

Lesson 149 - Why Many Christians Will Be Told to Depart

1. What does Jesus point to as being the reason for having "the workers of iniquity" depart? **Matthew 7:21-23**

EGW: I was shown that the following scripture was applicable to such, who go along under such a deception. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." {4bSG 157.1}

Here is the greatest deception that can affect the human mind, for persons to believe that they are right when they are wrong. They think that they are doing a great work in their religious life. Finally Jesus tears off their self-righteous covering, and vividly presents before them the true picture of themselves, in all their wrongs and deformity of religious character. They are found wanting when it is forever too late to have their wants supplied. {4bSG 157.2}

God has provided means to correct the erring, yet if those who err, choose to do as they think best, and follow their own judgment, and despise the means of God has ordained to correct the erring and unite them upon the truth, they will be brought into the position described by the words of our Lord quoted above. {4bSG 157.3}

2. How do we get to know Jesus? **Revelation 3:8, 1 John 2:5**

EGW: In this work, God's Word will be found a profitable guide. Poverty may bind about the work, because we abide by God's simple truth, but there must be a firm adherence to the truth still. You may have to drop men, but not one thread of truth must be conceded. Said the great Teacher, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" [Matthew 4:4]. Truth, eternal truth, is to be lived in the daily life. The maxims that the Author of our salvation has given must be strictly adhered to. The living principles are as the leaves of the tree of life, for the healing of human woes. {13MR 6.3}

In a "Thus saith the Lord" is eternal wisdom. Notwithstanding God's Word is so little practiced, this is the only remedy for the healing of individual and national woes. Man cannot bow upon his knees in the streets and in the market place to offer up his prayers to God, but never forget, wherever you may be, that there is a God upon whom you may call for wisdom. The Lord declared to John:

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" [Revelation 3:8]. {13MR 7.1}

3. Who experienced the correlation between the lack of knowing God and lack of knowing the Word? **1 Samuel 3:7**

EGW: The Scriptures state that before receiving this message from God, "Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him." He was not destitute of a knowledge of God, nor he was a stranger to the influence of divine grace; but he was not acquainted with such direct manifestations of his presence, as were granted to the prophets. It was the Lord's purpose, however, to reveal himself in an unexpected manner, that Eli might hear of it through the surprise and inquiry of the youth. {ST, December 15, 1881 par. 6}

4. What in God's Word separates God's people from the rest of the world? **2 John 1:9**

EGW: But although John dwells so particularly on love, he does not clasp hands with sin. Hear his words regarding the apostate from the faith, he who has had a knowledge of the truth but has departed from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds." Let all consider this. {1888 136.2}

John writes further, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.... He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." {1888 136.3}

The Lord has plain words for those who, like the Pharisees, make great boast of their piety but whose hearts are destitute of the love of God. The Pharisees refused to know God and Jesus Christ whom He had sent. Are we not in danger of doing the same thing as did the Pharisees and scribes? {1888 136.4}

5. What are those items referred to as that is causing the departure from the faith? **1 Timothy 4:1**

EGW: This scripture points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of Revelation 14 (verse 8), is to be repeated, with the additional mention

of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844. A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred. Christ is set at nought in the contempt placed upon His word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches. {GC 603.2}

6. What is the condition of the last church? **Revelation 3:14-22 [Answer is at the end of Revelation 3:17]** (5 items are listed)

EGW: The True Witness says of a cold, lifeless, Christless church, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15, 16). Mark the following words: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17). Here is represented a people who pride themselves in their possession of spiritual knowledge and advantages. But they have not responded to the unmerited blessings that God has bestowed upon them. They have been full of rebellion, ingratitude, and forgetfulness of God; and still He has dealt with them as a loving, forgiving father deals with an ungrateful, wayward son. They have resisted His grace, abused His privileges, slighted His opportunities, and have been satisfied to sink down in contentment, in lamentable ingratitude, hollow formalism, and hypocritical insincerity. With Pharisaic pride they have vaunted themselves till it has been said of them, "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." {1SM 357.2}

7. What is to help people see properly? **End of Revelation 3:18**

EGW: Has not the Lord Jesus sent message after message of rebuke, of warning, of entreaty to these self-satisfied ones? Have not His counsels been despised and rejected? Have not His delegated messengers been treated with scorn, and their words been received as idle tales? Christ sees that which man does not see. He sees the sins which, if not repented of, will exhaust the patience of a long-suffering God. Christ cannot take up the names of those who are satisfied in their own self-sufficiency. He cannot importune in behalf of a people who feel no need of His help, who claim to know and possess everything. {1SM 357.3}

The great Redeemer represents Himself as a heavenly merchantman, laden with riches, calling from house to house, presenting His priceless goods, and saying, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:18-20). {1SM 358.1}

Let us consider our condition before God; let us heed the counsel of the True Witness. Let none of us be filled with prejudice, as were the Jews, that light may not come into our hearts. Let it not be necessary for Christ to say of us as He did of them, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40). {1SM 358.2}

