

THE APOSTATE CHURCH IN FREE-FALL

By Paul M Hanssen

I can no longer hold my peace. Over the past few weeks, during the Passover/Easter celebrations, many churches have hosted their annual conferences and conventions. I have observed a notable trend in the posts and videos shared online by churches worldwide. Very little is mentioned about the Word of God or what the Spirit is currently saying to the churches. At the same time, a significant amount is focused on the stage performances, the music, the singers, the flashing lights, the smoke, the video visuals, and the hyped shouts and screams of the leaders. In most instances, I perceive a lack of anointing, an absence of the presence of God, no move of the Spirit, and an apparent lack of brokenness and humility before the LORD.

Some may accuse me of sitting in the seat of a judge. However, with this article, I am neither judging nor accusing. Instead, I am issuing a warning! My warning comes not from a place of ill will or religious rhetoric but from God's Word. Whether you accept it or reject it does not change the facts of divine Truth presented to us in the pages of God's Inspired Word. The modern-day church is in a horrific state of backslidden, lukewarm, apathetic, dry, and rebellious condition. Even the churches that have traditionally professed the "Pentecostal fire experience" have become entangled in the deceitful web of stage performance, adopting the trends of the world whilst pushing God and His Holy presence out of the Church.

It is not popular to hold on to the values of Truth. Therefore, rather than pay the price of being rejected and suffering the consequences of standing in the gap for Truth, church leaders have departed from the traditional paths of righteousness in favor of pleasing the masses and drawing crowds seeking entertainment and pleasure. The trend is both sickening and heartbreaking. Is there any wonder why God warned this church age that unless He found repentance, He would spew this generation of lukewarm "Christians" out of his mouth? (So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. (Revelation 3:16).

The modern church is apostate. People don't want to hear that. Such words cause discomfort, pricking the conscience with thorns of conviction.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first... (2 Thessalonians 2:3a)

The words "falling away" say it all. These words mean apostasy, divorce, defection, forsaking, and separation. It is as if the modern church has divorced itself from the husband and lover of her soul. She has walked away and defected to the "other side" by embracing the lies, deceit, and trickery of demonic powers sent from hell to kill and destroy. She has substituted the real for what is false.

One of the characteristics of the new age, end-time apostate church is the replacement of “the real” with “the counterfeit.” When the Church loses the real thing, it works tirelessly to produce a likeness of what is real. In Old Testament times, the LORD called this practice “offering strange fire.”

*And Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the Lord. (Numbers 26:61)
(see also Leviticus 10:1-2, Numbers 3:4)*

Nadab and Abihu were the sons of Aaron, the high priest. They held significant and prominent leadership and ministerial positions within the household of Israel as members of the priesthood.

The Hebrew word for strange is zoor, meaning unauthorized, foreign, profane, and adulterous. The fire offered with the holy incense by Nadab and Abihu did not originate from the altar of sacrifice, which contained fire that descended from heaven. God had instructed that the incense was to be released only with fire taken from the altar (Leviticus 16:12). Furthermore, the priestly leadership had the responsibility of being sanctified before the LORD and glorifying the Name of the LORD in their service before the people. Nadab and Abihu failed on all fronts in these regards.

Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace. (Leviticus 10:3)

The stages of the current church world are filled with Nadabs and Abihus. Real fire from heaven will not be present without an altar occupied by a sacrifice. In other words, real fire is costly; it requires obedience, demands sacrifice, entails waiting on God, and necessitates selflessness. It is easier to create strange fire than to wait on God. It is more thrilling to produce atmospheric sounds and sights that stimulate the carnal senses of an audience rather than to bow before God’s presence in humble submission, while waiting for Him to send His fire and glory upon His people.

The modern church is on a path of free-fall and destruction. In the meantime, a midnight cry emanates from God's throne. A wake-up call has been issued. At this present moment, few have heard the call. It is not popular to stand with those who embrace Truth. It is a costly price to pay to reject the mainstream trend in favor of God’s will. The apostate church will label you as legalistic, intolerant, religious, and fanatical. So, what’s new? The early Christians were also persecuted and scoffed at because they stood against the popular belief system in favor of embracing God, His Word, His presence, power, anointing, and favor.

Wake up, people of God. Now is not the time to be slothful. Rather, *“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” (Romans 13:11)*