

The Cappuccino Church

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We are living in a critical time in which spirituality in the church is near an all-time low and immorality in society is near an all-time high. The pulpits of the land have lost their influence upon society because they have let the world into the church and cheapened the Gospel message in an attempt to grow their church campus. Many church members profess to know Christ, but their lives do not display the evidence of true conversion.

When George Whitfield, the great British evangelist, came to America in 1740 during the Great Awakening, he was asked by a Boston minister, "Mr. Whitfield, how many converts have you had since you've been among us?" To which the great Whitfield replied, "I don't know, sir, but I shall return to these parts in a year or two and look for the evidence of their salvation." Few church members today demonstrate credible evidence of their salvation.

Listen friends, when the church fails to carry out the mandate of the Great Commission and proactively storm the gates of hell, then a vacuum is created. The vacuum begins within the church until the church compromises the Gospel message, places man and his needs as the center and focus of the church and everything rotates around the happiness of man.

My message tonight is on the apostate church in America. It is entitled "The Cappuccino Church" because it's all froth and no substance. I am not insinuating that the entire institutional church in America is apostate, please don't misunderstand me. There are many sound Christian churches throughout our land with solid shepherds leading them, but I have seen a drastic change in a majority of churches that have cheapened the Gospel message with the express purpose of growing their church. They've made it a lot easier to become a Christian than what Jesus stated. Jesus said, "The way is narrow and the passage difficult." He said, "Unless you repent, ye shall all likewise perish." I have been around for a long time and have witnessed the tragic spiritual declension of the church in America. It breaks my heart to bring this message tonight but I must unburden my heart of what the Lord has given me regarding the church in America today.

When I was a little boy in the 1950s and you went to church, you knew you were safe there. You knew that in all probability you would hear the true Gospel and be surrounded by real Christians and receive spiritual good but today in America, the church looks the same on the outside but instead of being a place of blessing, it is now a church that harms

you spiritually. It harms the soul with its diluted Gospel and man-centered theology. Sinners are fed a false Gospel and given a false security. So many pulpits preach death instead of life and damn their hearers instead of blessing them. I'm even afraid to take my teenage daughter to church these days because it seems to be more hurtful to her rather than helpful. You think you're doing good putting your child in a youth group at church but often it's more corrupting in influence than spiritually helpful. That's how bad things have gotten in the church in America in our day.

When I go around and visit churches, I can barely make it through the service without being offended or embarrassed by the minister in the pulpit. The pulpit today in America has not only lost its authority, it's lost its dignity through many of the immature men who occupy it. The church in America has become a Cappuccino Church, all froth and no substance and instead of being a place of spiritual good, it often has a damning influence.

Many churches in America today are indistinguishable from the local country club. They offer all the comforts of a country club including yoga classes and Zumba dancing and coffee bars whose focus is on making man happy and gratifying his flesh. The Gospel of the apostate church speaks of a comfortable Christianity which has no restrictions and it speaks of a Jesus who has no requirements. But the Jesus of the Bible did not speak of a comfortable Christianity, rather he said, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

The members of the apostate church are quite happy there and content. They are entertained weekly, empty, like they belong to a special social club and they meet on a regular basis. They even pay their monthly dues to this country club church by tithing and this helps to ease their conscience. But the sad fact is that this apostate church is a church that damns. The Cappuccino Church is a worldly church with a worldly program for its worldly members. It is of the world and of the devil. The Cappuccino Church has a pastor who is more like Jay Leno than a true shepherd. This comedian pastor tells jokes to make his people laugh. The jokes may even be off-color to embarrass them to laugh. He tells funny stories to arouse emotions and his ministry is based on his professionalism and personality rather than the power of God through a surrendered life under the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

Can you imagine Jonathan Edwards telling jokes to the congregation in Enfield, Connecticut to warm up his crowd with laughter before he preached "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"? But we have more jokesters in the pulpits today who make you laugh rather than prophets who cry with authority, "Thus sayeth the Lord." Sadly, few want to have an encounter with God in the church today. They just want to be entertained. The church was never intended to be a place of laughter and entertainment but a house of prayer and worship. The church in America today has become a party church with fun and laughter rather than a weeping church broken over the sins of the land and burdened for the lost and perishing around them. The church has become self-focused, self-sufficient and self-absorbed.

