

A Plain Battle Between the Children of Darkness and the Children of Light

by Milton Haney

The church's greatest barrier to success is its unsaved members, who decrease its power and hinder its saving work.

Topics: "Church Purity", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Milton Haney preaches about the presence of a 'church within the church' since the days of Abraham, highlighting how worldliness within the body weakens its power and hinders its work. He emphasizes that unsaved members within Christian congregations can be a greater barrier to spiritual success than external opposition. Haney challenges destructive critics within the church, questioning their personal relationship with God and their understanding of fundamental Christian doctrines, cautioning against undermining the Scriptures and core beliefs. He urges those who oppose the church's teachings to seek communion elsewhere in alignment with their beliefs.

Transcript

From the days of Abraham until this day, there has always been a church within the church, and in our fallen condition it seems well nigh impossible to be otherwise. As the body enlarges, it has never failed to have an outside rim of worldlings. These have never failed to be the greatest hindrance to her real prosperity. They add to her numbers, but decrease her power. They are counted with her, but have never been of her. In proportion as they are strong the church weakens, and when they rule the church goes into captivity.

Today, if ten thousand pastors of the larger Christian bodies, were to open a campaign for the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of believers: their unsaved members would be the greatest barrier to their success: greater than all other barriers! The whole fraternity of wicked men and devils outside, will not equal the barriers, furnished by the dead men within. This is Satan's greatest stronghold, and through the ages, he has insisted on pushing his children into God's enclosure to plot and plan for the overthrow of Christ's kingdom. One hundred of his servants inside the church, can do more to wither her spirituality, weaken her heart, and hinder her saving work, than ten thousand from the outside. "He that is not for me, is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." One wolf inside the fold, can scatter and destroy more sheep than one thousand wolves from the outside.

We venture the statement, that not one destructive critic can be found who can truthfully answer the following questions in the affirmative: Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour? Have you an inner consciousness, that your past sins are all forgiven you? Has God's Holy Spirit witnessed with your spirit, that you are born of God? Christ affirms, that we are the children of God, or the children of the devil, and the Book declares we are all made the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus! Have you truly been justified by faith, and have you peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? Rom. 5:1. Have you the joy of the Holy Ghost within? 1 Peter 1:1-9. Do you love God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself? Matt. 22:34-40. Have you conscious fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ? 1 John 1:3-4.

God has made such provision for His real children, that there is not an ignorant child in His family, of fifteen summers, who may not be able clearly to answer every one of these questions affirmatively, with a glad heart and free! But it is simply impossible that any human being should have these answers in the depths of his consciousness, and the knowledge of God, which brings that consciousness: should be employed in mutilating the Scriptures, and assaulting the fundamental doctrines of the Church. This is made infallibly true when we scrutinize the design of such criticisms.

Doctor Eliot, of Harvard, has brought the design of all this destructive criticism fully to light, and summed it up in his coming new religion of the world, which is to have the supernatural all eliminated! That is, always has been, and will be, the religion of the world; till the judgment day! But that is one thing, and the religion of Christ is another thing. That is of the earth, earthy, but this is of the Lord from heaven! Doctor Eliot is a man of great powers of intellect and worldly culture, but what can a man know of God who denies His existence?

There is not an ignorant child on the earth, of ten summers, who is truly born of God, who does not know God a thousand times better than Doctor Eliot. The difference between the two is, that the one knows Him, and the other does not know Him! Let us go to the word of God: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness: but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence." "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so, the things of God knoweth NO man, but the Spirit of God." "Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual thing with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." See 1st Corinthians, 1st and 2d chapters. These Scriptures open up this whole subject, and solve its difficulties.

Each kingdom has its laws distinct from every other kingdom, as the vegetable, the mineral and the animal kingdoms. How far would a scientist proceed, without confusion, investigating the mineral kingdom, by the laws which govern the vegetable kingdom? All intelligence would brand him as a fool, and insist that it could only be understood by its own laws.

The natural world and the spiritual world, are wholly distinct. These destructive critics belong to the natural world, with only an approximate knowledge of its laws, and are fearfully ignorant of the laws of the spiritual kingdom. Being inflated with their supposed knowledge of the laws of nature, they have set themselves to the adjustment of the whole spiritual realm! What do they know of the spiritual realm? -- or of God, its Author?

How about a man who has mastered the rules of English grammar, going about the country, lecturing on the higher mathematics, or a learned physician assaying to command the British navy? Why, the greatest scientist the world has ever produced might be utterly incapable of running a blacksmith shop! The most contemptible assumption in history, is a man dictating about experimental religion, who has no knowledge of pardoned sins, and is so ignorant of God, that he doubts His very existence!

How much knowledge of any person can we have, whose existence we are continuously doubting? "This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Have these persons eternal life, who are giving their time to mutilating the word of God and stealthily undermining the doctrines of His gospel? One of such whom I have known for forty years, a minister of a sister church, told me he thought the existence of a living, personal God, was simply impossible. Yet, at that very time, he was posing as a Christian minister! These pretenders mingling with the flock of God, are a menace to Christianity!

The true men of Methodism have given millions and millions, to build our institutions of learning, that their children might be educated in Methodist schools, and be doctrinally sound; and now not one of her bright sons can graduate in her higher universities without running against learned professors, questioning the inspiration of the Scriptures, caviling at the supernatural birth of Jesus, haggling at the atonement, and striking at the central doctrines of the church which have made her what she is! That the young men of the church preparing for the ministry, should be compelled to pass such ordeals, cannot but mean calamity. And that these young men should be compelled in their conference course of study, to peruse books, whose design is to substitute for the central doctrines of Methodism, the most subtle and cowardly forms of skepticism, is enough to bring the ashes of John Wesley from the grave!

There is no possible excuse for the ministers who have brought this condition of things about -- for each one of such has solemn vows upon him to sustain these very doctrines, and know that they cannot be changed, or substituted by others, without a gross violation of the constitution of the church, whose minister he is, and at whose hands he receives his bread! Good and great men have changed their minds consciously, concerning doctrinal truth, and for such, the Methodist church has always kept an open door of deliverance, and conceded the right to enjoy and disseminate doctrines contrary to her established teaching; but not within her fold! That door is still open, and these brethren, from pulpit or pew, who are at war with her vital centers, and the greatest barrier to her soul-saving work, will please God and greatly benefit man, by going through it, to a communion in harmony with their new faith, where they can disseminate their views, without violating their vows, or sailing under false colors. Why [do] not [such leave the Methodist Church]? Who can tell?

Source:

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