

"THE WORDS OF THE LORD ARE PURE WORDS, LIKE SILVER TRIED IN
A FURNACE OF EARTH, PURIFIED SEVEN TIMES.
YOU SHALL KEEP THEM, O LORD, YOU SHALL PRESERVE THEM FROM
THIS GENERATION FOREVER." (PSALM 12: 6 & 7)

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“A HOUSE DIVIDED”

IT IS WRITTEN

"Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand." (Matthew 12:25)

The words of Christ quoted above are well known and often quoted by professing Christians, but sadly, they are little understood. The words that are recorded in Matthew 12:25 are words that clearly express a spiritual law of God that is as certain as the physical law of gravity. They are words of warning, that when neglected, become words of certain judgment. Simply put, God's law states that whenever a nation, city, house or family, church, partnership, marriage, etc. is divided within itself, destruction and desolation are guaranteed. This is an "absolute" with God. We may think differently, but time will confirm God's word. Though He may remain silent for a season, sooner or later, His word is "always" confirmed ----

"These things you have done, and I kept silent; you thought that I was altogether like you, but I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes." (Psalm 50:21)

The desolation and destruction that follows division within, is the judgment of God. When God decrees that His judgment will bring desolation and destruction as the result of certain behavior, know ---- that it cannot be avoided. This spiritual law applies to believer and unbeliever alike. Just As the law of gravity applies to all, and shows no favoritism; the law of division spares no one – saint or sinner – hell bound or heaven bound – those of us who are divided within face the absolute certainty of desolation and destruction!

In case you are wondering just what is meant by the terms "desolation and destruction", here is what Webster has to say:

"Desolation carries the meaning of: Grief, Sadness, Loneliness, Devastation, Ruin and Barren wasteland."

"Destruction is the action or process of destroying something, Ruin".

Needless to say, the fruit that is born on the tree of division is bitter indeed, as bitter as wormwood (Proverbs 5:4). I for one have tasted the bitter fruit of division and by the grace of God, I will not visit that tree again. Division within has caused nations to fall, businesses to fail, friends to become enemies, husbands and wives to divorce and believers in Jesus Christ to split up into their own "self seeking, self promoting" groups.

Dear reader, please listen carefully; wherever the spirit of division manifests itself, know that man's flesh – "self" – rules and reigns. Where ever the foul smell of man's flesh is found, you are certain to find "pride"; and the deadliest form of pride is religious pride.

"By pride comes nothing but strife, ---" (Proverbs 13:10)

**"Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."
(Proverbs 16:18)**

"Therefore pride serves as their necklace; violence covers them like a garment." (Psalm 73:6)

"- - - the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world." (1 John 2:16b)

And Jesus said, **"What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of man, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, PRIDE, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man."** (Mark 7:20-23)

Dear reader, please direct your attention to our Lord's words where He includes PRIDE with murder, fornication, adultery, blasphemy, etc. Think not that PRIDE be a small thing in the eyes of God. PRIDE, left unchecked, will take a man straight to hell! Sadly, the modern day church, including many home fellowships, are well populated with those who are infected with religious pride; many being totally unaware of their condition or the danger that they are in.

For years I have taught that one cannot relate to a drunk, until he or she has been a drunk. Nor can one relate to parents who bury a child, until they bury a child. This principal applies to the whole of the life experience, including that of being infected with pride. And I must confess to my brothers and sisters that I am well acquainted with the spirit of pride, especially religious pride. I have been as drunk on pride as any man --- as deceived by pride as any man. In my religious ignorance and evil arrogance, I called my pride faith, truth, a holy zeal, love, etc. ---- anything but what it was and is ---- SIN!

Today, I thank God that I can speak to you as one who is well acquainted with the spirit of religious pride; and as one whom our Father has chastised, humbled and awakened to his wickedness of pride. While I believe that Father has delivered me from the bondage of religious pride and granted me a measure of revelation in this matter, I do not boast of being so free that I am now immune to this evil spirit. I am not! Nor are you, dear reader. As the strong man of my spiritual house, if I let down my guard, I would soon be overtaken by the weakness of my flesh and the "hiss of hell".

"When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace." (Luke 11:21)

"Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house." (Matthew 12:29)

There are no chains of religious bondage stronger, nor deadlier than those of pride. Of all forms of deception, those attached to religious pride are the most difficult to discern and deal with.

"And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works." (2 Corinthians 11:14 & 15)

Wisdom would warn those who have been set free, not to find any confidence in their own strength as they guard against spiritual pride. So deceptive is this agent of Satan, that even the "elect" are subject to his intoxicating charms (Matthew 24:24). Unless we repent of our pride, humble ourselves before God, and plead that He grant us the grace of His protection from pride, we are certain to be held captive by the enemy and housed in the prison of pride, where we await the judgment of a holy God, who shows no partiality to anyone (Romans 2:11).

