

## **The Pathology of False Teachers**

1 Timothy 6:3-5

54-45

Let's open our Bibles this morning, returning to our study of 1 Timothy. We find ourselves in the sixth and final chapter of this epistle. And our text this morning comes from verses 3, 4 and 5. As Paul brings this marvelous epistle to a conclusion, he wraps up some of the things most on his heart. And one of them is on this section, verses 3 to 5, having to do with false teachers.

In this particular section, Paul uses terminology borrowed from the medical field. He uses terminology related to health and sickness to describe false teachers. So I've chosen the title for the message, "The Pathology of False Teachers...The Pathology of False Teachers." The dictionary defines "pathology"

as the study of the nature and course of disease. One definition is the deviations, the deviations from the normal that characterize a disease.

Now when you talk about pathology you're talking about the elements of abnormality that create a disease. False teaching is a deadly disease. And it has an observable pathology and that is laid out for us by the Apostle in this passage. Now he has already warned about false teaching in chapter 1 verses 3 through 7, also in chapter 1 verses 18 to 20, also in chapter 4 verses 1 to 5, and he'll say a little more about it in chapter 6 verses 20 and 21 as he closes the epistle. He has then spoken and will speak about it but here he digs most deeply into the pathology of false teachers. In other words, the internal deviations from spiritual normalcy that characterize the disease with which they infect people.

Recently our society has become very much aware of disease pathology, particularly in reference to a new and deadly disease that has come to be known as AIDS, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. And all of us are very, very alerted to the reality and the potential disaster of that disease. We see rather regularly in newspapers, magazines and on television what it does to individuals. We see the terrible toll that it takes on the physical body and the ugly and tragic death that it brings. We also see from a statistical viewpoint what it does to a whole society. It is fearful and deadly not only because of its power over an individual but its potential to infect and destroy a whole society. It has the capacity to totally wipe out a population. And we are very much aware, I think, nowadays of some of the pathology of this disease, some of the deviations from normalcy that occur in a person who has aids, that make that person unable to fight off any other kind of invading disease and therefore die a terrible death.

It is curious to me that there are some people who want us to believe that it's not as serious as we might think. We are bombarded, I think, repeatedly from the incessant gaylesbian propaganda that wants us to believe that a few minor precautions such as safe sex and not using needles is all that's necessary and apart from that we have nothing to fear. They want to make it, of course, illegal to

discriminate against any carrier of AIDS and if you were to go today and have an AIDS test, you would be a number and not a name and nobody would ever know who you were. The people giving you the test wouldn't want to know who you were, at least in some hospitals that is definitely the case.

And I think is being demanded everywhere. There is a major major attempt to cover over the tremendous deadliness of this disease.

I was interested the other day to find out in a newspaper that AIDS was transmitted from one person to another in England through a simple skin graft...heretofore not thought possible and they might find other ways in which AIDS can be transmitted.

All of that to say this, we are threatened in our society by the devastation of this disease. We are threatened to appoint that I don't think in my life time I have ever known any such threat. As a child I was quarantined under two different diseases that came into my house, this disease far outstrips those and I hear no cry for quarantine, only for quote/unquote "safe sex," nobody seems to have anything to say about wrong sex, it's just a question of safe, not wrong.

But with all of the word and information, on the one hand panic, on the other hand those who want us to believe it isn't as potentially devastating as it could be, with all of that going on, we are nonetheless made more and more aware that we are always, even as a society, on the brink of a terrible, terrible disaster. If it isn't a holocaust of nuclear bombs, it's the deadliness of our own sin coming back at us in the form of disease. And I think people are afraid. I think maybe more so than at any other time people are fearful of a disease, at least any other time in my life. We don't know how this disease is passed, we do know what it can do.