8. What are the people with the proper eyesight needing to do? **End of 2 Timothy 2:15**

EGW: For the past fifty years every phase of heresy has been brought to bear upon us, to becloud our minds regarding the teaching of the Word--especially concerning the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and the message of heaven for these last days as given by the angels of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His Word and through the testimony of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.--Ms 44, 1905. ("An Appeal for Faithful Stewardship," March 29, 1905). {MR760 7.2}

I am bidden to bear a message to our people. In the name of the Lord I am bidden to warn our ministers not to mingle erroneous theories with the truth of God. Pure Bible truth is to stand forth in its nobility and sanctity. It is not to be classified and adjusted according to man's wisdom. The ministers of the gospel are to present truth in its simplicity, through the blessing of God making the Scriptures profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. "Rightly dividing the word of truth"--this is the word that should be spoken of all our ministers. But far, far from this, many of our ministers have departed from Christ's plans. The praise of men is coveted and they strain every faculty in an effort to hunt out and present wonderful things. The Lord bids me counsel them to walk humbly and prayerfully with Him. {MR760 7.3}

9. What do those who do not have proper sight turn to? **2 Timothy 4:3-4**

EGW: "Learn of Me," said Christ; "for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He will instruct those who come to Him for knowledge. There are multitudes of false teachers in the world. The apostle declares that in the last days men will "heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears," because they desire to hear smooth things. Against these Christ has warned us: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." The class of religious teachers here described profess to be Christians. They have the form of godliness and appear to be laboring for the good of souls, while they are at heart avaricious, selfish, ease-loving, following the promptings of their own unconsecrated hearts. They are in conflict with Christ and His teachings, and are destitute of His meek and lowly spirit. {4T 376.3}

10. What is the reason that so many Christians will be lost? **Hosea 4:6**

EGW: To us God's messengers come at the bidding of the Master. They come demanding, as did Christ, obedience to the word of God. They present His claim to the fruits of the vineyard, the fruits of love, and humility, and self-sacrificing service. Like the Jewish leaders, are not many of the husbandmen of the vineyard stirred to anger? When the claim of God's law is set before the people, do not these teachers use their influence in leading men to reject it? Such teachers God calls unfaithful servants. {COL 306.1}

The words of God to ancient Israel have a solemn warning to the church and its leaders today. Of Israel the Lord said, "I have written to him the great things of My law; but they were counted as a strange thing." Hosea 8:12. And to the priests and teachers He declared, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee; . . . seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children." Hosea 4:6. {COL 306.2}

Shall the warnings from God be passed by unheeded? Shall the opportunities for service be unimproved? Shall the world's scorn, the pride of reason, conformity to human customs and traditions, hold the professed followers of Christ from service to Him? Will they reject God's word as the Jewish leaders rejected Christ? The result of Israel's sin is before us. Will the church of today take warning? {COL 306.3}

11. With the lack of knowledge, what do they practice? **Hosea 4:7-8 [Take note of the last word at the end of verse 8 as it matches Matthew 7:23]**

EGW: There were times when the judgments of Heaven fell very heavily on the rebellious people. "I hewed them by the prophets," God declared; "I have slain them by the words of My mouth: and

thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth. For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against Me." Hosea 6:5-7. {PK 281.2}

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel," was the message that finally came to them: "Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. As they were increased, so they sinned against Me: therefore will I change their glory into shame.... I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings." Hosea 4:1, 6-9. {PK 281.3}

The iniquity in Israel during the last half century before the Assyrian captivity was like that of the days of Noah, and of every other age when men have rejected God and have given themselves wholly to evil-doing. The exaltation of nature above the God of nature, the worship of the creature instead of the Creator, has always resulted in the grossest of evils. Thus when the people of Israel, in their worship of Baal and Ashtoreth, paid supreme homage to the forces of nature, they severed their connection with all that is uplifting and ennobling, and fell an easy prey to temptation. With the defenses of the soul broken down, the misguided worshipers had no barrier against sin and yielded themselves to the evil passions of the human heart. {PK 281.4}

12. What takes away the heart? **Hosea 4:11**

EGW: (no comment)

13. What is the synonym for whoredom? **Ezekiel 23:43**

EGW: (no comment)

14. What do the people commit adultery with? **James 4:4**

EGW: May the Lord bless his people with spiritual eyesight, in order that they may see that the children of God and the children of the world cannot enter into co-partnership. James says: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." But while the children of God are not to be borne away by the spirit and influence of the world, they are to work with Christ to transform the children of darkness, to point them to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. {RH, July 31, 1894 par. 4}

