

11. CESSATIONISM – PART TWO

EXPLODING THE CESSATIONIST SOUND BITES

PART ONE was a plea from both scripture and personal experience, to present the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the ninefold gifts of the Holy Spirit and the apostolic ministries, as current in our twenty-first century, having never been withdrawn from the true Church of Jesus Christ. In PART TWO our endeavour will be to explode some of the "cessationist" myths that, because of being devoid of any true biblical support, are nothing more than SOUND BITES. These myths, without logical sense or scriptural warrant, are a delusion and because of what they do in the body of Christ are a dangerous, even a pernicious one at that. Strong words I know, but when numerous, precious believers are put off seeking for that *baptism in the Holy Ghost and with fire*, and when numerous, precious believers, and even assemblies, are caused to doubt the glorious experience granted to them and no longer exercise the vocal gifts of tongues and prophecy, our words are not too strong at all.

NOTHING COULD BE MORE SERIOUS THAN A DEMONIC DELUSION

Many of the deceptions targeted and revealed by those who have what have come to be known as "discernment" ministries, with undoubted rights, hit hard, revealing the error, even naming names. However, cessationism and, in particular, the pre-tribulation rapture deceit exposed in our first nine website topics, are often viewed almost benignly. Even those ministries which have discerned the error, suggest it is not a cardinal doctrine, it is nothing to get "hot under the collar about". Cardinal, when used as an adjective, means "most important, chief" and this Ministry believes, and believes most fervently, that there is almost nothing more important, nothing more serious, in the entire realms of deceit, than a delusion affecting more than 90% of those who believe in a pre-millennial rapture.

We have a pet shop near where we live that has the unlikely name of "Pampurred Pets". The current generation are surely "Pampered Pets" par excellence, drifting along, oblivious to the horrors soon to come on the earth, having been deluded into believing that they will be whisked away out of all trouble and be the only generation that will enter the Kingdom some other way than by tribulation. Apologies, but digression is now over, now to those "Sound Bites".

MYTH OR SOUND BITE 1/

CORINTH – THE CARNAL CHURCH

Many "cessationists" sneer at the Church at Corinth. It was a church that was undoubtedly "Pentecostal" in the best and purest sense of the word. Calling Corinth carnal by inference and extension (often covertly presented) all, who by doctrine and practice, hold Pentecostal truths, as did Corinth, must be carnal too. They are a sort of second class Christian citizen, to be pitied and patronised.

NOT THE PERFECT CHURCH

Obviously, Corinth, like every other church, both then and now and in all the centuries in between, had areas that needed correction that even Paul's longest pioneering ministry could not completely eradicate. Hence his two long letters that laid the basis for much Christian doctrine. Following the detailed presentation of how the "Communion" or Lord's Table should be ordered which, incidentally, is ignored in many of its vital aspects of both blessing and warnings, Paul then shares, in considerable detail, both the operation of the apostolic ministries and the spiritual gifts. The reason why such

attention is given to them is, of course, that they were to be the basis of Pentecostal doctrine for the entire church age.

PAUL, THE BEST OF SHEPHERDS

Paul did what any good shepherd would do. He endeavoured to reveal sin and bring repentance to the areas that needed correction. With Galatia it was the concision problem (the Jewish Christians trying to make the new Gentile believers, Jews as well as Christians). Here at Corinth there were factions and an awful case of sexual impurity. In the latter case, it was dealt with in a spiritual manner that was a perfect pattern for all future Christian generations. Would to God it was followed today where fornication, adultery and even, on occasions, homosexuality go unchallenged and uncorrected. Bravo beloved brother Paul.

PAUL'S OWN OPINION OF CORINTH

What did Paul really think of his beloved Corinthian Church? Paul said:

- A. In regard to the ordering of the case of the awful sexual impurity:

2 CORINTHIANS 7 v 11

...what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

- B. In regard to the manifestation of the apostolic ministries and the operation of the spiritual gifts Paul said:

1 CORINTHIANS 1 v 5 – 7

That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge.

Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On at least half a dozen occasions, Paul uses the expressions "boast" and "boastings" concerning the virtues of the Church at Corinth. Such expressions were used to Titus and when he went to Corinth he found that Paul had, by no means, overstated their spirituality. To label the Church at Corinth as carnal across the board is unfair, unkind and flies in the face of the scriptural evidence. We have already suggested why the attempt has been made. Corinth was one of the most radiant jewels in Paul's ministerial crown which he indeed presented to his beloved Lord. Thank God for Corinth. And, even if *when they came together (to worship) everyone of them had a psalm, had a doctrine, had a tongue, had a revelation, had an interpretation (1 CORINTHIANS 14 v 26)*. I'm sure they will be forgiven!!!

