

Errors that Hinder Spiritual Progress

Seeley D. Kinne

The early church of New Testament times contained the mightiest power ever known in this earth. Nothing could stand before it. The decline of that Divine saving energy was the most lamentable failure ever known to man.

The Gospel as originally given to Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was pure revelation of Jesus Christ, unsullied and unmixed with anything that was derived from man. It was purely spiritual, heavenly, supernatural and Divine, able to exalt those who tasted its power from groveling earth creatures, to the life in the Spirit, to sit with Jesus Christ in the heavens and to become sons of God.

Not alone was there such an obtainable personal state, but there sprang forth a body of Christ, a company of men and women so bound together in one body, the church, that they were of one accord, one heart and one soul, compacted into a unit. Before this host, filled with the dynamite of heaven, every other power gave way.

But alas! the time came when various mixtures of human power, heathen philosophies, Jewish traditions, superstitions, legalism, form and ritualism came in and polluted the pure stream of water of life that flowed in the Gospel. Gradually the original life and power waned, till all was lost, and for a thousand years gross darkness prevailed. Since the Reformation, part of the original power and glory has been recovered. Now we are come to the times of restoration of all that has been lost Acts 3:21.

There are unknown and undiscovered obstacles that hinder or prevent the attainment of the full Apostolic state of ministry and experience and the restoration of the New Testament church in its first glory and power. If these obstacles had been seen, some would have overcome them. The reason they have remained undiscovered is that men have searched by the light of reason rather than by Revelation. The Gospel is by Revelation. Rom. 1:17. Therefore it cannot be rediscovered without Revelation. Errors and mixtures can only be found out by Divine illumination.

LEGALISM

The first Covenant was intended to be a schoolmaster to bring to Christ. It was law, a complete system for every circumstance of life. The New Covenant was by the operation of the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. These two methods could not be combined. "Many

thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law." A full deliverance from legal tendencies seems never to have come to the Church at Jerusalem. But some Gentile churches under Paul rose up to full experience of Divine grace in the New Covenant, though there are passages which show that Paul had severe conflicts in the Spirit with legalizers. (See Col. 2:14-23; Rom. 14:14; Gal. 2:3-5, 16-19; 3:1-5; 5:1-5, 18; I Tim. 4:1-5).

Tendencies to legal methods of applying the Gospel have long been a menace to spirituality. They have colored and biased our teachings more than we have been aware of. To discover and eliminate these legalistic ways of dealing and come to the pure "Gospel of God's grace" requires a deep measure of revelation that will show the great mercy manifested in the covenant of grace through Jesus Christ.

The great distinction between the Law covenant and the Grace covenant is that the Law commands to do this or that, abstain from wrong doing, come under law, but Grace flows in streams of enabling power. Law reproves man's weaknesses and failures; but Grace magnifies and exalts the imparted ability of God, raising man from his fallen state to be heir of the Divine Nature, -heals, receives, renews, recreates - makes a new creature.

The Holy Spirit is the great active Operator. All is done by His direction and by the inworking of His power. Independent activity of man tends to legalism.

PHILOSOPHY

For centuries, beginning 600 or more years B. C., there were men, principally Greeks, called philosophers. Among them were Plato, Aristotle, Epictetus and many others. They were deep thinkers. They evolved theories and hypotheses concerning creation, nature of matter and man. Their deductions are called philosophy.

These men did not have knowledge of God. Nor did they have Revelation and Prophecy, the true key of knowledge. Their conclusions could not be correct. No science or philosophy of creation, nature, matter and man can be sound if it be not founded upon knowledge of God and truth through Revelation, and Prophetic Wisdom.

"In medieval times religion and philosophy went hand in hand. Such men as Aquinas and others attempted to combine the two. They sought to make the facts of Christianity compatible with the ideas of philosophy, and endeavored to reduce religious faith to the mere plain of rationality."

This was one of the greatest of crimes against Jesus Christ and man. It could but be very destructive to faith in and for the supernatural. It was a direct blow at the miraculous in true religion. Its result must be to bring the Gospel down to a similar level of that of heathen religions.

The deadly effects of these efforts to combine the truth of Christ with heathen philosophy are everywhere plainly seen, both in Catholic and Protestant churches, and even in the most devoted spiritual groups. The fear and unbelief concerning the supernatural and miraculous are everywhere.

The loss of the original, anointed, powerful, miraculous, Prophetic Gospel is in a degree due to this philosophy being mixed in with the truth of God, thus diluting the Gospel.

How far reaching and disastrous has been this introduction of heathen philosophy, we shall scarcely ever fully discover, but by the most radical search with strongest light of Divine revelation and wisdom.

TRADITION

The word tradition is here used as the name of those several teachings, doctrines, practices and customs which have grown out of ideas of men, and lack foundation in Divine Revelation and are often contrary to the Bible.

Among these is the observance of days. "Ye observe days and months and times and years. I am afraid of you; lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" Gal. 4:10. Some observe the Sabbath of the law. Yet they themselves never kept the Christian Sabbath of soul rest described in Heb. 4:1-10. Christmas—the birth of Christ—is said to have been in spring. Easter, a movable festival, had its origin in the worship of the goddess of spring.

Jesus ran against many Jewish traditions which He declared made void the Law. We do well to see what traditions we hold that may make void the power of God in the Gospel, or at least tend to lessen its energy.

SUPERSTITION

Recently we saw a rabbit's paw tacked up in an auto. Horseshoe over the door is very common. Some will not go on if a black cat crosses their path! Regard paid to superstitions is akin to devil worship. Such practices breed fear. Fear of demon power and superstitious regard for such things is not only foolish but dangerous, as it is likely to make opportunity for attack by demon forces. Fear is opposite to faith. Fear opens the door to demons, while

faith gives God a chance to work. Beware to whom you open. An entrance gained may result in great harm.

RITUAL AND FORM

It is easier for man, who is spiritually slothful, to perform his religious activities by a previously made or revealed form than to seek and obtain a move of the Spirit for the occasion. We have seen some, for example, use and read a marriage service from a ritual. They might have had some new fresh prophetic working for the occasion had the Spirit been given opportunity.

Oh! how we have shut the door to the miracle working power of the Spirit, and thus missed the water turned into wine, or some rich supernatural move of the Lord. And just because of our substituting the weak philosophies, rites and traditions of man for the glorious gifts and grace of God. Let us return to God that He may heal us.

Faith Links PART II

Mrs. L. Ingham Grace

"It is time to go to India." It was not easy to leave the flourishing church He had given us in Zululand, not easy to leave the dear natives who were dearer than life to us: yet, He had spoken—only one thing to do, obey.

Husband could hardly receive the word. He had labored day and night among these people. A mighty revival had come; signs and wonders were following; now, when it was most promising, we were to leave. He said, "I must pray about it." As he waited on the Lord, it was made very plain to him that he must leave all and follow. He had been in Africa a very long time without any furlough and was greatly in need of a change, as he had had fever many times.

Although we did not know it, we could not have gone to America, as war had been declared. The dear Lord wanted His tired children to come apart a while and rest and He alone knew the only place they would be allowed to go. So it came by the Word of Knowledge. We both said, "By Thy grace we will follow." Although wonderful blessings were being poured upon us spiritually, we had very little of this world's goods. In fact, we did not have a penny to travel on; yet in the Spirit we felt as though we possessed all things. We were continually praising and worshipping the Lord. He was more to us than any service we could render. His divine will meant more to us than the joy of a