

Holy Ghost Last Days

by Jacob Prasch

Jacob Prasch discusses the warnings from the Holy Spirit regarding the last days, emphasizing the dangers of apostasy and the importance of remaining steadfast in faith.

Duration: 53:15

Scripture: John 10:28, 1 Timothy 4:7-8, 1 Timothy 4:12-16

Topics: "Last Days"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the last days and the warnings given by Paul to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4. The speaker highlights the dangers of falling away from the faith and being deceived by false teachings and doctrines of demons. They emphasize the importance of reading and studying the Word of God to avoid being led astray. The sermon concludes with a reminder to pay close attention to one's own teaching and to persevere in the truth, as it ensures salvation for oneself and for others.

Transcript

Hello dear friends, this is Jacob Craft speaking to you on Radio Kingfisher today. In First Timothy, Chapter 4, St. Paul the Apostle, known to some people as Rabbi Shaul of Tarsus, tells us what the Holy Spirit explicitly says about the last days. There's been a lot of focus on the last days in recent months because of the year 2000, but in actual fact, we know because of the historical timing of the reign of Caesar Augustus in the New Testament, and the differences between the Jewish lunar calendar and the Gregorian solar calendar, the year 2000, judging from the estimated time of Christ's birth, actually came and went somewhere around 1996 or 1997.

In theological terms, it was really a big nothing. I think Bible-believing Christians are more concerned with the return of Jesus and the real new millennium that will come when he establishes his kingdom from Jerusalem. In any event, from the globalization of the world economy to the reconfederation of the countries that were in the Roman Empire, now to events in the Middle East, the rise of ecumenism, a host of environmental calamities, increased seismic activity, thermal pollution, the ethnic cleansing that plagues the continent of Africa, reaching now into places like Yugoslavia and as far away as East Timor, Even the seduction of the evangelical church with false doctrine and with false prophets that Jesus warned would happen, we see ourselves coming closer and closer to his return.

But we also see a church less and less prepared for it to happen. God's grace, however, we also see a faithful remnant being raised up and prepared by the Holy Spirit. These are not enthusiasts about things

like Y2K, nor about the seduction by extreme forms of kingdom-now and dominion theology.

People who are extreme Calvinists who believe in reconstructionism, the idea that the millennium is now, and that we're going to conquer the whole world for Christ before he comes and set up his kingdom. Indeed, if Satan is bound, I want to know who keeps letting him go. Yet an important aspect of God's preparation of the faithful is to prepare them for what must precede the return of Jesus.

To this end, over the years, our own ministry has focused much on the Bible's teaching concerning how to understand the Antichrist, the future history of the church, the seven churches of Revelation, just as in the days of Noah, understanding the rapture, the caveats or the warnings of Jesus in the Alphabet Discourse of Matthew 24, understanding the future meaning of Daniel and the Maccabees, and the Hebraic or Judaic understanding of the Nativity and of Hanukkah. All of these things pointing to the return of Jesus. Soon we're planning conferences on understanding the Great Tribulation.

But one of the clearest and most important predictive prophecies we have in the New Testament about what will transpire before the return of Jesus is here in the fourth chapter of Paul's epistle to Timothy. As we point out in the future history of the church series, the first century church, in certain respects, typologically prefigures, that is, it foreshadows, the church of the last century. It is, of course, entirely possible, and some would say likely, that we have now entered the last century.

It's against this background that Paul writes to Timothy, and to us, in 1 Timothy chapter 4, where he says, What the Spirit explicitly says in the latter times, some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of hypocrisy of liars, sealed in their own conscience as with a branding iron. Men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from food, which God created to be gratefully shared by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude.

For it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer. In pointing these things out, brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nervous on the words of the faith, and of the sound doctrine which you have been following, but have nothing to do with worldly fables, fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.

For bodily discipline is only for a little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life, and also the life to come. It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. For it is this we labor and strive, for we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

Prescribe and teach these things. Let no one in any way look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity, show yourself as an example of those who believe. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.

Do not regret the spiritual gift within you which was bestowed upon you through the prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things. Be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to all.

Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching. Persevere in these things, for as you do, you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. In this text, we have told apostolic instruction and exhortation for Timothy from the Holy Spirit, and he's told to disseminate, to pass these

instructions on and these exhortations on to others.

He says this further in his epistle in 1 Timothy 4, verses 6 and 11. The Holy Spirit puts this into the New Testament canon, but if we are in the latter days, especially, the context is for us. The first feature of what the Holy Spirit says concerns the falling away.