God is a million miles away from the Cappuccino Church in America today. The Cappuccino Church is a feel-good church like the coffee drink, it makes you feel good. I remember being in church as a boy and there was a sense of God's presence there and a certain solemnity that attended it and you worshipped God because of his presence. But today in churches, they have a party and laugh and sing because of his absence. The church in America back then was a place where true believers gathered to pray and lay hold of God and weep over the lost and you heard a message about the blood and the cross and the need for repentance because you were a sinner who needed to be reconciled back to an offended God. You heard about a terrible place called hell and you were warned not to go there. But today, in the churches in the land, you'll hear a funny story and feel-good messages to make you feel better about yourself before it's time for you to go leave and enjoy your lunch.

Listen friends, the apostate church fails to warn the sinner to flee from the wrath to come and it's run on man-power and methodologies rather than God and Holy Ghost power. The Cappuccino Church presents a God that has no claims or rights upon a person's life. It omits the need of repentance, the plan of redemption, the blood of Christ and the bloody cross on which he died. Rather, it preaches a feel-good message which doesn't upset anybody or confront them with their sins. The underground church in China suffers persecution as they follow a crucified Savior. The aboveground church in China is the Three Self Church and it's a tool for the communist government.

The apostate church in America will be the vehicle used by Antichrist when he appears. You will be able to distinguish a true Christian then. They'll be the ones being persecuted for their faith and testimony in Christ Jesus. Martin Luther cried out against the corrupt church in his day and he was persecuted for it. The apostate church will persecute true believers as the Antichrist appears.

Well, that's my introduction for my message tonight on "The Cappuccino Church." My text is found in the Book of Ezekiel, in chapter 11 and verse 12. You may turn in your Bibles there now. Allow me to read it to you for it accurately describes the church in the West today. Listen to how God describes his rebellious people:

"And ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about you."

Notice several outstanding remarks from this passage from the Word of God: 1. God says something to his people which is quite extraordinary, he declares, "And ye shall know that I am the LORD." You see, many that claim to know him did not know him. They had a perverted view of God and their god was not the God of the Bible. Today in the land, I fear many church members have a perverted view of God and they have fashioned a god of their own making and they worship that idol rather than know the true and living God of the Bible.

God was telling his rebellious people that through coming judgments, they will know the true God and “know that I am the LORD.” This will be true when judgment falls upon America from the hand of God. Times will become so desperate, people so despondent, they will turn to the government for help and the government will be bankrupt and entirely helpless themselves. This situation will be so drastic and so bad that people will realize that God is the author of their calamity and God will be able to say, “And ye shall know that I am the LORD.”

2. Notice the next indictment God has against his straying people. He says, “For ye have not walked in my statutes.” Today’s apostate church has members who live in sin and have no remorse for it. They feel that because they are once saved, always saved, they can sin all they want to without any repercussions since they won their ticket to heaven through a false, easy believeism.

God reprimands his people for their disobedience to his commands. Today’s church that damns, preaches an easy belief Gospel that allows you to take Christ as Savior and remain in your sins, whereas the Bible declares that Jesus came to save his people from their sins. Jesus never preached a sinning religion, but a self-crucifying one. He said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” But the church that damns declares you can have Jesus and the world, too. You can have Jesus and hold on to your rotten sins and it’s okay with him. But, God says “No.” God says, “Be ye holy for I am holy.” And in Hebrews it declares, “Without holiness no one will see the Lord.”

