is not in error because truth and error are matters individual perception. Well, this is the same kind of nonsense. Nobody should ever *think* they are right, regardless of what the Scripture teaches, because our interpretations of the Scripture are just our “particular points of view”—and everyone’s point of view is just as valid as the next guy’s point of view.

Does this sound familiar to anyone? Does it sound like anything you hear in the *secular* world? Everyone’s opinion, everyone’s religious views, everyone’s culture, holds equal value and equal weight. Nobody can say THEY have the truth. Nobody can say THEY are right and those who oppose them are wrong. Well, if it looks like a duck and acts like a duck and sounds like a duck—guess what? It’s a duck! These kinds of comments are coming from the spirit who controls this world.

*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; **reprove, rebuke,**
exhort with all longsuffering **and doctrine.***

II. Timothy 4:2

Please notice that Paul told Timothy to reprove and rebuke those who were in error. Moreover, he instructed Timothy to rebuke them with doctrine. What? With doctrine? How could Timothy possibly rebuke and reprove people with doctrine unless he knew his doctrine *was correct* and the doctrine of the ones being rebuked *was wrong*?

God must be so grieved that His people have allowed themselves to become so deluded they actually believe no one can know they are right; that no one can be confident they know the truth of the Scripture. I thank God brother Paul never allowed himself to get into this kind of spiritual condition. If he would have, he would have never told Timothy to rebuke those who were in error with correct doctrine. Instead, he would be saying the same thing this blogger is saying, which is: “*How dare you think—let lone publicly proclaim—that your point of view is right and others are wrong! How arrogant!*”

Maybe this blogger could use a refresher course in what the Scripture actually teaches about the importance of learning, teaching, holding fast to, defending, and separating over, doctrine. Paul said: “*But speak thou the things which become **sound doctrine***” (Titus 2:1). If doctrine was not important, why would Paul tell Titus to make sure he spoke things which “become sound doctrine”? How can we possibly make sure we are speaking those things which *support* sound doctrine if we consider doctrine unimportant? How can we possibly speak things which become sound doctrine if we haven't even taken the time to *learn* sound doctrine? How can we possibly speak things which become sound doctrine if we don't know, or even care to know, the difference between sound and unsound doctrine?

This verse alone shows that the current attitude towards doctrine that so many people have, is *unbiblical*. Oh, I’m sorry! I forgot. It doesn’t really matter if something we believe is unbiblical, as long as we love Jesus and each other—right? And besides, who knows FOR SURE what’s Biblical and what’s not? Who’s to judge? I mean, none of us can be sure we know the truth, since it’s all a matter of PERCEPTION, isn’t it? It all boils down to OUR OWN POINT OF VIEW, doesn’t it? And we certainly don’t want to be so arrogant and self righteous as to think we are right and others are wrong—do we?

*In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: **in doctrine** shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,*

Titus 2:7

If doctrine isn't all that important to God, then why does Paul tell Titus to be sure his "doctrine" shows uncorruptness, gravity and sincerity? In order for a person's doctrine to be uncorrupt, it must be free of *mixture*. So this young pastor is being instructed to be sure his doctrine is correct, and not mixed with error. But how can he possibly be sure his doctrine is correct when, according to our illustrious blogger, just ASSUMING that our doctrine is correct proves we are walking in the flesh?

*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering **and doctrine**.*

II. Timothy 4:2

We already looked at this verse, but the question remains: if doctrine isn't important, if the only thing that is important is that we love God and each other, then why does Paul tell Timothy to use doctrine to reprove, rebuke and exhort the brethren? Why didn't he just tell Timothy to say whatever he feels like saying, or whatever the *Holy Spirit tells him to say*? And how would it even be possible for Timothy to use doctrine to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, if he never bothered to learn it in the first place; or if he could never be sure his doctrine was correct? The best he could do was give the people his "opinion".

