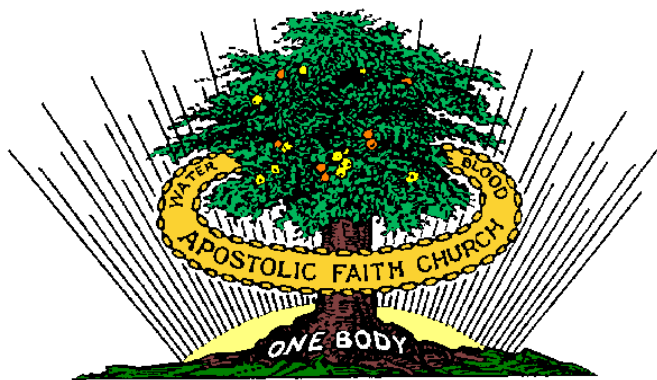


Apostolic Faith Church
66 Muscliffe Road,
Winton,
Bournemouth,
Dorset
BH9 1NW



Showers of Blessing

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Worship God

No one, whomsoever they might be, would worship anyone or anything to which they did not ascribe overriding power of authority! It seems incredible to us the number and variety of objects and individuals to whom others will submit themselves, in total surrender, in spite of their glaring deficiencies.

The wonder is, how have these gods managed to capture their attention so as to enthrall them, that they become their willing victims. There must be something in the first place to attract them, that echoes a cord of harmony between some deeply cherished sentiment, dwelling in the heart of these simple gullible slaves, with that of a subtle, enticing spirit.

When reading the Bible, one marvels to see how quickly and easily the children of Israel, time and time again, departed from serving the living God, and turned to worship idols.

We know, of course, that back of all the infinite variety of false gods, there lies the "false god" - the arch-deceiver - the Devil. He is a fast-builder of idols, and is adept at turning out as many custom-built models as his foul purposes require, to meet every situation where he can find an entrance into a wayward heart.

It has been said that the Devil has a religion to fit every frame of mind! To counterfeit the Word of God before those who possess the light of His truth, has the highest priority amongst his secret schemes. He never announces his intentions to those he beguiles: that would destroy his chances of netting his prey.

Of all the numerous angelic cloaks he wears, there is just one he never dons, and that is the one which reflects his evil and devilishness, and never, never, does he show his horns!

Whenever there is a falling away from the worship of the Creator, there arises a spirit of compromise within the heart. This will turn to embrace - though in a small measure at the beginning - impure elements within. These may never have been cast out following conversion, and may have lain dormant for years; their never having been dealt with, when later a different spiritual situation or climate may form, favourable to their redevelopment, these impurities may become quickened into growth.

The higher one climbs with the Lord, the more dangerous is the position one can get in, if there is a deviation from the narrow way of righteousness. Christians do not always realise this, erroneously supposing that because they have been blessed of God, and perhaps received wonderful spiritual gifts, they are secure and well-approved of God.

Falling away from the faith, whether in days of the early apostles, or since, down to modern times, does not necessarily mean failing to continue to worship, but more often that their worship becomes distorted.

It is the falling away from the truth, which has to be watched with the utmost scrutiny, for out of it - the truth - are the issues of life. We have the example of the great apostasy - that is, the falling away from the faith once delivered to the saints - in the rise of the Roman beast, counterfeiting the truth (Daniel 7:7,8 & 19-26), and which still has great power, and is Satan's masterpiece.

Nevertheless, there are in this system many admirable and devoted Christians, in spite of its terrible beastly character. Even in recent history it contrived the escape of many Nazi war criminals to South America, by issuing them with Vatican passports with false identities.

In Poland and other lands, the enemy beguiles millions including Lech Walesa, into the worship of the 'Black Madonna', a bewitching form of Mariolatry; having great power over the people. An idol may constitute anything or anyone we worship, that takes the place in our hearts which the heavenly Father alone, and His Son whom He appointed to His right hand, should occupy. The Lord our God is a jealous God in a righteous sense, that He jealously guards what is His right; as man may guard his rights; and will jealously protect his children.

The gifts and callings of God are not taken away immediately one goes astray. If they were, one would quickly retrace one's steps; and there then would be no proving that one would worship God with a perfect heart. God did not until some years later, dispose of King Saul when he disobeyed by keeping as loot that which he was commanded to destroy. Rebellion against the Word is as the sin of witchcraft in any age (1 Samuel 15:23).

How are we to know whether we are walking in the right way and approved of God? Well, we are told not to believe every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God. How do we try the spirits? By the plumb line of the Word's precepts. It is very direct! The simplest are quite capable of doing so. Do they walk uprightly, or do they contradict the precepts of righteousness? Do they steal, while they deceive with lies? Are they covenant-breakers, implacable and whisperers, etc. (Romans 2)?

To those who know of and hold these truths, and then ignore them in unrighteousness, it is a work of rebellion, and their stubbornness is as the iniquity of idolatry to which it leads; and they treasure up wrath for themselves by their hardness and impenitent heart (Romans 1:18; Romans 2:5,6; 1 Samuel 15:23).

All are responsible for themselves. The way is too narrow for compromises. Only the Lord is to be worshipped. He will allow no other God beside Himself! One can all too unwittingly turn to worship others, especially when subtle interpretations allow the introduction of counterfeits, which grow into fetishes. May the Lord guide our footsteps and keep us from being deflected from the narrow way of truth and righteousness, for His Name's sake.

Article written by the late Pastor R. Pain, first published in Showers number 3564, 15/9/83.