Let me just stop talking about AIDS for a moment and turn a corner and bring you to this text. As deadly as AIDS is, as potentially destructive as it is, I don't think it even comes close to the deadliness of false teaching because false teaching damns souls, AIDS kills bodies. I have known two people who died with AIDS who prior to their death embraced Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. AIDS killed their body but didn't kill their soul. False teaching damns the soul, false teaching destroys the soul. It is far more deadly than AIDS and yet it seems to me that while the world is greatly preoccupied with how to stop AIDS, the church is very little preoccupied with how to deal with false teaching. And in the name of love, some kind of love that the Bible doesn't know anything about, we want to be as accepting as we possibly can of everybody and everything and every teaching. And in fact our exposing ourselves to something that is so tragically dangerous that if we really knew the realities of an eternal hell without God, we'd be as exercised over this or maybe a hundred times more so than we are over we are any physical killer that faces our society.

To help us understand the pathology of the deadliness of false teaching we look at verses 3 to 5. And Paul here lays out certain pathological characteristics of false teachers. They're not things that are unknown to us, they may not even be new to you but they are said in a way that is a reminder very helpful to us. And let me just say before we look at the text that one of the roles that a pastor has to play, one of the roles that any Bible teacher or spiritual leader has to play is that of one who warns. It isn't just enough to always be positive and always be trying to make people see the good side of everything. There is an absolutely essential area of ministry in regard to warning people about false teaching. It rings through the whole of the New Testament as well as the Old Testament because God knows that His people if not prepared can be led astray by false teaching and some

folks who are victims of that never having embraced the truth will be damned forever under the illusion that they have found truth. And so we are reminded again in this portion of the seriousness of the need to warn even as Paul warns Timothy and encourages Timothy to warn the church at Ephesus to which Timothy is ministering.

Now let's begin at the beginning here in verse 3. We do so by a look at the mark of false teachers, the identifying mark of false teachers. What is it that characterizes them? If we're looking for one sort of pathological diagnostic feature, what is it that we find in false teachers that enables us to perceive that they indeed possess a deadly disease? Well, verse 3 begins, "If any man teach differently...if any man teach otherwise." Now there you have the first pathological characteristic of false teaching. It is teaching different.

Different than what? Go back to verse 2 at the end, "These things teach and exhort," says Paul and ending verse 2. And what things does he have in mind? Everything that he has brought up in this epistle. It's got to go back even beyond verses 1 and 2 which has to do with employment responsibility, to encompass the whole epistle. And that started in chapter 1 with a proper understanding of the law of God, with a proper understanding of the gospel, the saving gospel, with a proper understanding of the majesty of God in verse 17. It goes back to chapter 2 where Paul instructed about evangelistic praying, praying for the lost. It goes back to chapter 2 verses 9 to 15, the instruction on the role of a woman in the order of the church, chapter 3, principles to characterize church leaders and church deacons. Chapter 4, you have there statements regarding false doctrine and then you have the model of an effective ministry given, principles for proper ministry. Chapter 5 deals with how to treat older men and how to treat older women, particularly widows. And then how to treat younger widows. And then it discusses also how to treat the elders of the church. Then you come to chapter 6 and the matter of employment and how one is to work under both a believing and unbelieving boss.

And what Paul is saying at the end of verse 2 is all these things are to be taught and given by way of admonition and exhortation. In other words, teach the truth, teach the revealed truth of God in all these dimensions. And then he says in verse 3, "If anyone teaches differently," differently than revelation, differently than what has been revealed through the inspiration of the Spirit of God in Scripture.

Now by the way, the "if" here is a firstclass conditional in Greek and that means that it assumes reality. If and it is true, if and it is true, could be translated "since." Since some are teaching differently...it's assumed that this is a reality.