3. Notice the next urgent matter that God brings before his rebellious people: he says to them, “neither executed my judgments.” The people of God were careless stewards of the things of God. Rather than declare to the heathen the purposes of God, they kept all their knowledge to themselves selfishly. Today’s church that damns has no real Gospel witness to the world. There’s no message of God’s true Gospel which speaks of ruin, redemption, repentance, and regeneration. You will not hear of the blood, nor the cross, nor sin, nor hell, nor of a future judgment for all mankind. Rather, it’s a selfish Gospel which creates selfish followers who think only of themselves and their own amusements. Their number one aim in life is to gratify their flesh. They know nothing of the cross in the life of the believer nor have they ever surrendered to the Lordship of Christ with all his claims and demands upon their lives. The church that damns speaks nothing about the strict and severe law of God which every man will be judged against and that all will fail that test. I am a sinner and I need a sin substitute in the person of Jesus Christ.

The rebellious Jews did not execute God’s judgments and defend a holy God and fear him. Rather, they put their own needs and desires first in their lives to the neglect of the things of God. The Jews put themselves first and God second in their lives and God said, “No.”

Finally, notice the last thing in this verse from Ezekiel, notice the last indictment from God to his straying people. He tells them, “but have done after the manners of the

heathen that are round about you.” In other words, they worshipped God like the heathen. They brought false fire into the house of God. They let the world in and pushed God out. I fear many churches in America today have walked God to the back of the church and pushed him out the back door and then they’ve gone and opened their front door and invited the world in. The Cappuccino Church looks just like the world, there’s no telling them apart.

I have a hard time finding anybody today preaching up the blood and the cross and calling sin “black” and hell “hot,” and warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come. No, they just want to make you laugh and want to entertain you. They don’t want to upset anybody by mentioning sin or the need for repentance. They’re afraid to offend man so they offend God. God help us.

When Jesus preached, he always upset his hearers. They wanted to take him to the top of a hill after he preached and throw him off of it. After one preaching session, the people picked up stones to stone him but he escaped them by walking through their midst. And one time, after Jesus preached a hard message, the crowd left him and many said, “Who can understand it?” And Jesus turned to his men and asked, “Will you leave me too?”

When Christ preached, he divided the crowd into sheep and goats but many of the pygmies that stand in our pulpits today want to be accepted by their hearers because of their pride so they speak, “Peace, peace, when there is no peace.” The true Gospel declares we are enemies of God because of sin and we need to be reconciled to him through the blood of Jesus Christ. We need to repent of our rotten sins and fall on our faces and turn back to God in true contrition and brokenness over our sins. We need to humble ourselves before an offended Creator and beg him for mercy.

Listen friends, judgment is not coming to America because of the White House. Judgment is not coming to America because of the Court House. Judgment is coming to America because of the Church House. God is sending judgments upon America because the professed church of God does not walk in his statutes nor execute his judgments but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about them.

The only hope for America and Canada is revival. But there is good news. God is calling out his remnant to stand strong for him. God called out a remnant in the days of Ezekiel. Listen to verses 19 and 20 from chapter 11. Listen to God’s mercy,

“And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”

I believe that God is calling his remnant today in the land to go to their knees and humble themselves before his face. I believe it will be God’s remnant who emerge in the coming days of the appearing of Antichrist. The remnant will be the sufferers for Christ. The

remnant will be the ones in prison for him. The remnant will be the ones martyred for him and his glory. This is a call to the people of God to go to our knees and ask the Holy Spirit to show us anything in our lives that is grievous to him.

Listen friends, I got rid of television in my home. I was hooked on too many news programs and cooking programs and golf programs. I got rid of the damning influence of television in my home. People call me odd but I don't care. I spend that time I used to watch tv now, in my Bible and in prayer. Christ is calling his own to separate themselves from the world. Are we willing to do it?

The Cappuccino Church is a feel-good church with a feel-good message and it allows you to profess Christ and remain in your sins. Jesus said if you die in your sins, you will go to hell. The Cappuccino Church is damning its members to hell rather than warning them not to go there.

In the coming days of these end times, the apostate church will grow in influence and popularity and it will spread over the land like the great plague that it is. For it is an indictment against the people of God who have not walked in his statutes nor executed his judgments but have done after the matters of the heathen that were round about them. God have mercy on us.