MYTH OR SOUND BITE 2/

WHEN THAT WHICH IS PERFECT IS COME

The next "sound bite" first introduced to me in those 1950's fellowship sarnie and thermos lunches at the back of hanger 106, was that prophecies and, of course, other spiritual gifts and apostolic ministries, *would cease or be done away with when that which is perfect is come (1 CORINTHIANS 13 v 8)*. It was insisted that the perfect, which

was to come, was the completed canon of scripture. Even to this converted teenager, with a somewhat limited knowledge of scripture and its doctrines, this seemed a most unlikely suggestion. Even with the passage of so many years, I can still recall my reply. "Surely the perfect that was to come was not the completed canon of scripture but the second coming of the Lord Jesus". It was believed then, and more than fifty years of study and reflection, leaves a mature mind with exactly the same conclusion. *Prophecies and tongues will cease knowledge (and other gifts) will vanish away*. Also, it is most certainly true that *we know in part and prophesy in part* but even these gifts and ministries, though limited, will not cease or vanish away until *THAT WHICH IS PERFECT IS COME* at the return of Messiah Jesus. There will be nine gifts of the Spirit operating in the church and all the apostolic ministries will remain intact until *THAT WHICH IS PERFECT IS COME* at His parousia and not one single moment before.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE CANON

The last additions to the canon were when our dear brother John completed his epistles and the Book of Revelation between A.D. 90 and A.D. 100. The Church was already two generations (60 – 70 years) old. Nothing could be more illogical than the suggestion that the nine gifts of the Spirit and the apostolic ministries were a vital ingredient in the life of the church for the first two generations but not fit for purpose after that time. Such a suggestion is ridiculous. Two generations of believers in almost all of the known world were endued with power from on high when they were baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire, accompanied by speaking tongues and prophecy, yet, after that, nothing. Such a suggestion cannot be credited. Why should two generations of Christians be so richly blessed while we, upon whom *the ends of the earth are come*, are denied that abundant life and blessing? Such a suggestion defies all reason.

WHY CORINTHIANS II ✓ YET NOT CORINTHIANS 12 AND 14 X

Our STATEMENT OF FAITH in regard to Sacred Scripture and our Holy Bible:

2 TIMOTHY 3 v 16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Does it not defy all logic and fly in the face of the inspiration of scripture as the Timothy scripture just quoted to suggest that I CORINTHIANS II presents canonical doctrine for the entire church age, yet I CORINTHIANS 12 and 14, plus a plethora of other scripture, were only canonical for two generations. Such a doctrine is also false on the grounds of its denial of the inspiration of scripture, our Holy Bible, for the entire church age. Surely we have satisfactorily exploded another cessationist myth.

LET US LEAVE MYTHS AND GET TO THE TRUTH

The cessationists have other "sound bites". One surfaced recently that was new to me. "Tongues are a sign to the Jews" and by implication unnecessary for us gentiles. It was planned to explode that one too, but now is the time for biblical truth. In the Acts of the Apostles, and in many of the Epistles, much scripture is devoted to the reality, manifestation and practice of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the apostolic ministries. There is much detail of operation etc., but not one single hint anywhere that these precious blessings were shortly to be withdrawn. To the contrary, every reference indicates longevity, for they were to last throughout the building of the church until the "Constructor in Chief" returns. Cessationists say cessation is at the time of the completed canon. Just consider for a moment that today, nearly 2000 years after that canon was complete, there are still 4000 of earth's tongues that,

far from having the complete canon, have no word of scripture in their language at all. Surely that is a sobering thought for all who espouse the cessationist delusion.

CONTRAST THIS WITH THE OLD AND NEW COVENANTS

Nobody disputes the fact that the cross and the atoning death and resurrection of our beloved Lord Jesus brought into being a new covenant. This covenant was based on remission of sins through the shed blood of our Saviour Jesus. This covenant, through blood, took away sins and superseded the Old Covenant that covered, but could not remove, through the blood of bulls and goats, the guilt of sin. This is an often repeated New Testament theme. The writer to the Hebrews explores the subject in a powerful, convincing presentation of meticulous detail. Hebrews Chapters, seven, eight, nine and a good part of ten are almost totally devoted to this. When the Lord, through His Word, wants to convey that something is to pass, He leaves His believers in no doubt. There is a tremendous weight of scripture that conveys the New Covenant will supersede the Old Covenant. Contrast this with the total lack of true biblical evidence that the baptism of the Holy Ghost, accompanied and confirmed with speaking in tongues, that the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit and that the Apostolic ministries were ever to be withdrawn at any time during the entire church age.

THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE CONCLUSION

And it is this. Cessationism is nothing but a delusional deceit spawned in the underworld, designed to rob the believer of so much. It must be exposed and exploded for what it truly is. That it is one of the most dangerous and pernicious deceits among those that abound in these last days. For all the forces of darkness are redoubling their efforts to delude God's Saints as they know their time is short. Soon Epiphany will be upon us when Jesus returns, so we close with triumphant truth.

2 THESSALONIANS 2 v 1 – 3 and v 8

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.

That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

REVELATION 22 v 7, 12 and 17 – 21

Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.