*But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but **ye have obeyed** from the heart that form of **doctrine** which was delivered you.*

Romans 6:17

If the only thing God requires of us is that we "obey the voice of Jesus" or the Holy Spirit, then why is Paul telling the saints at Rome that they should obey "the doctrine" that was delivered to them? And how could they obey that doctrine unless they first learned it and were confident that it was the *right* doctrine?

*Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them** which cause divisions and offences **contrary to the doctrine** which ye have learned; and **avoid them**.*

Romans 16:17

If the only thing God requires is that we love each other, why is Paul telling the saints at Rome to "mark them" which cause divisions and offences contrary to THE DOCTRINE they had been taught, and avoid them? How totally opposite Paul's attitude was from the delusion so many people live in today!

*Take heed unto thyself, **and unto the doctrine**; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both **save thyself**, and them that hear thee.*

I. Timothy 4:16

Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

I. Timothy 4:13

If God doesn't really care what we believe—if He's only interested in our "relationship" with Him and that we love one another—then why did Paul tell Timothy to "take heed" unto THE DOCTRINE he had learned? Why didn't he say take heed unto thy love for Christ; or take heed unto thy love for the brethren? Moreover, why did he tell Timothy to be sure to "continue in" that doctrine? Shouldn't he have told him to make sure he continues in the love of God? If the only requirement for salvation is that we have a "relationship" with Jesus, then why did Paul tell Timothy that if he heeds the doctrine he was taught and continues in *that* doctrine, he will "save" himself and those who hear him?

*Holding fast the faithful word as **he hath been taught**, that he may be able by **sound doctrine** both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*

Titus 1:9

If doctrine is no longer important, why is Paul telling Titus to *hold fast* to the doctrine he was taught? And how can you hold fast to something you don't have and aren't even interested in getting? Why is Paul telling him to use sound DOCTRINE to exhort and convince the gainsayers? Why didn't Paul tell him to just speak what the Father tells him to speak; or speak what the Holy Spirit is leading him to speak?

*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.*

II John 1:8-9

If it's all about love and relationship, if the only thing God requires of us is that we know and love Jesus, then why does John say if we abide in THE DOCTRINE of Christ we have both the Father and the Son; but if we do not abide in *that* doctrine, we will not have either of them?

This passage alone is destroys the whole "just-love-God-and-each-other" error. Knowing, teaching, holding fast to, defending, and separating over, doctrine was important to the apostles. Please notice the instructions they gave regarding those who teach false doctrine. Of course, we know that none of this applies to us, since we can't possibly *know* who is teaching false doctrine and who isn't, since what each of us believes is just a matter of individual perception. I mean, we can't say our point of view is right and someone else's is wrong, can we? That's flesh—isn't it?

REBUKE THEM SHARPLY *"...rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith." Titus 1:13*

REJECT THEM *"A man that is **an heretic** after the first and second admonition reject." Titus 3:10*

WITHDRAW FROM THEM "...we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and **not after the tradition** which he received of us." II. Thessalonians 3:6

HAVE NO COMPANY WITH THEM "And if any man obey not **our word** (doctrine) by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." II. Thessalonians 3:14

RECEIVE THEM NOT "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 1:10-11

Why is doctrine so important? As I said last week, one reason is because the Christian faith is not in experience (ie: relationship) alone. It's *also* in doctrine. Correct doctrine and correct relationship go hand in hand. Both are *equally* important. Whenever we emphasize one above the other, we go straight into religious deception. You see, anyone can *say* they have a relationship with Jesus, when in fact, they don't. Moreover, people can have a relationship with a *counterfeit* Jesus and not realize it. So just because some one says they "love" Jesus, that doesn't necessarily mean they love the *real* Jesus. They could be loving a religious demon who's calling himself Jesus. 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".

Another reason correct doctrine is so important is because we can be *carried away from the faith* by false doctrine. This is why the apostle Peter instructed the saints to guard against those who would distort the teaching (doctrine) of the Scripture (II. Peter 3:15-18). False doctrine has the power to carry us away from God. I don't care how much you *think* you love God, or how much spiritual life you *think* you are walking in, or how much revelation you *think* you have, or how well you *think* you are abiding in the Vine—if you do not care about doctrine, if you are not willing to contend over doctrine and separate over doctrine, and guard yourself against unsound doctrine, you are food for demons.

