

SEVEN ANTI-CHRISTS

What do we mean by anti-Christ? *"Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour"* (1 John 2:18, c. 69 A.D.). One should compare John's statement: *"it is the last hour"* with that of Jesus in Matthew 24 concerning the destruction for Jerusalem, which came in 70 A.D. This is not to suggest that the "anti-Christ" that have arisen among us foretell of any imminent destruction of our land, but it ought to make us diligent as citizens of the kingdom of heaven to do more to leaven our society. It is written of our Lord, *"Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened"* (Matthew 13:33). It is obvious that we are having very little effect in this matter and there are many anti-Christ in our land. Here are seven that seek to destroy America, but they are tools of Satan, whose ultimate goal is to eradicate the church of Christ from the earth.

I. Islamic Terrorism: Example: on 9/11, Islamic terrorists in the name of their god murdered about 3,000 in New York City; again they continued their murderous ways in the Boston Marathon; in Chattanooga, TN; in Philadelphia, PA and in San Bernardino, CA. In great contrast, Jesus said, *"Love your neighbor as yourself"* (Matthew 19:19); and *"I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6). See: Bing: Mosques on the front lines in the war against America. By Carol Brown.

II. Denominationalism: There are 9,000 sectarian bodies in the U.S. claiming to be of Christ (Bing: Denominations). Yet, Jesus, shortly before He was crucified prayed, *"Father I pray not for the (apostles) alone, but also for those who believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me"* (John 17:21). Denominationalism is a major component of Satan's arsenal against Jesus and His kingdom (Matt. 16:18-19; Acts 2:1-4; 16-41,47; 8:12; Col. 1:13).

III. The Destruction of the nuclear home: Jesus said, *"for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife"* (Matthew 19:5). 2.2 million men in America are incarcerated in jails and prisons (Bing: Men incarcerated), and 83% come from homes without fathers (See Bing, Homes without fathers).

IV. Immorality: *"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God"* (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). "Most children will be born out of wedlock (in) 2016. The proportion of children born to unmarried mothers hit a record 47.5 per cent last year, according to the Office for National Statistics. The figure has risen from 25 per cent in 1988 and just 11 per cent in 1979. If the trend continues at the current rate, the majority of children will be born to parents who are not married by 2016" (Bing: Children Born out of wed-lock. By Steven Swinford, *The Telegraph*, Wednesday 09 March 2016).

V. Idolatry: Gross Materialism: *"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows"* (1 Timothy 6:10). On January 14, 2016, millions risked their money at a one to 292 chance of winning the \$1.5 billion payout in the power ball lottery. The Holy Spirit said, *"covetousness ... is idolatry"* (Col. 3:5). The idolatry of covetousness greatly overshadows the worship of images which is also rampant in our land.

VI. The "Gay" Agenda: June 25, 2015: the United States Supreme Court without any authority from the constitution declared marriage can include two males or females living together. The Holy Spirit has said, *"Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire"* (Jude 7).

VII. Abortion and Euthanasia *"These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren"* (Proverbs 6:16-19). The world was horrified when the Nazi's in the 1930's and '40's destroyed 11,000,000 in the holocaust in the most horrible ways (Bing: How many deaths in the holocaust?). Yet, the slaughtering pens of America, called, "abortion clinics" have since January 22, 1973, exterminated more than five times that number of the most innocent of humans: 58,586,256, by ripping them from their mothers' wombs as though they were vermin.

These anti-Christ movements and others are the work of Satan; the apostle Peter by the Spirit warned, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"* (1 Peter 5:8).

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PROBLEMS IN CONFRONTING THESE SEVEN EVILS AND OTHERS

I. One of the greatest problems is the lack of growth in the body; to illustrate: The number of congregations and members in the States has been decreasing since 1990. In that year according to the *21st Century Christian*, 2809 12th Ave S, Nashville, TN 37204, in 1990 considering all churches there were 13,174 congregations with 1,284,056 members, but in 2015 there were 12,300 congregations with 1,183,613 members, this indicates a decrease of 6.6% in the total number of congregations and a decrease in members of 7.8 %.