The Greek word here in the original text is *apostasante*, the future tense of the verbal form of the word *apostasia*, meaning to depart out of, or to fall out of. And it's the same word used for the great falling away by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2, verse 3, which is associated with the Antichrist. Our ministry, Moriel, has often warned that what we see happening in the ecumenical movement and in charismania and in the extremes of Pentecostalism and liberation theology and in word-face deception are all preludes leading up to and helping set the stage for this mass backsliding and ultimately a deception by the Antichrist.

The same falling away Paul predicts in association with the Antichrist in 2 Thessalonians is dealt with from a more pastoral perspective here in the epistle to Timothy. We might say that in 2 Thessalonians Paul deals with the apostasy itself, while in 1 Timothy he deals with the trends within the Church leading up to the events that cause this apostasy. And he does this as a senior pastor urging a younger one to protectively alert the sheep as to what to expect.

The first danger here is the belief that Christians cannot fall away. This is a very complex subject in its own right and we have tapes called *Once Saved, Always Saved?* dealing with this subject. One cannot depart from what one has never been in to begin with.

You can't abandon or depart from something you never believed. The Bible clearly warns of a mass apostasy and the notion that only unsaved people can fall away from something they were never in to begin with is linguistically, theologically and logically absurd. You can't fall away from something you were never in.

You can't stop believing something you never believed. You can't apostatize from something you never were part of. Similarly, the epistle to the Hebrews was written to Jewish believers in danger of departing from the faith and going back under the law in face of possible persecution.

It is similarly absurd to suggest that those who received a knowledge of the truth and had a sacrifice for their sins with the blood of their Messiah, Yeshua, Jesus and are now in danger were not believers to begin with in Hebrews 10, verse 26. Just the same as it is illogical to say that someone could have tasted of the powers of the age to come and been a partaker of the Holy Spirit who are in danger as they commit apostasy. The word for apostasy here is *tarapitho*.

It's related to *apostasia* in Greek and it comes from the infinitive of the verb the same verb to apostatize. Once more there is a double illogicality of those who say Christians cannot fall away. How can one apostatize from that which one has never believed? But secondly to suggest a non-believer can be a part of the Holy Spirit is in itself ludicrous.

A non-believer can have no part of the Holy Spirit. I would have to respectfully disagree with South African Bishop Desmond Tutu who says that Hindus can have the Holy Spirit. This is his opinion but it is not the theology of the word of God.

Such reasoning is truly a *reductio ad absurdum* where the hollow premise misleads one into making a hollow and logically incoherent deduction thus reducing the conclusion of the matter to an absurdity. In

other words, in more simple terms, instead of approaching the text of the Bible objectively and allowing the text to interpret itself from the context one redefines and thus reduces the stated meaning in order to accommodate your presupposition. Even so, no one looking at that same text in its own context without that presupposition would arrive at a reduced meaning.

It's impossible to fall away so therefore when it says you can fall away it must mean something different than we think of when we say falling away. It becomes an illogical and an absurd argument. It's a flawed premise with convoluted reasoning demanding exegetical acrobatics to sustain itself in order to defend a presupposition that is contradicted by the explicit assertion of the text itself.

Simply stated, because the direct unprejudiced meaning of a Bible text like Hebrews 6 or Hebrews 10 taken in context goes against their presupposed ideas that Christians can't fall away they must reduce its straightforward meaning in order to protect their presupposition. This they achieve by a contorted exegesis that can only seem to make sense if one takes on their presupposition to begin with. If, however, what allows the text to speak for itself their reduction of the meaning of the passage becomes self-evidently absurd from the context.

In fairness, we have to acknowledge that when John Calvin formulated what became known as the doctrine of perseverance, he was trying to debunk what he saw as a former Roman Catholic priest as the heretical exploitation by the medieval Roman Catholic Church, which held people in continual bondage, telling them that there was no assurance of salvation, which helped facilitate their sale of indulgences to finance the Renaissance building programs. Catholic priests who read the Bible and became what we call the Reformers, such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, were appalled at this. We must remember while we may think they made mistakes, I certainly do not completely agree with the Reformers, they were Roman Catholic priests.

Calvin, Zwingli, Luther, Aquampadius, Cranmer, every single one of them was a Roman Catholic priest who read the Bible and came to the conclusion that they could not agree with the doctrines or the practice of the Roman Catholic Church based on the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. However, the Reformers were not perfect, and by saying, once saved, always saved, full stop without condition, they were trying to correct this error, which said you cannot know you are eternally secure or have salvation. The solution to error, however, is truth, not another error.