*Then Jesus said unto them, **Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.** And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?...How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of **the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.***

Matthew 16:6-8 & 11-12

The Lord told His disciples to “beware” of doctrinal leaven, which is false doctrine. That warning applies to us as well. When Jesus tells us to beware of something, He means it! If we ignore His warning, we show ourselves to be fools and are headed for deception. The influence of false or unsound doctrine in our lives is not a joke. Bad doctrine produces *bad experience*. Bad doctrine can bring us under the influence of demon spirits. Bad doctrine contains enough power to carry us away from God. It has enough power to cause us to depart from the faith. It has enough power to destroy individuals and entire fellowships. So don't ever fall for Satan's line that doctrine isn't important.

I took the time to show how much importance the Scripture places on knowing and walking in sound doctrine for a reason. For you see, the *spirit* that's working in our illustrious blogger is an angel of light—and that angel of light is talking about RIGHTEOUSNESS. It's saying we can walk in righteousness without any major concern over doctrine. The doctrines we believe are just our own points of view. And when we come across someone who has a different point of view (doctrine), it is flesh and self righteousness that makes us judge them, or see our doctrine as correct and theirs as wrong.

This is a COVERT attack on the truth revealed in the Scripture regarding doctrine. It's a covert attack on the need to learn, teach, hold fast to, defend, and if necessary, separate over correct doctrine. It's not an OVERT attack. This blogger doesn't come right out and say that thinking doctrine is important is wrong and unscriptural. What's being said is that we *can't really be sure* that our doctrine is correct and those who walk around *thinking* their doctrine is correct are walking in the flesh.

This takes away *the assurance* that we can know sound doctrine; it takes away *the assurance* that we can walk in sound doctrine; and it *neutralizes* our willingness and our ability to reprove, rebuke, and exhort others WITH doctrine. After all, if everyone's doctrine is just their own individual point of view, how can anyone use their doctrine as a STANDARD for anything?

It is true that many of us have been taught false doctrines in the Church System; and when we come out, we *should* ask God to separate the truth from the error in our understanding. We must be humble enough to admit we are wrong in some of the things we have been taught. We must be teachable and willing to accept new truths. But this does not mean we can never be sure the things we believe, which *are* Scriptural, are true. This does not mean that we can never judge the correctness of other people's doctrine. It does not mean we can never use the doctrine we know to be true to reprove and rebuke those who are clearly teaching false doctrine. Those who say we can't be sure we are right, or that we can't judge the doctrine of others because it's all a matter of personal opinion, or that we can't rebuke and reprove others with the doctrine we know is true, are functioning as Satan's ministers of righteousness.

So far, we've seen how Satan carries out his COVERT attacks in two specific areas of righteousness. I want to look at a third area for a few minutes. This is the area of *sanctification*. There is the true, Scriptural view of sanctification; and then there are various false or counterfeit views that have been introduced by Satan over the years. As in the first two cases we looked at, the enemy's attack on the truth of sanctification both overt and cover. His overt attack comes in the form of out-right denial that it's possible to be fully sanctified in this life. This is part of the whole Evangelical “saved by grace” theology. Since we cannot possibly reach perfection in *this* life, God offers us salvation by “grace”—meaning, that since we will *continue* to sin the rest of our lives, grace is the only thing that God can come up with in order not to destroy us because of our sin. Once we get to heaven, we will be made holy and pure in reality. But until

then, we can only be *reckoned* as pure and holy through the covering of the blood of Jesus. As long as we are alive in the flesh, we will continue to sin, and God will continue to cover and forgive us *by grace*, until we get to heaven where we will be made holy in truth and experience.

His covert attack is much different. He doesn't deny that we can attain full sanctification in this life. Rather, he confuses our understanding of *how* this sanctification is achieved; and in some cases, he gives people a various religious experiences which they think has brought them to that place of full sanctification.

