

Destroyed For A Lack Of Knowledge

by Wayne Goff

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.” Hosea 4:6

LOOMING APOSTASY

Those who know me realize that I am not an alarmist, but I see many churches of Christ on the verge of apostasy because they have lost respect for the Word of God. In a few short years, you will see many churches of Christ become just another denomination -- accepting salvation without baptism for the remission of sins, fellowship with other denominations, and removal of the name “church of Christ” from their buildings. They will go with the religious flow around them, and whatever is most popular is what will be in vogue with them.

These signs of departure have reminded me of the sad condition of the nation of Israel in Hosea’s day that led God to say through that faithful prophet: “My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge.” And who is to blame for that? The religious leadership of each congregation! In Hosea’s day it was the priesthood which God condemned for “reject(ing) knowledge”! The very ones who should have loved, respected and honored God’s Word were the ones who had given it up!

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

Hopefully there are those who are still reading this article and asking the question, **“How do you know this apostasy is coming?”** My answer is that I am seeing in churches of Christ the **same condition** that existed in denominations when I first began preaching!

I don’t know when it started, but by the time I began preaching the Gospel in 1974, many denominations were only meeting on Sunday morning. If they had a Wednesday service, it was usually for some “youth group” or supposed “evangelistic” meeting. When I visited with some members of such churches, it was obvious that they had little knowledge of God’s Word, and almost no understanding of it. **Why?** They simply didn’t read, study, and obey the Bible! They gave lip service to it, but it was meaningless to them. Their “pastors” would preach sermonettes to appease their consciences, and everybody went on their merry way.

Today when I see churches of Christ *cutting down* on the number of sermons they hear, *changing* their public worship to “home studies,” and even borrowing Bible class material from the denominations, I know they are in grave trouble.

I also know wherein lies the problem: **the leadership**. Weak elders permit such changes with hardly a whimper. They simply do not have the knowledge or the backbone to stand up against these *changes* which are not healthy for God’s people. Preachers, who should be the stalwart defenders of the Faith, are the ones *instigating these changes*! Just like those in Hosea’s day, the very ones we should be counting on to sound the clarion call with the trumpet blast of God’s Word are the ones who *silently* betray the Lord and His church. **Why?** They do not believe that the church of Christ as built by Jesus is the one, true church. They do not honor Christ’s bride by maintaining her purity.

CHANGES COME SLOWLY

The way you institute erroneous ideas and practices is by *testing the waters* -- putting out some *seemingly* innocent changes on the pretense of *improving* ourselves or *upgrading* our practices. If no one loudly objects, then that becomes an established item, and the next error is introduced. Over time the cumulative effect is that the church has gone into apostasy, and nobody can exactly put the finger on when it happened?

“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord GOD, “that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD” (Amos 8:11). Sadly today, there are churches of Christ who have **imposed** this “famine” upon themselves.