

We Have Been Taught Not to Discern - Part 3

by Andrew Strom

The church has lost its focus on preaching the true word of God, and instead has emphasized hype and church growth principles, leading to a famine of the word of God and a decline of the church.

Duration: 9:59

Scripture: Proverbs 1:7, Jeremiah 5:14, Amos 8:11-12, Matthew 4:4, Matthew 6:19-21, Luke 9:23, Romans 1:18, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Spiritual Discernment", "Godly Fear"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the scarcity of true spiritual nourishment in a time of crisis, pointing out the absence of the word of the Lord amidst church growth strategies and motivational talks. It calls for a return to preaching on sin, righteousness, and judgment, highlighting the need for a fear of God and understanding of being saved from His wrath. The sermon challenges the materialistic mindset prevalent in society, urging a shift towards spiritual grounding in God's truth rather than superficial 'frothiness.'

Transcript

This is what we're left with now. I want to tell this to you very seriously. It is so difficult.

Do you know, I have people writing to me all the time with this problem. There's not enough bread in the land, real bread, bread from heaven to feed the people. They go around churches, they say we've been to every church in our town, we still didn't hear the word of the Lord.

Not in any of them did we hear the word of the Lord. We hear so much hype. We see church growth principles being put into action.

We see, you know, purpose driven this and purpose driven that. We hear wonderful motivational talks a la Joel Osteen and co. You know, we hear plenty of this.

But where is the word of the Lord in a crisis situation in this land? We don't hear that. We're not finding that. There's a famine and Jesus, you know, he's looking at the situation but he says he knew about it all along.

He's asking the question where is there bread for the people? But Jesus all along had in his own hands what he knew he was going to do in a second. And I want to tell you we are at that crossroads but Jesus does have in his hands the answers. If only we could find enough people to pray.

If only we could find those preachers again. Do you know America manufactures some of the best revivalists in the history of the world? Did you know that? Almost unmatched. Wales and America again.

Wales, you know, Christmas Evans and going way back, you know, Daniel Rawlins and all these guys. John Elias, right up into the days of Evan Roberts of the Welsh Revival. Famous, famous preachers.

Unbelievable guys. It was Wesley based. Wesley was based in Bristol.

When you go to England you suddenly find Bristol's right next to Wales. No wonder those guys all knew each other so well. Bristol, you just crossed from the bridge from Bristol into Wales.

No wonder those guys all knew each other so well. No wonder the revivals were catching in between the two lots of people. And George Woodfield would come over from England over into America and spend most of his time here.

One of the most powerful preachers that he ever lived. Spent most of his time, much of his time in America. And Jonathan Edwards of course was here.

And Charles Finney. And D.L. Moody. And all these great fantastic preachers.

America mass produces some of the great revival preachers. And I say where is the next crop going to come from because we have been paying them all not to preach the truth anymore. We throw money at the young men who sound like they might be a good preacher.

We throw money at them and we say as long as you don't preach too hard on this, this and this, we'll keep throwing money at you and you'll have, you'll build up a great big ministry and we'll get you on television. And that's what's been happening. And so sin, righteousness and judgment preaching is disappearing out of the land.

You say what's so important about preaching sin, righteousness and judgment? I want to say do you know what John the Baptist preached? He preached who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Who warned you to flee? We say is that really necessary in the gospel? And I say do you know what we suffer from in the church so bad today? People don't know what they're supposed to be saved from. They don't know what they're supposed to be saved from. They don't think God is a fearful God.

Did you know that? We don't have the fear of the Lord in the churches. We don't build it into people on the first day that God is to be feared. That Jesus had to die to save us from wrath.

The wrath of God. The wrath of God. You say what is this word wrath? Because we never preach about it anymore.

We say what is this word wrath? I want to say it's the fierce anger of God against sin. We say what are we being saved from? Nobody knows. What are we always preaching to them? We're always you know there's the carrot and stick approach.