And it was a reality. Already from studying 1 Timothy we know that men had infiltrated the church teaching bizarre fables, endless genealogies, teaching questions rather than things that edified, vain jangling, they were desiring to be teachers of the law but didn't know what they were talking about. They were shipwrecking the faith. They were teaching doctrines of demons spawned by seducing spirits. They were lying in hypocrisy. They were teaching areas of abstinence which were contrary to God's truth. They were teaching knowledge falsely so called, vain profane babblings. False teaching was there. And so when he says, "If anyone teach other wise," he is saying, "And I know they are." That's why he uses the construction of a firstclass conditional. There is no specific teacher mentioned, there is no specific teaching so we can say it's a generic phrase...it's a generic statement, embracing all false teaching, all subversive doctrines, all subversive agents of Satan who have infiltrated the church to infect people with their spiritual AIDS, with the deadly virus of lying,

false teaching. So it is generic enough not only to relate to everything Timothy would face but to relate to everything the church would face in any age, including today.

And what were they facing specifically? Well, false teachers were rampant in that ancient world. It was just commonplace. From the very beginning when Satan rebelled against God and began to teach lies and as John 8:44 says was the father of lies, he has been spawning other liars to attack the Christian faith not necessarily by an overt attack on what the Bible says, but by a substitution of error. And so teachers have always come in among the people of God sowing lies, whether you're talking about the false prophets of the Old Testament or the false teachers of the New Testament, it has always been a part of the people of God to be battling against lies and errors. And any church or any pastor or any Christian who is not aware of that really has his head in the sand or her head in the sand because it's always there. Our Lord Jesus said there will be false Christs, there will be many who come and say "I am Christ," there will be false teachers, there will be liars, the Scripture literally is replete with such warnings.

And so, Paul is saying, "Look, if anyone teaches differently, that's the mark...that's how you know them." It is, first of all then, what they affirm. You have to listen to what they say. Is it different than what you know Scripture says?

Are they saying something different? The word is heteros didaskalia, a heterodox teaching rather than an orthodox teaching. That means a heresy, a false teaching, something that is different than the Scripture teaches. They don't get their teaching out of the Word of God, they have something different than the Bible, some vision, some revelation, some psychological insight, some selfgenerated, selfspawned doctrine, some interpretation that is contrary to Scripture. Anything different than the sound true teaching of the Word of God revealed marks a false teacher. It could be a teaching that denies that God is the only true God. It could be a teaching that denies that God is a spirit and turns God into an idol or a man. It could be a teaching that denies that God is a trinity or that denies some of the attributes or any of the attributes of God. It could be a teaching that denies that God is almighty, that God is sovereign, that God is the creator, that God has revealed Himself in history. It can be a teaching that denies His person, His attributes or His works. And any such thing marks out one who has a virus that is deadly.

It could be error about Christ, error about His lineage, error about His virgin birth. Someone who teaches contrary to the sinless perfection of Christ, contrary to His substitutionary atoning death on the cross, contrary to His resurrection, contrary to His miraculous life and works, His perfect teaching, His Second Coming, His high priestly ministry of intercession, His eternal reign, any of that. Anyone who teaches differently than that. It could be a denial of the authenticity of Scripture, the inspiration of Scripture, the authority of Scripture, the inerrancy of Scripture. It could be a denial of the work and ministry and person of the Holy Spirit as revealed on the pages of holy Scripture.

Any deviation from what the Bible teaches marks out the virus of false teaching that can deadly...in a deadly way infect people. Any area of truth twisted, perverted or superseding Scripture is cause for us to take note.

Now what does that tell us? If false teachers are marked because they teach differently than Scripture, what does that tell us? How are we going to be able to spot the carriers of spiritual virus and deadly infection? Very simply, by knowing what? Scripture. If false teaching is contrary to Scripture, it is easily recognized by one who knows what Scripture teaches, one who in the terms of

1 John 2 has become a spiritual young man because the Word of God abides in you and you are strong and therefore you have overcome the wicked one. The wicked one plying his false teaching is overcome by one who is strong in the Word.

When I began pastorate here many years ago, two verses set the course for my whole life and they are still there in my mind.

