

By this gospel you are saved IF you hold firmly to the word I [Paul] preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain (1 Cor. 15:2). *Fighting The Good Fight* is an Apologetic Magazine (Jude 3,4).

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Could This Be The Great Apostasy?

—Dan Corner—

The Bible teaches **before** the rapture occurs, two things will transpire: (1) The [great] apostasy and (2) The revealing of the antichrist:

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and **our gathering together to Him**, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless **the apostasy comes first**, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction (2 Thess. 2:1-3).

If we aren't living now, at this moment, in the days of that same apostasy, that will precede the rise of antichrist, it seems we have to be getting very close. Some think we are and might be correct. The so-called *church* of our day is such a poor imitation of the true church it is like comparing a ground mole to an airplane. To be more precise it is a spiritual counterfeit having a spiritually adulterous affair with popularity, money and large buildings. It is so far from dispersing wholesome Biblical truth, and has been for so long, that the vast majority in our day have never, even once, been in a congregation that closely resembles the New Testament church described in Acts. They have not heard sermons based on Scripture and therefore, aren't sure what one sounds like. There are a number of reasons why this is so.

The Leaders are Not Qualified Spiritually

First, the ministers, overseers, superintendents, etc. of denominations and religious groups are nowhere near the spiritual caliber they need to be for the office they hold! The Bible emphasizes holiness in character and soundness in doctrine, and in that order, as being necessary for people to even qualify for such a high, influential office (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1). But in our day, secular education, money, influence in the community and a musical ability are often the basis of deciding who will or will not be the church leaders and teachers. The Bible never places a premium on any type of ignorance, but formal education, etc. has never been the basis for ministry, according to Scripture. The Lord Jesus chose the Twelve and four out of that number were **ignorant fishermen who reeked with no formal education, but they were qualified to hold the highest office in the church:**

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, **ordinary** men, they were astonished and they took note



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that these men had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

The word translated *ordinary* in the Greek is the word we get *idiot* from. Peter and John might have been rejected in our day, but were **qualified in God's eyes to be among his chief spokesmen because of their heart condition.** This was also the basis of choosing a replacement for Judas:

Then they prayed, "**Lord, you know everyone's heart.** Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs" (Acts 1:24,25).

Paul said he was not a *trained speaker* either, but was the greatest example Christianity ever produced:

I may not be a trained speaker, but I do have knowledge. We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way (2 Cor. 11:6).

(Note: knowledge has nothing to do with being a trained speaker or not.) Elsewhere Paul wrote that false teachers can be **smooth** talkers. It is still like this in our day:

For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By **smooth talk** and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people (Rom. 16:18).

Even Moses, God's premium choice in his day to be the spiritual leader over Israel, was **not eloquent in speech, but was instead slow in speech and tongue:**

Moses said to the LORD, "O Lord, I have **never been eloquent**, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. **I am slow of speech and tongue.**" The LORD said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go; I will help you speak

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