Dear saints, please bear with me a little longer while I attempt to share with you what I believe to be our Father's truth on this matter of Division. May Father grant each one of us a deep and full revelation of the importance of Unity and the dangers of Division. May He grant us the grace of coming into "union" with Him on this subject, so that we might not be at odds with Him, and find ourselves walking alone.

"Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" (Amos 3:3)

Division within is the outgrowth or fruit of Pride. Pride in man's heart is sin and it is as wicked and evil as any sin known to man. Satan fell from heaven and from favor with God because of Pride. Job went through hell on earth because of Pride – religious pride. I invite you to consider Job, a man who found favor with God:

"Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" (Job 1:8)

In Job's day, he above all other believers was counted by God, as the most righteous; and yet, he was susceptible to the demonic spirit of Pride. The Book of Job is recorded in 42 chapters that are rich with Truth on our subject at hand. In chapter 42, verses 5 and 6, Job came to understand and to deplore religious Pride. Please listen to his own words:

"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

What about you, dear reader? How can you be so sure that you are not infected with a spirit of Pride? May I suggest that the more confident you are about your freedom from a spirit of Pride, the more likely, you are infected.

"If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know." (1 Corinthians 8:2)

"But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word." (Isaiah 66:2b)

For many years, your writer walked as a born-again, baptized in the Holy Spirit, son of God, and had no idea whatsoever that religious Pride had infected his heart; but it had! I was unclean because of Pride, and I walked with an unclean people, who like me, reeked of the foul smell of *pride!* I thank God for His mercy in calling me out into a place where He could show me the real Tom and expose my wickedness; but he did not stop there, he also granted the grace of repentance and the gift of revelation in the matter of *Pride, Division and Unity*. I must tell you, dear reader, that He longs to bless all of His sons and daughters in like manner ---- this includes you, if in fact, you belong to Him.

“In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality”. (Peter speaking – Acts 10:34)

What our God has done for me, He will do for you. However, you must decide which is more important; to walk together in agreement with the One you call the Lord of your life ---- Jesus Christ – or to continue to walk according to the dictates of your deceitful heart. It’s your choice --- God’s word or your way! But, I warn you ---- it is written:

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

“All to well you reject the commandment of God that you may keep your traditions.

Making the word of God of no affect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.” (Mark 7:9 & 13)

“You are restricted by your own affections”. (2 Corinthians 6:12b)

Division within is the work of the spirit of Pride, but Pride can only enter a man’s heart where there is a lack of love ---- a true love for God, which causes man to hunger and thirst for Truth. Many, perhaps the over-whelming majority of professing Christians today, say they love God and they call Jesus Christ, Lord, but they are liars! It is written:

“He who says, “I know Him”, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” (1 John 2:4)

“He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me”. (John 14:24)

“But why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46)

Man proves His love for God as He obeys God and loves his brethren. If we love God with all of our heart, mind, soul and strength, we will love His word (Hebrews 8:10) and we will keep or obey His word. Loving God, as we are commanded to do causes us to believe Him, and in believing Him, we obey Him, both because we love Him and because we fear Him. We know that if we disobey Him, that He will discipline us; and that is never pleasant. Loving and obeying God brings blessings from God. Failure to Love and obey God results in the loss of blessings. This spiritual law cannot be broken!

“If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.” (Hebrews 12:7 & 8)

Division within is the “hallmark” of the modern day church. This division is the fruit of religious pride that fills the heart that loves not God above all else. While I am convinced that this problem is worse than it has ever been, it is nothing new among those who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ. Listen to the Apostle Paul:

"Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul", or "I am of Apollos", Or "I am of Cephas", or "I am of Christ". Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

(1 Corinthians 1:10, 12 & 13)

"I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, "I am of Paul", and another, "I am of Apollos", are you not carnal?" (1Corinthians 3:1 - 4)

Dear reader, are we, who make up the modern day church, not carnal? Do you honestly believe that our God and our Lord, is pleased with our behavior as we carry on an adulterous affair with a spirit of religious pride. Do you honestly believe that when our hearts have a greater love and affection for "our church", "our pastor, priest or Pope", "our doctrine or ministry" than we do for our Head - Jesus Christ. ---- Do you honestly believe that God is pleased with us? Again, I ask, are we not carnal? Are we not at enmity with God? Are we not deserving of His discipline? Can we honestly expect God to reward us for reflecting to the world religious pride, division, and body worship; and do so using His name? May God have mercy on us all!

"For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:6-8)

This message will continue, as we look deeper into the evil of division and the blessing of unity. In the meantime, I leave you with this thought:

Unity with God, and with His people, can only be found in Truth; not the having attained Truth, but the mutual love for, and desire for, Truth. Unity, apart from a mutual love and desire for Truth, is no Unity at all, and speaks clearly of division within.

God Bless,

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Thomas -- your Brother

"EVERY WORD OF GOD IS PURE; HE IS A SHIELD TO THOSE WHO PUT THEIR TRUST IN HIM. DO NOT ADD TO HIS WORDS, LEST HE REBUKE YOU, AND YOU BE FOUND A LIAR." (PROVERBS 30:5 & 6)