Two verses, Acts 20:27, Paul said, "I have not failed to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." In three years he spent his time night and day with tears from house to house publicly and in the meetings of the church on the Lord's day teaching the Word, teaching the Word, teaching the Word so that he would declare the whole counsel of God. Why? Because he says immediately after that, "I know that after my departure shall wolves come in and perverse men rise up from among you to lead you astray." And he says, "I have to commend you to the Word of His grace which is able to build you up." The only way that you can be protected against error is to know truth. That's the only way. They come along with what Peter calls destructive damnable heresies, they come along with their what John refers to as lying spirits who are not to be believed and they teach their hypocritical lies as Paul calls them in this very epistle and the people who recognize that are the people who know the Word of God. That's why the primary task of the shepherd is to feed the sheep so that they begin to recognize what is their proper diet and they don't go out to eat the noxious deadly weeds that grow on the fringes of their pasture.

In fact, in Ephesians chapter 4 Paul says God has given to the church apostles and prophets and evangelists and teaching pastors for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ until all of us come to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ.

Why? In order that we may no longer be thrown around by every wind of doctrine, tossed to and fro by the sleight of men and the cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive us. We are to know the Word, we are to be taught the Word in order that we may be able to discern error.

The other verse that not only Acts 20, but the second verse that really has rung true in my heart through the years is Ephesians 6:17, "Take unto you the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God." And the recognition that a believer has to have the sword at every point in life to be able to defend himself against the attacks of Satan. That's why, for example, Paul in 1 Timothy 4 and verse 6 says if you're a good minister you'll be nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine.

And in verse 16 you take heed to yourself and unto the doctrine.

And you continue in them for in doing this you will save yourself and those who hear you. When you know good doctrine and your people know good doctrine, you're protected, you're protected from the deadly virus of error. And the only protecting antibiotic that we have against false teaching is the truth, the truth of God. And so Paul in writing his second epistle to Timothy even reiterates it again, verse 13 of chapter 1, "Hold on to the form of sound words, the good thing, that doctrinal content which was committed to you." Keep it, he says in verse 14. In chapter 2, "The things I taught you among many witnesses, teach others that they may teach others yet." This tremendous commitment to truth. Preach the Word, he says, and don't allow yourself to be caught up with error which is the desire of many people who having itching ears want teachers who will fulfill their fancies.

And so, false teachers, first of all, as we look at their pathology, are marked by heresy. They teach differently than the Word of God. They affirm things different than what it says in the Scripture. They add to the Scripture. They speak things that the Scripture does not teach.

Secondly, it is not only what they affirm it's what they deny. Look back at verse 3 again. They not affirm certain things but they are not consenting to healthy words even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching which is according to godliness. They affirm something different than Scripture and they are not willing to consent to healthy words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. That's a present tense, they...the false teacher is not presently in agreement with, the idea here is in their teaching they disagree with Scripture.

They're not in agreement with healthy words. That word in the Greek becomes the English word hygiene. They don't give themselves to the hygienic words, the healthy words, the wholesome words, the beneficial words that are namely the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now what does he mean by that? Well, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ really in the literature, the Greek says the ones of our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, they do not commit themselves to the wholesome lifegiving beneficial spiritually productive words that have come to us from our Lord Jesus Christ.

And that does not simply refer to the very quotes of Jesus in the gospels but all the word that He has given to us as the author of Scripture using the Spirit of God in inspiration through the human writers. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ refers to any revelation given to us and particularly, most particularly, the New Testament revelation.

Just to sort of support that idea, you'll remember that Colossians 3:16 calls Scripture the Word of Christ. First Thessalonian 1:8 calls Scripture the Word of our Lord. Second Thessalonians 3:1 calls Scripture the Word of the Lord. The Scripture is the Word of the Lord, it is the word of Christ, it is the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ. So what he is saying here is, first of all, they affirm things different than Scripture.

Secondly, they deny things in Scripture. This is how you mark them, this is how you identify them. They don't accept certain things taught in the Word of God. And they add things to the Word of God. It is Scripture that provides the healthy teaching.