We are, of course, eternally secure in Christ, providing we use the free will restored to us at the cross, and appropriated by the new birth to remain in Christ by cooperating with God's grace. We can't save ourselves. It's an act of grace.

Jesus saves us. People who are not born again, people who are unsaved, according to the teaching of the New Testament, don't have a free will. Their free will is in bondage.

But when somebody is born again, that free will that was lost by Adam is restored. Tragically, Calvinism, akin to the very Roman Catholicism it tries to react against, seems to deny the full power of the cross of Jesus. Ironically, one of the biggest threats to the eternal security of a believer is the misplaced fact believed by covenant theologians, believed by Calvinism, that believers cannot fall away.

No one can snatch us out of the Father's hands, but we can misuse our restored free will to leave. This was the point of view, for instance, of people like John Wesley. And it's also what I believe the apostles taught in the New Testament.

This is why verse 16 states that it is we who ensure our salvation. This chapter tells us it is rather those who are forewarned of these dangers and act accordingly who can be assured of their security, and not those who deny it can ever happen. In 1 Timothy chapter 4, verse 16, and the last days, the Holy Spirit explicitly says that it shall.

Yes, we are eternally secure in Christ. No one can snatch us out of the Father's hands. We are eternally secure in Christ, providing we use our restored free will to remain in Him.

But from here, Paul goes on telling us by the Holy Spirit that the initial form of last days apostasy will take on a particular characteristic. He begins by pointing out it will be undertaken by men he calls hypocritical liars who come into the church, propagating doctrines that are demonic in order to mislead Christians. The Holy Spirit does not inspire Paul to miss words or to mince words in his description of these people.

He calls them hypocritical liars sent by the devil. Nor does he make any appeal to them. They are not sincere people who are in error, but bad people who are teaching error to advance their own interests.

The prophet Jeremiah was told not to even pray for people like this. In Jeremiah chapter 14, verse 11, neither does Paul place the blame only on the demons. The doctrines come from demons, but they are proclaimed by false leaders in the church.

Specifically, the first of these doctrines is a soft form of legalism that a theologian would call gnomianism. Here is the concern with dietary regulation. It's not that these people abstain from certain foods for cultural or testimonial reasons, or as a matter of personal choice, but they doctrinally advocate it.

This is something that we call Judaization. Now, my aunt's family are Jewish. We very much affirm the Jewish root of the Judeo-Christian faith.

Christianity comes from the Hebrew root of the church. It is perfectly fine for Christians to eat kosher, observe dietary laws if they wish to do so. The problem happens is when you either say it is necessary for salvation, or for sanctification.

Paul became as all things to all people. So for the sake of my own witness and testimony to the Jewish community, my family, we don't eat pig or shellfish. But to try to put that on someone else, or to say it's necessary to be a believer, is absolute Judaization.

In fact, St. Paul in Galatians calls it witchcraft, using the Greek word mesmero, literally putting the evil eye on people. It's no coincidence that our friends in the Seventh-day Adventists, Mormons, and extremists within the Messianic movement are very concerned with abstinence from certain foods. Indeed, the Roman Catholic Church had, and still has, days of abstinence.

But the Bible talks about making such dietary requirements compulsory demonic. It says they are placing people into bondage to the law. One danger is that with the emergence of post-millennialism and Dominion theology comes what is known as over-realized eschatology.

This is better known as Kingdom Now. It is a strange mixture of Reformed Reconstructionism, that is, extreme Calvinism today mixed with extreme Charismania. Now, I myself do not deny everything John Calvin said, and I do believe in the gifts of the Spirit.

But the extremes of Calvinism and the extremes of Pentecostalism and Charismania have never done the Church any good, but have done the Church a great deal of harm. The Calvinistic idea of theonomy, that is, setting up God's law, where the Church takes over the institutions of law, government, commerce, banks, etc., and establishes a divine kingdom prior to the return of Jesus, follows the model of the police base of John Calvin, John Knox, and John Zwingli, and the Massachusetts Puritans. These things happened in Geneva, they happened in Zurich, they happened in colonial Massachusetts in America.

But they become mixed with Charismania. Any time the Church has vied for political power, to set itself up as a temporal political power, it has brought moral and spiritual death to the Church. Jesus said directly that His kingdom was not of this world.

In fact, this is an imitation of what happened in medieval Roman Catholicism, after Constantine Christianized the Roman Empire and turned the Church into a political power, in open defiance of the plain teaching of Jesus. His theology for this, his doctrinal basis, came from the Platonic ideas of someone called Augustine of Hippo. Augustine of Hippo.