What we're throwing the stick away. And the carrot that we're using is Jesus will give you a better life. Isn't it? What's the title of Christian quote unquote books? Your best life now.

Is that biblical? Is that title in any sense belong with the gospel? I want to tell you quite frankly that that title there is the exact opposite of the gospel Jesus preached. You couldn't get more opposite if you try than

that little quote there. Your best life now is the opposite of what Jesus preached.

Jesus preached if you do not come after me and take up your cross and deny yourself and follow me you're not going to be my follower. You're not going to be my disciple. I won't even have you.

Rich young man comes to him. He says I've kept all the commandments Jesus. He says no no I'm sorry one thing you lapsed it.

Sell everything you have. Go and give it to the poor. Then you'll have treasure in heaven.

Come take up your cross and follow me. Rich young man went away sad. It says before he had many possessions.

Before he had many possessions what do we have? Yes America is full of Christian people who have too many possessions and God has started to strip it down. He's going to get to the get us down to the point again like our parents generation and the parents before them where we're happy to drive around in an old car as long as it gets us from A to B. I can't stand it that too many Americans including Christians think they have to drive a brand new car to be quote-unquote blessed by Jesus. That's not blessed by Jesus to me.

That's blessed by the bank who loans you the money and you don't own the car. And most Americans are now finding out what it means to have built your life on a pile of debt. You know what you're doing? You're building a house on sand and now the sand is sinking and most of America is about to find out you cannot build a house that way.

It will in the end decline and fall. We're building houses of cards for the last 30, 40, 50 years and thinking they never will go down. They're going down now.

People who think the financial crisis is over are dreaming and fooling the public at the same time. Why are they always in the mainstream media trying to drum up more confidence? They want people to start buying again because they know that people have stopped. People have stopped and this Christmas is going to prove it all over again.

Last Christmas was one of the worst Christmases ever on record in the United States. Why? Because people suddenly got some sense. People, you know, this is why I have hope for America right now because of what's going on in the economy.

I want to tell you it's doing a wonderful work and it's the mercy of God. The mercy of God will get rid of that froth. That's why I say Lakeland to me is an example of froth.

It's like we have the height of the stock market, the height of people's housing prices, the height of the mania about that and in the church we had the height of hype and the height of frothiness and ridiculousness in every way. We have a revival of kind of hype and frothy stuff and we've had our big revival and it's blowing apart now and it's falling to pieces and people are starting to go, wow, that wasn't what it was all cracked up to be, was it? And the housing bubble wasn't worthwhile either, was it? And in fact we've put ourselves in more trouble going after that junk than we ever were before and in fact I think we'd better get sensible with our money and maybe we'd better get sensible with our spiritual state and start listening to preachers who actually are grounded in the word of God instead of grounded in froth. And I want to tell you this process is underway in America and it delights my soul because a preacher like me

has no chance in frothville, zero.

No one wants to listen to John the Baptist or anybody preaching anything like him in frothville, nobody wants to listen. But when times turn, well it's like Jeremiah, who's the most unpopular guy in Jerusalem? Jeremiah, Jeremiah, Jeremiah, for years and years and years and years until one day, uh-oh, Jeremiah's right. That was the day frothville ended, that's the day Jerusalem gets invaded and suddenly everything Jeremiah's been saying, oh my goodness, the guy was right.

There's prophets that God has been sending to America for a long, long, long time. Some raised up from within the country, some coming from outside. Many, many years, years and years of this.

Leonard Ravenclaw is one of them, Keith Green is one of them, David Wilkerson is one of them. Many, many, many. A lot of them rejected because their word is too strong and frothville doesn't like it.

But I want to say when the tide turns and things start really getting bad, where do we turn to? We don't want to listen to the flaky thing anymore. It just doesn't ring true. What do we listen to? You look at the guys that are popular economists now, you know, there's a guy called Muriel Rubini.

Nobody ever heard of him except that he was right about the economy and suddenly he's the most popular economist now. One of the most popular in the world. Why? Because he was right.

They used to call him Dr. Doom. They said this guy never...

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