Peter says, "As a babe desires the milk, so you should desire the milk of the Word in order that you may grow by it." It is that which causes us to grow. But these people, literally the Greek says, are not giving heed to the spiritually healthgiving message that comes from our Lord Jesus Christ. They're not committed to Scripture. False teachers will be all over the place. They may talk about Jesus. They may talk about God. But the heart of their ministry will not be the Word of God. They add to that and they take away from that. And so they affirm things different than Scripture and they do not consent to what is in the Scripture. And you can mark them out. The Scripture is the beginning and the ending of God's revelation and all that we are to teach is contained within its pages.

Furthermore he adds at the end of verse 3 that they not only are not consenting to the wholesome

words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also they are therefore not consenting to the doctrine or teaching which is according to godliness or which is related to godliness, or which is linked kata to godliness.

What does that mean? That means that the ultimate test, mark this one, the ultimate test of a teaching is does it produce...what?...godliness. That's the ultimate test. They will add to Scripture. They will deny the Scripture. And they will also because of the absence of scriptural truth produce a life that lacks godliness. The ultimate test of truth is resulting godliness. They do not agree with the teaching which is related to godliness. Truth always results in godliness when it is applied. The Word of God will produce healthy spiritual behavior. The Word of God will bring truth to bear on a life that results in godliness. That's why 4:7 of 1 Timothy says, "Exercise yourself unto godliness...exercise yourself unto godliness."

Now listen, error can never produce godliness. What do we mean by godliness? Reverence, piety, but simply to be like God, to be like Christ. False teaching, heresy, error cannot produce Christ likeness. Only the truth of God can do that. Only the Word can produce godliness. Living holiness, living reverence, living Godlikeness, living Christ likeness is the fruit of truth. So the ultimate test of a teacher's teaching is to take a look at his or her life. Jesus said it in Matthew 7, talking about the false teachers who come like wolves in sheep's clothing, He said, "You will know them by their...what?...their fruit." You'll know them by their fruit. Take a look at the product of their life. Take a look at their conduct. Do they take pleasure in wickedness, as Peter says they do? Are they given over to presumptuous selfwilled lewdness as Peter also says, 2 Peter 2, in so many words? Are they given over to sinful life? Are they oriented to pride? When you see them do you see them concerned with prestige and recognition and power and popularity? And is there a certain sexual looseness in their behavior? Are they selfcentered, selfindulgent, self gratifying? If so, those are the things not produced by truth but produced by lies.

Look at their creed. Listen to what they say. Are they calling for repentance? Are they calling for holiness? Are they calling for God likeness and Christ likeness? Are they telling people to abandon their selfindulgence? Are they calling for brokenness over sin? Or are they teaching teachings that accommodate the carnal mind and feed the fallenness of man?

That's the question. And so when you look to the identifying marks in the pathology of false teachers, first of all they say things different than Scripture. Secondly, they deny things the Scripture says. And thirdly, what they teach does not produce godliness. That's how you mark them.

Peter describes their barren lives, their godlessness in vivid terms. In 2 Peter 2, let me tell you some of the things he says. They indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires. They are daring and selfwilled. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. In other words they carouse and sin in broad daylight.

They are stains and blemishes or scabs and filth spots, as the Greek says, reveling in their deceptions as they carouse. They have eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin. They are a cursed children. They entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality. They are like dogs who lick their own vomit and pigs who wallow in their own muck.

Jude also says they are ungodly persons...the opposite of godliness. They turn grace into

lewdness. They defile the flesh. They care only for themselves. And they throw up their own shame like foam. These are the patterns of conduct among false teachers. The point to reinforce, beloved, is this, truth produces godliness. And when you look at a false teacher and you want marks and identifying features, you look one, do they say things Scripture doesn't say? Two...and that might be different than Scripture, additional to Scripture. Two, they deny some things that are said in Scripture. Either they deny them openly or they deny them by never referring to them. And thirdly, as you look at their lives you don't see the godliness produced by truth but you see the ungodliness produced by error.