In any event, let's look at whatever has happened when the Church became a political power. Here in South Africa, the Dutch Reformed Church played a pivotal role in the institution of apartheid. In the American South, the Baptist denominations split in the 19th century over the issue of slavery.

The Southern Baptists, influenced by Calvinism, were pro-slavery and later pro-segregation. In Northern Ireland, the persecution of Catholics, not disagreeing with Catholicism, but repressing Roman Catholics by the Reformed Presbyterians. Any time you had an extreme Calvinistic Church with political overtones trying to influence society beyond the realms of biblical morality, you had a terrible history of social injustice.

And South Africa is one of the examples of this. It only became a Protestant version of the repression of the Dark Ages by the Roman Catholic system when the same thing happened. Jesus' Kingdom is not of this world.

We are indeed called to be salt and light, but we're not called to set up His Kingdom before He came. In Great Britain, during the Toronto experience, one Anglican Church, which still to this day follows the Kansas City Prophets in Sheffield, England, was exposed on national television for its famous alternative service, where people were topless and semi-naked in the church, heralding the return of Jesus, saying that they were going back to the nakedness of Adam and Eve because the Kingdom had come. As man was seemingly herbivorous and not carnivorous before the Fall, some Christians actually prohibit meat now as a higher role or road to spirituality.

With the influx of New Age philosophy into Evangelical circles via the Vineyard Movement and by writers such as Clark Pinnock, William D. Ortega, Patrick Dixon, and Yung Yee Chow, saved Christians become predisposed to all manner of New Age influences. It's probably no coincidence that in certain quarters of the USA ideas of holistic medicine and vegetarianism as a route to higher spirituality are already being repackaged in Evangelical jargon for consumption by naive and biblically ignorant Christians. But from here, Paul moves on to mandatory celibacy, calling it a doctrine of demons which, for its clergy, remains mandatory to this day within the Roman Catholic Church.

I have no desire to offend my Roman Catholic friends. My mother is a Roman Catholic, and because of her influence, I grew up in Catholicism. My family's a mixture of Catholic and Jewish.

However, as much as I love my mother and my Catholic relatives and friends, I cannot change the fact that the Bible, the New Testament, calls celibacy a doctrine of demons. It's true that you have the grace to remain single. That is a higher calling, if you have that grace.

But the Bible says not all have that grace. When you begin refusing what is natural, outlawing what is natural, you are going to have an explosion of what is unnatural. Do you know, in the United States, just in one archdiocese of the Catholic Church alone, in Houston, they were ordered to pay \$120 million U.S. dollars in damages to altar boys sexually abused by priests.

Five years ago, the government of the Republic of Ireland set up some power in the aftermath of a national scandal showing Catholic politicians covering up widespread pedophilia by Roman Catholic priests. This is a big problem. And it's not only a Roman Catholic phenomenon, but it's most peculiar that it happens time after time, week after week.

Huge scandals have taken place in England and other countries along this line. Why the pedophilia? The worst kind of sexual perversion imaginable. It's because of the doctrine of demons.

When you forbid what God has created as natural and constructive, people will go to something alternative. We today at long last see these things being exposed. They've always gone on.

But we have to understand how they went on. Such practices were common practices in the ancient world. There was a peculiar mixture in the ancient world of the first century church between perverted sex and religious belief.

Among the Greeks, there were the Hierophants, the temple prostitutes. In pagan Rome, there were the Vestal Virgins. What began to happen after Constantine the Great was this.

These same kinds of institutions that existed in paganism with perverted sex found their way into Christendom. I've read even Roman Catholic scholars who admitted about the widespread poetry that was taking place in Convent. There were more bordellos in Rome than churches.

This is a disgrace, but it happens. When you forbid what's unnatural, it's one thing. But when you forbid what's natural, it's another.

The origins of this demonic doctrine are again found in Augustine of Hippo. He'd been a member of a Gnostic cult called the Manichaeans. He believed in Manichaeism.

They were a dualistic Gnostic cult in the ancient world which were against marriage. They saw anything physical as inherently bad. Well, the Bible doesn't say what's physical is bad.

It just says man is fallen. What Augustine did after the time of Constantine was bring these pagan influences into Christendom, into the church. He actually wrote, the only good thing about marriage is having children who will be celibate.

This is most unfortunate, but it's happening more and more. In the United States, there's a ministry about basic youth seminars. One man named Bill Gothard, who conducts these seminars, advises young people not to get married until at least the age of 30.