A few weeks back, I mentioned some personal experiences I had with people who had some kind of religious experience which they interpreted as God "circumcising" their hearts. They believed the experience they had completely REMOVED their sin nature. I would like to share some more about this particular kind of error because it's not just something that's believed or preached by a few nut-cases out here in the wilderness. It's an idea that has been around for centuries, both inside and outside the Religious System, in various forms. It became prominent during the Holiness Movement in the 1800's.

First, I want to look at a *current* example of this kind of error. I will be quoting from two articles written by a brother named George Delo. He has a web site called "*Power For Today Prophetic Ministries*". <http://powerfortodaypropheticministries.org/index.html> He's also a featured writer on the "*Enter His Rest*" web site, who's description of him is as follows:

"George Delo—**After becoming sanctified**, George was called to provoke churches to holiness. With an aggressive and explicit message **to obtain the second blessing and a supernatural righteousness of heart**, he has been preaching with success and power in the U.S. and internationally for 21 years now. Under his firm guidance many enter into His Rest.

Unless you are familiar with the Holiness Movement of the 1800's, the above description Mr. Delo will probably sound a bit confusing. The phrase "after becoming sanctified" is a reference to a very specific religious experience the Holiness people refer to as the "second blessing". It's an experience which *supernaturally* removes the sin nature from a person's life. You can see this concept in the writings of Mr. Delo. For example, in an article called "*How Many Times Must We Die?*", he writes:

"The way we overcome sin is by **removing the nature of sin** through the crucifixion of the old man or **the circumcision of the heart**. . . The old man or the flesh is put to death by the circumcision or **removal of its sin nature**. The power or dominion of sin that enslaves us is taken away through the sanctifying work of Christ. . . This is what was foreshadowed by circumcision in the Old Testament. The Israelites entered into covenant relationship with the Lord through the rite of circumcision, the removal of the flesh. It is through the circumcision of the heart that **we too** enter into covenant relationship with the Lord. **The removal of the sin nature does two things**. It frees us from the power of sin to now obey God and it purifies our hearts so that God is then able to pour His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. This enables us to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, and strength

Jesus died to sin once ending all relation to it so that He might live in abiding fellowship with the Father. **In the same way we too die once to sin ending all relation to it** so we too can live in abiding fellowship with the Lord. Look what he says: BUT NOW having

been set free from sin! He's talking about the sin nature. **Either you are free or you're not. Either you died or you didn't.** There is no gray area. **There is no partial death.** When you die your body of sin is done away with so that you are no longer a slave of sin. He who has died is freed from sin”

The point of this article is that Christians are wrong when they think they have to “die daily” to sin. According to Mr. Delo, we only have to die once to the sin nature. This death is not something we have any part in, other than believe and receiving it by faith. It’s a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. When that work transpires, the heart of the individual is circumcised and the sin nature is REMOVED by God. Once a person experiences this second blessing or supernatural work of the Spirit, we are freed from the power of sin and we will love the Lord with all our hearts. You can see this same idea in another article Mr. Delo wrote, called “*The Power Of Satan*”. He says:

“The power of Satan is sin. **As long as we have a nature of sin within us, Satan has power over us.** Satan had no power over the Lord because there was no sin in Him. *"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me"* (John 14:30). When Satan tempted the Lord in the wilderness, he tested Him for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life which are the roots of all sin. When he could find nothing in Him he had to leave. **The same holds true for us. When the nature of sin is removed through sanctification by faith,** Satan no longer has power over us. . . The power of Satan is sin. If we have no sin then Satan has no power over us. **Through sanctification, the Lord removes our nature of sin** and brings us into fellowship with Himself where we are cherished and kept safe by Him”

Pretty clear, is it not? When the nature of sin is REMOVED from us through sanctification by faith, Satan no longer has power over us. Again, through sanctification, the Lord *removes* our sin nature. This is a serious error—and the ones who believe it are left wide open to deception because they won’t be watching for the tactics and wiles of an enemy who (they believe) can no longer touch them. This is why you have to be careful when you read the articles and books, or transcribed sermons, of old “holiness” writers and preachers. Many of them are infected with this error, even though, many times they don’t express it as clearly or as bluntly as Mr. Delo does.

