

## Their Cancerous Message

---

by Wayne Goff

***“And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort,”*** (2 Timothy 2:17 NKJV).

Lies, misrepresentations, gossip, and false doctrine have a life of their own. They can be as destructive as though they were the truth! Hymenaeus and Philetus had the message that the resurrection of the dead was past already, and overthrew the faith of some (v. 18). Their message would spread like a **“cancer”** (**“canker,”** KJV). The Greek word appears only here in the New Testament and it is the word “gangrene.” **Thayer’s** explains the meaning of the word as “...a disease by which any part of the body suffering from inflammation becomes so corrupted that, unless a remedy may be seasonably applied, the evil continually spreads, attacks other parts, and at last eats away the bones: 2 Tim. 2:17...”

This is why it is important to **mark** false teachers, liars and gossips! If their errors are allowed to continue, they can destroy a Christian, a church, or a good reputation like cancer destroys the body! Ironically, some have the idea that if a Christian, a church, or a good reputation is marred or destroyed by such **“cancer,”** that the good person, church or reputation must be bad! How absurd is that thinking? Does anyone think because cancer invades the human body that the human body must have been bad to start with?! Absolutely not!

God commands the **“cancer”** to be cut out so that it can be stopped. ***“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them”*** (Romans 16:17 KJV). This is how cancer is stopped from the human body, and this is how it is stopped from the spiritual body as well.

One of the jobs of the local eldership is to stop the mouths of the **“insubordinate”** (Titus 1:10-11), who are **“idle talkers”** and **“deceivers.”** This is done by withdrawing fellowship from those in the local body, or marking those outside the local body. By so identifying and discrediting them, their malicious influence can be stopped. It is a sad commentary on some elderships today that they do not have the courage or the convictions to stop harm from being done to those under their oversight! Wolves will continue to feed on the sheep until they are stopped. Elders, are you watching out for the sheep?

322001