Now, he himself is single. And he's been accused of, people even in his ministry, of trying to put his celibacy on others. A terrible sex scandal rocked his ministry, involving his own staff and his own family.

In fact, 30 is the gynecological age where if a female has not already had children, she runs a much higher statistical risk of infertility, miscarriages, and congenital birth defects. Yet with no medical qualifications, Bill Gothard puts on evangelical seminars for youth propagating these unbiblical ideas. Dear friends, these things are doctrines of demons.

We'll continue looking further at what prayer says, what the Holy Spirit says, specifically about the last days in our next broadcast. Hello dear friends, greetings in Jesus. This is Jacob Pratt continuing our study in what the Holy Spirit explicitly says about the last days in 1 Timothy 4. We concluded by looking at the doctrine of demons, forbidding certain foods, but also mandatory celibacy.

We pointed out that St. Augustine of Hippo, from whom both Catholicism and Protestantism draw much of their foundational influence, had been in the Manichean cult, which was basically against any kind of physical relationship, seeing it as inherently evil. The Bible says this is wrong. Man is fallen, but what's physical is not evil.

The Greek idea was that God was impassable, but God's gospel was written against this, where it says the logos became stark, the words became flesh, Jesus being the logos. Picking up on this in verse 6, Paul continues. Here in the Greek text, there's a kind of play on words, where Paul makes a contrast between bad food and good food.

He compares those who were teaching wrong doctrine and forbidding certain physical foods with those who were giving wrong teachings. In other words, the bad physical food was a symbol of the bad spiritual food. Good or nutritious physical food is in the context a symbol of good spiritual food.

The good food is called entrofomenos, meaning to be nourished. He takes this comparison further by referring to the false doctrines as fables, or in Greek, muthos, where we get the word, myths. He calls these things silly fables that are old womanish.

Actually, the Greek word is not silly, but babilos, better translated as something that's sustained. I don't think Paul was making a misogynistic statement against women by calling it old womanish. What he was probably doing is referring to the Greek practice of the Delphic Oracle, who, using hallucinogenic potions, called pharmakos in Revelation chapter 21, verse 8, and in Revelation 22, verse 15, cooked up mythical revelations while in occult chances, induced with the assistance of these hallucinogenic potions or plants.

Such practices were commonplace in the Greek world in which Paul was trying to communicate the Gospel. But some people thinking, after they became Christians and were born again and saved out of these paganistic backgrounds, were still influenced by what they came from, much the same as Augustine was still influenced by the dualism and the Gnosticism of his own Manichean background, which caused him to take a very dim view of marriage. Anyway, Paul continues, and he says that those men who were propagating such things are liars.

But the word here he uses for liars is pseudologon. Pseudologon, meaning a false logo. In other words, Jesus is the true logo.

But those who come with a teaching contrary to his are the false logo. In 2 Thessalonians, the Bible speaks of the man of perdition. Again, speaking of course of the Antichrist, who teaches in the end times apostasy that we discussed in our previous introduction to this teaching from 1 Timothy 4. There is an equivalent between the pseudologon, the false logo, and the Antichrist.

The Greek word Antichrist, Antichristos, means that which is in place of Christ. So the pseudologon means that which is the false logo. Therefore, in 1 Timothy chapter 4, instead of the true logo revealed in the flesh, which is the Lord Jesus, the false logo says that all flesh is inherently bad, when in fact it's only fallen, but not inherently bad.

This is also a key feature of the Antichrist, in 1 John chapter 4, verses 1 to 3. Instead of the true logo revealed through the person of the Holy Spirit, the false logo is revealed through a demon. Instead of the true logo revealed in a living word, the false logo becomes revealed in stupid, superstitious fables, such as you see people today talking about gold fillings that can't even be medically documented. Instead of the true logo being preached by faithful servants of the Lord, such as Paul and Timothy, the false logo is preached by stock-slidden liars, all of which result in profanity.

This, as God's word in this chapter forecasts, is exactly the ridiculous kind of mess we see having emerged even in our own time. The continual moral scandals that come from churches that depart from the word of God and its teaching doctrinalists. From here, Paul goes on and speaks of Jesus as the Savior of all men.

He continues with a list of personal exhortations and commendations to Timothy, including an encouragement akin to what God told Jeremiah, not to be made to feel inadequate due to being a youth. Let no one look down on your youth. Say not, I'm only a youth.

To God, age has to do with how long you've been born again. It is to do with spiritual age. There are young people who were saved in their childhood, who by their late teens are already spiritually quite mature.

