

# Led Astray By Ron Graham

*"For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible." Matthew 24:24 (NIV)*

*"For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." II Timothy 4:3-4 (NIV)*

*"Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour." I John 2:18 (NIV)*

It's happening right now, a falling away from the faith of Jesus Christ on a grandiose scale. Jesus, Paul, John all taught about it and now it's happening right before our very eyes. As John wrote his first epistle, this falling away was already happening. In the Greek the word for falling away is *apostasia*. Apostasia is to fall away, to defect, and it's speaking of defecting from the one true Gospel, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Instead of holding fast to the faith of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, many are following false teachers. The following quote is from a Lighthouse Trails newsletter, an online publication I receive on a weekly basis. [www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com](http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com)

There are two ground swelling, pervasive movements steeped in occultism, and mysticism happening here in the U.S. and abroad. They go by terms such as New Age, and the Emergent Church, or the Emerging Church. Its leaders are young, energetic, men and women who profess to know Christ, but who are in actuality leading millions away from the cross through mysticism and contemplative spirituality.

There is no turning back in the advancement of mysticism in the United States and the Western world. Now the green light is on for the average person. Meditation has lost its connotation as being silly nonsense for the secular person and suspicious for the Christian. **Alice Bailey**, the occultist who coined the term New Age, expressed the goal for meditation to find its way in the mass education. This goal has finally been fulfilled. And if more dramatic elements of Bailey's prophecies are fulfilled next on the horizon such as the revelation of the Coming One, then this information is of vital importance to every Christian who cares about those around him or her. In her book "From Intellect to Intuition", Bailey states:

*"The education and reorientation of the advanced human being [one who sees himself as divine] must find its place in our mass education." She doesn't mean the public school system but the media outlets of society in general. She adds: "Meditation. The question naturally arises: 'Is that all?' And the answer is: 'Yes.' ... If meditation is rightly followed, and if perseverance is the key note of the life, then*

*increasingly, soul [the divine self] contact is established... The results of that contact work-out in self-discipline, in purification, and in the life of aspiration and of service.' (p. 61)"*

In other words once you hook up with your higher self through meditation, then your role becomes that of meditation evangelist to get others involved.

When it comes to the Emerging Church and New Age, Christian leaders seem to lack the understanding and discernment needed to defeat these false doctrines before they even get started. *Some* books and several articles have now been written about the emerging church, and interestingly, nearly all of them lack the most important element-the emerging church (which incorporates the teachings of the Emergent leaders such as Brian McLaren, Doug Pagitt, Dan Kimball, Rob Bell, etc.) is a conduit for mysticism and is heading right into the arms of Catholicism and eventually a universal interfaith church.

Some of us are amazed by any spiritual power that is real, without carefully thinking that real power may have a demonic source instead of a Godly source. And even if a psychic or new age power seems to feel right, we must not be seduced by it because demonic powers can come masquerading as angels of light,

*"For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve." II Corinthians 11: 13- 15 (NIV)*

But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse: Evil men refers to the obvious, open enemies of Jesus; impostors refers to those who "look" fine, and many think of as fine, but they are actually destructive forces among Jesus' followers.

Motives are important, but we can sometimes place too much importance on them. Much harm has been done by people who were sincerely deceived and who tried to do wrong things out of wonderful motives – and because others look at their wonderful hearts, they accept their dangerous deceptions. We can't always go only by motives in others; we must measure them also by the *truth*.

New Age has been around for some time now, but this Emergent Church is a fairly current phenomena. Both are leading people away from the truth. If you think this new phenomena is going away any time soon, think again. It's here for the duration, and it's spreading like wild fire. It's estimated that there are more than forty million adherents to the Emergent Church right here in the United States that practice some form of contemplative spirituality. For the most part they've turned away from the truth of the Bible and are actually saying that Jesus Christ isn't the only way to Heaven, that there are many different paths that lead to Heaven.

Here's what I see happening in our culture today. We have had the same Gospel for approximately two-thousand years now and it has worked fine. Many have come to know the Lord through the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Multitudes have placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their savior, and have done so in every country on earth. But these new young leaders of the Emergent movement are now saying it isn't enough to preach the Gospel of Christ. They say: "The young people nowadays want and deserve more." We need to ask ourselves, why? They say that the younger generation wants to be more spiritual than their parents, more in tune with the spirits that surround them. They're being taught that they can clear their minds and open them to allow spirit guides in that will lead them on to new and different paths of spirituality. This sounds like hogwash to me; I can't think of a better way to describe this "new" spirituality. Jesus Christ is the way the truth and the life, He is all we need to get to Heaven. The Bible tells us our salvation is through belief and confession,

*"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9 (NIV)*

God gave us everything we needed when we became born again. We don't need this new mysticism, or any spirit guides to guide us into an ultimate closeness with our Lord Jesus. As a matter of fact, if we open our minds and allow a spirit guide to direct us it will more than likely be a demon that we will be allowing to enter our minds and be our guide. I can guarantee you that that demon isn't going to lead you to Jesus Christ, but he will lead you to Hell if you allow him a place in your mind.

We must be very careful; always reading and studying the word of God so we can be a discerning Christian. This way we won't be swept along by these false teachings like so many nowadays.