God's people are not to be swayed by the evil suggestions of worldlings against some of God's

chosen ones. There must be unity among the children of God, and nothing must be allowed to enter that will bring alienation and discord. When there is unity with Christ, there is unity among the believers, and then one can chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. Let not unholy bonds be formed between the children of God and the friends of the world. Let there not be marriages made between believers and unbelievers. Let the people of God take their stand firmly for truth and righteousness. {RH, July 31, 1894 par. 5}

15. What happens when they drink the wine? **Beginning of Isaiah 28:7**

EGW: The prophet says, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils" (Revelation 18:1, 2). This is the same message that was given by the second angel. Babylon is fallen, "because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Revelation 14:8). What is that wine?--Her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the falsehood that Satan first told Eve in Eden--the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). {2SM 118.1}

16. To reduce being in error, what ought people to do with God's Word? **Isaiah 28:9-10**

EGW: Instruction has been given, warning our people against uniting in the least degree with those who advocate false theories. He who allows his sympathies and interests to be enlisted in a work that is opposed to the teachings of the word of God, is on dangerous ground, where he is surrounded by the agencies of evil. Satan is working with great determination to introduce among God's peculiar people strange and forbidden things. Commercialism threatens to absorb energies and means that should be given to the work of God for this time. Of those who are advocating these enterprises, God declares, "I have not sent them." Shall the people who have had great light, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, yield to the temptations of the enemy on this point, and refuse to heed the warnings of God to them? {SpTB17a 29.2}

17. What will many people be motivated by to doubt God's Word? **2 Peter 3:3-4 [End of verse 3 is the answer]**

EGW: While exalting the "sure word of prophecy" as a safe guide in times of peril, the apostle solemnly warned the church against the torch of false prophecy, which would be uplifted by "false teachers," who would privily bring in "damnable heresies, even denying the Lord." These false

teachers arising in the church are accounted true by many of their brethren in the faith, but the apostle compared them to "wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever." "The latter end is worse with them," he declared, "than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." {RH, September 26, 1912 par. 5}

Looking down through the ages to the close of time, Peter was inspired to outline conditions that would exist in the world just prior to the second coming of Christ. "There shall come in the last days scoffers," he wrote, "walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But "when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." Not all, however, would be ensnared by the enemy's devices. As the end of all things earthly approached, there would be faithful ones able to discern the signs of the times. While a larger number of professing believers would deny their faith by their works, there would be a remnant who would endure to the end. {RH, September 26, 1912 par. 6}

18. Before antichrist is restored, what happens to many of God's people? **2 Thessalonians 2:2-3**

EGW: The apostle Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, foretold the great apostasy which would result in the establishment of the papal power. He declared that the day of Christ should not come, "except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." And furthermore, the apostle warns his brethren that "the mystery of iniquity doth already work." [2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, 7.] Even at that early date he saw, creeping into the church, errors that would prepare the way for the development of the papacy. {4SP 51.1}

Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased in strength and gained control of the minds of men, the mystery of iniquity carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism. But as persecution ceased, and Christianity entered the courts and palaces of kings, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and his apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers; and in place of the requirements of God, she substituted human theories and traditions. The nominal conversion of Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, arrayed in robes of righteousness, walked into the church. Now the work of corruption rapidly progressed. Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Her spirit controlled the church. Her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the

professed followers of Christ. {4SP 51.2}

This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the man of sin foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan's power,--a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will. {4SP 52.1}

19. What warnings ought we to be aware of? **Matthew 7:15, Matthew 24:11, Matthew 24:24, 2 Peter 2:1-2, 1 John 4:1**

EGW: As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. Revelation 1:13-15. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: "Christ has come! Christ has come!" The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion. Like the Samaritans who were deceived by Simon Magus, the multitudes, from the least to the greatest, give heed to these sorceries, saying: This is "the great power of God." Acts 8:10. {GC 624.2}

But the people of God will not be misled. The teachings of this false christ are not in accordance with the Scriptures. His blessing is pronounced upon the worshipers of the beast and his image, the very class upon whom the Bible declares that God's unmingled wrath shall be poured out. {GC 625.1}

And, furthermore, Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ's advent. The Saviour has warned His people against deception upon this point, and has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming. "There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. . . . Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:24-27, 31; 25:31; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This coming there is no possibility of counterfeiting. It will be universally

known--witnessed by the whole world. {GC 625.2}

Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the Bible testimony these will detect the deceiver in his disguise. To all the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible and the Bible only? Satan will, if possible, prevent them from obtaining a preparation to stand in that day. He will so arrange affairs as to hedge up their way, entangle them with earthly treasures, cause them to carry a heavy, wearisome burden, that their hearts may be overcharged with the cares of this life and the day of trial may come upon them as a thief. {GC 625.3}

20. What advice ought we to follow? **Titus 2:11-12**

EGW: The Lord, by close and pointed truths for these last days, is cleaving out a people from the world and purifying them unto Himself. Pride and unhealthful fashions, the love of display, the love of approbation--all must be left with the world if we would be renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created us. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." {3T 52.1}