On the other hand, I know people who've been saved later in life who know little, if anything. Most, tragically, are people who've been saved a long time, but because they lacked proper spiritual food, as Paul warns about in Hebrews chapter 6 and 1 Corinthians 3, they've only had milk, not meat, and they've never grown to maturity. Age in the Bible and maturity has to do with how well you know Jesus and how long you've known Him, and one reflection of it is our grasp of His Word.

Paul then continues and he gives quite an exhortation. Much of this exhortation in verses 8 to 12 suggests as well apply to many sincere believers today. But in verse 10, Paul reveals that God is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

He's the Savior of all men, especially those who believe. This is, first of all, a Christological statement about Jesus. Jesus is God and the Savior.

But it's also what we call a soteriological statement. It's a statement about salvation, where the Holy Spirit is inspiring Paul to refute two significant doctrinal errors that God in His eternal omniscience and wisdom knew would emerge after the Apostles. The first is the denial that Jesus is God and the second is the denial that Jesus is the Savior of all men.

Both of these are errors that the Holy Spirit preempts and addresses in this text. Indeed, in this same epistle, the Holy Spirit declares through Paul that God desires all men to be saved in 1 Timothy chapter 2, verse 4. As Peter writes in his epistle in 2 Peter chapter 3, verse 9, the Lord is wanting none to perish but that all should reach repentance. God is in eternity and by definition He exists outside of time.

This is why past, present and future events are all concurrent in the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation speaks of past events in the future in the present tense and future events in the present tense.

God is outside of time.

In this sense, we can say there is predestination. God knows exactly who would be saved because past, present and future are all the same once we leave this temporal realm. Therefore, relative to eternity where time does not exist as we know it, the number saved is ordained before the foundation of the world.

But with the incarnation of Jesus, God entered time from eternity to bring salvation to all who would respond to His undeserved and unmerited grace. Thus, relative to the sphere of time, the Lord declares He takes no delight in the plight of the wicked but prefers that they would all repent, as the Hebrew prophet Ezekiel tells us in Ezekiel chapter 18, verse 3. Then, in quoting Joel and his kerygma in the Acts chapter 2, verse 21, Peter says, Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. The Holy Spirit knew that deceptions and false doctrines denying the wonderful truths of a just but loving God, making His grace available to all, would one day infiltrate His church.

And here He makes doctrinal provision for it. Again, I love and respect my Calvinistic brothers who are in Reformed churches. But I must face what the New Testament says.

These Reformed errors in understanding sovereignty and election have continually wreaked havoc throughout church history. Now, we have to point out that not all Calvinists are extreme. And not all would remove verse 10 from the canon of Scripture.

But the Bible says He's the Savior of all men, especially of believers. Only the lunatic fringe of Calvinism would hold to such extra-biblical or contra-biblical ideas of what we call particularism. These people say that God created some people to burn in hell forever.

That Jesus only died for the elect. That He's not willing to receive all. This is tragic.

It's simply not what the New Testament teaches. He's the Savior of all men, writes Paul, especially of believers. A glance at Calvin's commentary on Seneca's De Clementia, his secular work, shows that his way of handling the Bible, what we call his hermeneutic, and the hermeneutic of Reformed exegesis, comes from humanism, not from Scripture.

Calvin was a humanist scholar, albeit one that believed in God. A review of Calvin's post-millennialism, and his Eurasianism, his view of the state church, and also his belief in infant baptism, sprinkling babies and proclaiming them part of the covenant. His doctrine of the church, which we call ecclesiology, all of these things derive not from the New Testament, but from the very Roman Catholicism he grew up in, and tried to react against.

A search of the Scriptures to find a single verse substantiating the basis of Reformed theology cannot be found. What is this basis? It's called covenant. Covenant theology is the basis of what we call Calvinism, or Reformed theology.

What does it mean? They say that God only ever made two covenants. One with Adam, and the other with Abraham. When you ask them to show you a verse where it says God only ever made two covenants, they can't produce it.

In fact, they don't make a distinction between the old and new covenant. That's why they will sprinkle babies on the eighth day, the way Jews circumcised babies on the eighth day. It is why they call the church Israel, and believe in something called supersessionism, or replacement theology.

However, in Jeremiah chapter 31, verse 31, God says to Jeremiah, I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the one I made with their fathers. First of all, the new covenant was never made with the church. It was made with the Jews.

The church was incorporated into it in Romans 11. Secondly, and more importantly, there is a new covenant. Although Calvinism says there's only two, Calvinism was wrong.