Many years ago, there was a teaching going around that was similar to this whole line of thought. It was called: “Reckon Yourself Dead”. The ones promoting this error said basically the same thing as Mr. Delo is saying, except it was more of a *mental exercise* than an actual supernatural experience. The idea was that if you *believe* strong enough that you are dead to sin, then you *will be* dead to sin. There was no responsibility on our part to actually put the deeds of the body to death, as Paul says in Romans 8:13. Instead, the person would become dead to sin by osmosis through faith.

There is a lot of confusion in people’s minds regarding the sin or flesh nature, what it is, where it is located, how we overcome it, and whether or not it can be eradicated in this life. At first glance, all these question may seem unimportant, but they are far from unimportant. Many errors are being promoted among God’s people right not because we do not understand what the Scripture teaches regarding the flesh, and how we put it to death.

Let me share an important concept with you that very few people ever talk about when dealing with the whole issue of the flesh nature. God is looking for overcommers. There are many abiding places in the Kingdom of God for all kinds of different Christians. But among all the various kinds of believers that will be in the kingdom when the dust settles, there is an absolute *need* for overcomers. There is an absolute *need* for people like David's mighty men. There is an absolute need for those who will function in that kingdom as "pillars". And the only way *these kinds* of people are produced is through constant pressure and conflict. This is the reason God does not do what Mr. DeLo says He does. God does not remove our flesh nature because it's our resistance against that flesh nature that makes us strong. The battle with the flesh—and the spirits that traffic in that flesh—is what produces *pillars* for God's Temple.

This is why Satan is continues to come up with doctrines and ideas that offer us freedom from sin, or freedom from our flesh, *without* a struggle. He knows that it's the STRUGGLE against sin, it's the STRUGGLE against the flesh, it's the STRUGGLE against the demons who are entwined in our personalities, that produces spiritual strength. It's the struggle—and struggle alone—that produces the kinds of people God wants.

Satan is very aware of this, and so what he is constantly trying to do is move us into a passive state or walk with the Lord. He does this through false doctrines and false religious experiences. This is the whole purpose behind the "*Jesus-did-it-all*" theology. Jesus overcame sin so you don't have to. Jesus overcame the Devil so you don't have to. Jesus overcame the flesh so you don't have to.

The doctrine of the Second Blessing, or Entire Sanctification began with none other than John Wesley, the 18th century revivalist, from whom sprang the Methodist Church (and its offshoots), the Wesleyan and Nazarene Churches, the Salvation Army, and more. According to Wesley, the Second Blessing is an *instantaneous* experience that happens *subsequent* to the new birth, which is the first blessing. When this event happens, the believer is cleansed from all inbred sin which is the same as saying the sinful nature is removed. This experience enables the believer to walk in the same sinlessness that Jesus walked in on this earth. There is no more transgression of any moral law of God. The believer walks in perfect faith (no doubts), perfect hope (complete fullness of joy), and perfect love (no fears).

Wesley preached this doctrine of the Second Blessing to all his converts, constantly encouraging them to seek this instantaneous experience in which their sinful nature would be eradicated and they would receive perfect love. All doubts and fears would be being removed once for all, and there would be no more inward struggle to be holy. After this experience, there is no longer any inward inclination to sin, no inward struggle to fight against the fallen flesh and sinful nature, and in Wesley's own words, the perfectly sanctified believer now possesses "all the mind of Christ", with no evil thoughts, doubts, motives, etc

Though this may sound like an experience every true Christian would love to have—after all, who among us who hates sin and hungers for righteousness wouldn't love to be sinless once and for all?—but it is totally unscriptural. Not only is there no mention or any clear evidence in Scripture of this kind of work in the Christians life, there are clear teachings against such a thing.

I think we'll have to end here tonight because it would take too long to go through the rest of this. Lord willing, I'll continue next week. So if you are interested, come on back.