Paul by the Spirit gave the order, "*Hold fast the pattern of sound words*" (2 Timothy 1:13). For 2015, *21st Century Christian* listed 9,382 congregations that they define as mainstream, which is to not say that they know all of them are sound, but they are congregations which through the years have not taken up a hobby that sets them apart from the others.

II. One of the major reasons for the lack of growth is that we have so very few that are truly being trained to do the work of evangelists. Now compare the above with the following,

"MORMON CHURCH SET TO BECOME WORLDS LARGEST CHURCH"

"The LDS Church ... known as the Mormon church, is on track to become the largest both in the United States and ... the second-largest religious body in the world during the next 100 years. So says Mark Koltko-Rivera, Ph.D., an award-winning social scientist, in his latest book, *The Rise of the Mormons: Latter-day Saint Growth in the 21st Century*. Contrary to popular belief, Koltko-Rivera reports that more than 90 percent of Mormon growth is the result of the baptisms of converts—not the baptisms of children raised in the faith." (Bing: Growth of the Mormon church).

Waldron: The fact that the Mormons have a strange doctrine has not stopped their growth; nor has the fact that American culture has become more secular over the past sixty years slowed the growth of the Mormon church. The reason that they have grown is because they expect their men and many of their women to learn to be effective teachers of their religion. When in October 2012, the Mormon Church "lowered the age for male missionaries from 19 to 18 and for females from 21 to 19, their ranks have skyrocketed. "Sister" missionaries now make up 42 percent of the enlistees, up from the 10 percent to 15 percent before the age change" (Salt Lake Tribune: 07/24/2013).

POTENTIAL GROWTH FOR THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST

The church founded by Joseph Smith in (1830) was not commanded to take the gospel to all the world. That order was given to Jesus' disciples (Mark 16:15-16), who make up the church of Christ (Jesus' kingdom founded in Jerusalem on Pentecost). It ought to be obvious that we are miserably failing to get the job done. Let us accept the fact that we have at least 9,000 congregations in this land that do desire to hold to sound doctrine. Our problem is that we are not training the membership to truly know that doctrine and how to teach it. The average Mormon Church of a hundred members will have up to fifty percent of their membership, if not more, who can hold a home study on Mormonism while in the churches of Christ too often we need to hire a professional to do "personal work" for the congregation. Too long have we been wedded to professional institutions like "Christian Colleges" and preacher training schools. Sound schools have done a good work, but what they have done and are doing is just a drop in the bucket when it comes to meeting the need.

The Holy Spirit by the pen of Paul gave command to Timothy to train others to be teachers of the word, "*And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*" (2 Timothy 2:2). He also wrote, "*do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry*" (2 Timothy 4:5). Is it not a fact that every brother who considers himself an evangelist as Timothy was, is obligated to obey the command? If not, why not?

It amazes me how many evangelists seem to think that others will obey the command, but it is not their responsibility. It is not just evangelists that need to be trained, but every preacher and every congregation ought to be holding intensive classes to obey this divine command with testing and memory work to be sure that the average individual in the pew can know the truth and teach it.

Think of the enormous number of church buildings across this land that have Bible studies in them perhaps four hours a week. Why can the buildings not be used on other week days and at least three or four nights a week and on Saturdays to train disciples to the point that they can make disciples? If just 5,000 of the 9,000 churches would train just five workers each, over two years that would mean that there would be 25,000 more trained laborers to impact the world for Jesus' sake.

Obviously the culture that has been created among us is that "Sunday school" and Wednesday Bible study with no test or memory work is sufficient if one attends regularly. Such an ingrained tradition has created a mind set among us that the average member feels no obligation to truly learn to lead others to Christ. God has put elders in place to prepare His servants to leaven the world, and elders ought to expect that the flock will respond to the admonition: "*Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you*" (Hebrews 13:17). Jim Waldron