They don't make the distinction between the old and new covenant. And from this comes all kinds of errors, including wrong views of election, that only the elect will be saved, which is true, but by the elect, they mean something quite different than the Bible does. There is a balance, quite a balance.

The origins of this thinking come not from the scripture, but from Islam. When the crusades returned to medieval Europe, with influences of Hinduism and Islam, the result of that was Europe coming out of the Dark Ages. That made the Renaissance.

From the Renaissance came a movement called Christian Humanism, led by people like Erasmus of Rotterdam, and people like Thomas Moore in England, etc. These men influenced the Reformers by going back to the original Hebrew and Greek scriptures. With these Islamic influences that came into Europe was the Islamic doctrine of Inja Allah.

Inja Allah. A kind of fatalism, where everything that happens, good or bad, is God's perfect will. Thus, this fatalism, where it's all foreordained, it's all predestined, you have no choice, the outcome is all determined without any ultimate say-so by us, has come into Protestantism in the form of this Calvinistic idea of election.

Well, if you were elected to go to hell, that's it. God created you to be tortured forever. That's what's going to happen to you.

You have no choice. And if you were elected to go to heaven, you're going to go to heaven. You have no choice.

That's not what the Bible says. The Bible says God is the Savior of all men, especially believers. We can either believe what Paul believed, or we can believe what John Calvin believed.

I personally agree with Saint Paul. In verse 13, Paul issues his admonishment that attention be given to the reading of Scripture. This is quite an exhortation.

You know, towards the end of his life and ministry, John Wesley lamented that Methodism would decline. The Methodist movement would decline because they were already, in his day, ignoring the exposition of Scripture. And it's so true in Great Britain, one Methodist church closes per week.

That's where Methodism came from. Today we see tremendous decline in the United Reformed churches, the Anglican churches, the Methodist churches. In Great Britain, according to a report televised on BBC television, in the last year, 1998 to 1999, church attendance in the Church of England increased, no, decreased, by a further 36,000.

There were people in England trying to run programs such as Alpha Courses, thinking they could make the churches grow. But the latest statistics show the opposite has happened. The decline of the Church of England, where Alpha Courses come from, has, if anything, accelerated.

There are people leaving the Church of England at the average of 1,000 persons per week. Yet Alpha Courses have not made a difference. And similar such things can be said and seen in other denominations.

You know one thing we can be sure of in a country like South Africa? Things that are in America, trends you see in America and in Britain today, will be in South Africa tomorrow. Now there are places the churches are growing in America, and even in Britain among the gypsies. But by and large, mainstream evangelical Christianity is declining in most of the Protestant countries.

Protestantism is a declining faith. Jesus is turning His grace to the third world. It is places in Africa like Ghana and Nigeria and Kenya where we see explosive growth.

These churches lack leadership, they lack Bible teaching, they lack a lot of things. But in terms of evangelism, they are growing like wildfire. It is white Protestantism that's declining everywhere.

Around the world, that's one trend we see. Asia, Latin America, Africa, God is turning His grace from the rich countries to the poor ones. From the Protestant countries to the Catholic ones.

Many, many people, millions and millions every year throughout Latin America and the Philippines, people are becoming evangelical Christians, breaking with the Roman Catholic Church the way they did in Europe during the Reformation. It's caused a great deal of tension in Latin America. But the fact is, what happened in the Reformation in Europe is now happening in Latin America and in the Philippines.

By any barometer of church history, white Protestant Christianity is declining. It's Catholics who are being saved, it's Africans, it is Asians. But European Christianity in its evangelical Protestant version is unfortunately on its way out.

They've had the truth for 500 years. From here, Paul continues. He continues with further exhortations, and he says, let the Bible be read.

Revote attention to the reading of Scripture. Paul goes on to use the Greek word *paraklesio*, meaning to implore as an exhortation with a view on comforting, as is directly related in the Greek text. Exhortation from the word.

The word *paraklesio* is a descriptive title of the Holy Spirit, who gets next to us as our comforter. But his chief means of doing this is through the revealed word. Spirit and truth are mutually dependent, not mutually exclusive.

The Holy Spirit only operates according to the Bible he inspired to be written. Today in the evangelical church, something terrible has happened. People have made truth and love mutually exclusive.

But in Philippians chapter 1 verse 9, Paul says, let your love abound in real truth and discernment. In the Bible, love depends on truth and discernment. Today, so much of the evangelical church, the Pentecostal church, the Charismatic church, Baptist church, they have thrown truth and discernment out the window in the name of love.