*"But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves." II Peter 2:1*

We must imitate the Bereans who searched the scriptures daily to see if what Paul and Silas were teaching them was actually the truth or a falsehood. (Acts 17:11)

We must look, listen, and be aware of false teachings even in our own Churches. This great falling away that is spoken of by Paul the Apostle in II Timothy 2:3 is no longer silently creeping into our congregations but is now roaring in like a lion. The pervasiveness of false teachings is quite alarming as these false teachings invade the Christian church in our society today. We must be ready for any red flags that get raised in our presence. For example, if your pastor starts to speak of finding that silent place in your mind where you can go and seek God's presence, this could be a red flag. For the most part we love our pastors and don't believe that they could lead us astray. Be careful; all pastors are human with human sinful faults and

anyone can be lead astray by these false teaching, especially if they lack discernment.

The Word of God doesn't admonish us to seek a silent place in our minds while mouthing some inane mantra over and over again. This allows a spirit guide to invade our minds and control us as he is supposedly moving us ever so much closer to God. This is not Biblical. God is always available no matter when and no matter where we are. He's always ready to listen to His children's prayers. As we retreat to our prayer closet where it is quite He's there, or if we are in rush hour traffic with all the noisy automobile horns going off in disharmony, God's there listening to our prayers.

There are many more false teachings that can be addressed that are leading many into the prophesied end time's apostasy of the Church. We know that false teachers will do whatever they can to twist scriptures to fit their agendas. For example, women pastors are not Biblical. This is probably the most debated issue in the church today. You won't find one woman pastor or preacher in any of the sixty-six books of the Bible. Yet there are many Churches today which boast of a woman as senior pastor or associate pastor. This should not be so. You might say "Well no man has stepped forward to pastor our Church consequently we've accepted a woman and she does a great job." If no man steps forward then keep searching he's out there. God doesn't allow a woman to teach a man or to usurp authority over a man.

*"I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent."* I Timothy 2:12 (NIV)

I've heard of women pastors who actually state publicly that in the Greek this verse in Timothy is referring to husbands and wives. This is not the correct scriptural interpretation of this Greek word. The word used here, and as it's used in every other place in The New Testament, is referring to men and women in the Church not husbands and wives in the Church. Again we must look to the whole council of God's Word. Still others say it was a cultural thing only associated with the early Church. I say read Paul's words to his protégé Timothy.

*"For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner."* I Timothy 2:13-14 (NIV)

If Paul was speaking of a cultural situation he wouldn't have gone clear back to the book of Genesis and the time of Adam and Eve. No. God doesn't allow a woman to preach to or teach men. Women do have a place in the Church; as a matter of fact they're indispensable. Women have many callings and for the most part they fulfill them wonderfully. They teach women's Bible studies, they run the day care, they play instruments, they sing in the choir, and they have many other responsibilities. But they are not to usurp authority over, or teach men, period. The Bible doesn't set a man over a woman because he's more intelligent or anything like that, it's God's ordained sequence of His structure, not man's. Do I believe this commentary

will put the issue of women pastors to rest once and for all? Hardly, but I do believe it is the responsibility of every born again believer to point out the errors in the Church today no matter how controversial they may be.

Other false teachings that lead to this same end time's apostasy of the Church are works doctrines that get added in by some misinformed individuals to help with your salvation. It is an abomination to God to add anything to what He accomplished on the cross. If your Church organization tells you that you must be baptized to be saved, this is a falsehood. Baptism is very important, but it isn't a salvation issue. Also, if you are told you must stand before the congregation and confess your sins right there in public for you to be saved, this too is a falsehood. The only One you need to confess your sins to is God Almighty. Some mainstream denominations claim you must speak in tongues to be born again. This too is a false doctrine. Nowhere in the Bible are we told that only by speaking in tongues can we be saved, nowhere. How can we, being human, do anything to physically facilitate our own salvation? We can't. Jesus Christ paid it all. Jesus being our perfect God willingly died on that cross at Calvary to pay in full the payment required for the complete elimination of our sin. All we need to do to obtain God's free gift of salvation is accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ as truth, repent of our sins, ask Jesus to come into our lives, and start living for Him.

False teaching, false religions, works added to the sufficiency of the cross are all abominations to God. Our God is a jealous God. Don't try to subvert His word or twist it to achieve your own desired results. All those religions which have denied the deity of Jesus Christ are abominations to God. All teachings that would put any person born of a human mother and human father on an equal basis with Jesus Christ are abominations to God. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah born of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit. He has no equal. He isn't the brother of Lucifer. His mother Mary isn't a co-redemeter. She isn't to be worshipped. Jesus Christ is our Creator God. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the Almighty.

Believe the Bible to be the inerrant word of God, and it will be very difficult for anyone to be led astray by false teachings. Believe not that the Bible is God breathed and just about any falsehood imaginable will suffice.

*"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup>For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."*  
Romans 10:9-10 (NIV)

Should we add anything or take anything away from the truth stated above? Absolutely not. What Paul is explaining to us in these verses is the simplicity of the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is God, that's a fact. His Gospel is true and that's a fact.

*“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,”* I Corinthians 15:3-4 (NIV)

Paul also tells us in the next couple of verses that Jesus was seen by Peter, and over five hundred others, then by James and the Apostles and lastly by Paul himself. All this after His resurrection from the grave; this is an undeniable fact and this is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There’s a great apostasy coming like a fright train upon the Church. Reject the truth and clear teachings in God’s word and get ready to be derailed.

God bless you all,

Ron Graham

*“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!”* Galatians 1:6-9 (NIV)

Scriptural references changed to the New International Version and final admonition added by John Fortune at [FindingTheChurch.com](http://FindingTheChurch.com).