That's not love. Real love can't abound without truth and discernment. The Holy Spirit, who comforts us, comforts us through the Bible.

This brings us to Paul's third exhortation in this text. Teaching, where the Greek word is *daidastria*. *Daidastria*, which means basically doctrine.

The word comes directly from the Greek word for doctrine, *dadastia*. You know, in the United States, a major evangelical television network actually said doctrine is excrement. Friends, doctrine is the teaching of Jesus.

He said, if you love me, keep my commandments. He is the *logo*. He is the eternal word.

When someone on American TV would call doctrine excrement, that's what they're calling Jesus. Only in first highlighting the primacy of Scripture and its doctrine does Paul move on to urge Timothy that the gift bestowed on him through prophetic ministry is not to be neglected. The word for gift here in Greek is *charismatos*, of grace given through an individual through the body to equip him for ministry, which in this case is associated with a further *charismatos*, or gift in the form of prophetic ministry.

Unless a firm doctrinal basis is in place where such gifts are exercised in accordance with Scripture, the result will not be biblical. *Charismato*? Yes. But *charismania*? No.

Such gifts as well as the ministry gifts are the charismatic gifts of the Spirit help equip us for the ministry God has called us to. This is what we read in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 verses 4 to 5. These gifts can be compared to the talents that Jesus speaks about and that we will be judged according to how we use them when He returns. In Matthew 25 14 to 26.

God gave our gifts, He gave us our talents and He expects us to give Him a return in His investment. This is one of the reasons the devil uses *charismania* to discredit the gifts so others will not want them. Prayer warns about this in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 verse 23.

He actually says if the undifted people who are not charismatic enter will they not say you are mad if they see *charismania* instead of *charismata*? Understood biblically and practiced scripturally. I believe in tongues. I believe in prophecy.

I believe in miracles. I believe in healings as the Bible describes them. But unfortunately so much of what we see today in popular charismatic churches and in much of Pentecostalism is not biblical Pentecostalism.

It's not a scriptural use of the gifts but it's counterfeit. It's abuse. In fact it's freshness.

The reason Paul links gifts and calling in Romans 11 29 is because the doctrinal error that God has finished with the gifts is the opposite side of the coin of the doctrinal error that God has finished with the Jews. The gifts and calling of God go forth without repentance. Much the same as God never withdrew His calling and His election of Israel as a nation in Romans 11 29 neither does He take His gifts back from the church.

That's why the gifts of the Spirit follow in the next chapter of Romans 12. Cessationism. The view that the gifts of the Spirit ended with the apostles is a doctrinal error.

It is a false doctrine. Paul says, despise not prophetic utterance. Forbid not to speak in tongues.

Now we can forbid the counterfeit. We can forbid tongues that are not tongues. We can forbid disorder and chaos.

But we dare not throw the baby out with the backwater. We dare not throw away the real because of the counterfeit. Paul tells us, despise not the gift that is in you.

Despise not the charismatic gift. There will be a big danger in the last days that people will be teaching against the gifts of the Spirit. Just as there is a big danger in the last days that people are being used by Satan to counterfeit them.

Neither one is biblically balanced. These are the things the Holy Spirit says specifically that will happen in the last days. These are the things we need to pay attention to.

We have to understand what Paul is telling us. He is warning that many will fall away from the faith. You can't fall away from that which you never believed.

You can't apostatize from what you were never in. He warned there would be hypocritical liars coming into the church, deceiving God's people. He warned of those who would forbid marriage and teach doctrines of celibacy and try to put people under dietary laws as a mandatory observance.

And we see this happening. He talks of these things directly. He goes on to point out, watch out for fables.

Watch out for nonsense. For doctrines based on experience or myths that have no biblical foundation. He goes on telling us to watch out for all these things.

He tells us that God is the savior of all men, especially of those who believe. Jesus died for everybody but those who accept Him, He foreknew from the foundation of the world. Forbid not the gifts of the Spirit.

We should not forbid the proper use of gifts of the Spirit and charismatic gifts any more than we should encourage or allow the counterfeit. And above all, give our attention to the exposition of Scripture, to the study and the reading of the Word of God. So much of what has gone wrong in the Church in these last days comes from the fact that we no longer read the Word of God.

In conclusion, Paul says, the Holy Spirit says, and we say to you today, pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching. Persevere in these things for as you do, you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. This is Jacob Pratt.

God bless you and thank you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12031.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jacob-prasch/holy-ghost-last-days/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net