So, the mark of false teachers then is heresy in doctrine and heresy in behavior. Heresy in doctrine and heresy in behavior. Now very rapidly, just to pick up some of the other elements in their pathology.

Number two, their attitude. Looking a little more closely, what is the attitude of false teachers? Verse 4, the first statement is simple, "He is...what?...proud." What's their attitude? Pride. Their mark is heresy and their attitude is pride. It's the same word used in chapter 3 verse 6, it's a very unique word, it's the word *tuphoo*, which means to be enveloped in smoke or engulfed in smoke. It's a perfect passive form which means they're in a settled state of being engulfed in their own smoke. In other words, they're just pure smoke. They're just a big puff of hot air.

Arrogance is what that word implies. They are arrogant.

False teachers inevitably are arrogant. You say, "Well how so?"

Very simply, if you set your teaching up as superior of the Word of God, that is the epitome of arrogance. That hardly needs to be said. When you say I know the Bible says, but I say...and set yourself up against that, that's arrogance. Arrogance, that's being inflated with your own sense of selfimportance. Peter says they're so arrogant in 2 Peter 2 that they do not tremble when they blaspheme angelic majesties. Peter says they're so arrogant they're totally selfwilled. So arrogant, verse 18 of that chapter, he says they speak out arrogant words of vanity. They just talk useless talk that demonstrates their own arrogance. Jude says in his epistle about their pride, they reject authority and they speak arrogantly, verse 16.

Anyone who puts his teaching above that of the Word of God is arrogant. And false teachers arrogantly refuse to accept the simple truth of God which links with godliness. They may try to pass themselves off as humble and meek and selfeffacing but they are most conceited who affirm things contrary to the Word of God.

I often think of that when some sort of intellectual guy comes along with all the degrees out of liberal theology and starts espousing things contrary to the Word of God. And people assume that basically that's intellectualism, and all it is is inflated ego. Somebody who cannot humbly bow beneath the truth of the Word of God but sets himself up as greater than God when it comes to articulating truth, the height of arrogance...the height of arrogance. Should we expect any less when Satan in his arrogance decided to be greater than God and has spawned a generation of sinners with the same desire? In fact, you look at the illustration in Acts 8 of Simon, the sorcerer, going around telling everyone that he was some great person...very typical, very typical. These people who are arrogant, who are inflated with their own sense of selfimportance as Colossians 2:18 says are nothing but

errorists revealing the pathology of their virus.

What is their mark? Heresy. What is their attitude?

Pride. Thirdly, their mentality...what are we dealing with?

This is very direct. "He is proud...the next two words...knowing...what?...nothing." I don't care how many PhD.s or how much training or preparation they have, they know nothing.

It doesn't say they don't know much, it says they don't know anything. They are pompous ignoramuses. They don't know anything but they are inflated about what they think they know. They parade their imagined intelligence, their imagined scholarship, their imagined superior understanding, their imagined deeper insights, their imagined religious acumen and the truth is they don't know anything. They're fools. First Corinthians chapter 1 and 2, they are absolute fools. And the wisdom of the world, he says, is...what?...foolishness with God. They don't have insight into any matter of spiritual truth. They have the wisdom of James that is not from above, that is earthly, sensual, demoniacal. They don't have any truth. People who come along wither they're liberal theologians, or cultic leaders like Brigham Young and Joseph Smith and Mary Baker Eddy and Judge Rutherford, and whoever else they are, whether they're L. Ron Hubbard or whoever they are, they come along and espouse some great truth and the fact of it is they're absolutely ignorant.

They know nothing, absolutely nothing. Because you can't know anything apart from the revelation of God. That is anything about spiritual reality. They claim some new truth, some new insight, they claim to know things that no one else knows and they pontificate in their pompous ignorance about all the solutions to everything and they don't know anything.

Beloved, it's so wonderful that the Lord has chosen to hide these things from the quote/unquote wise and the prudent in their own eyes and reveal them unto babes. God has hidden these things from the prosperous selfpromoting minds of this world and given it to the common folks like us. Those of us who know the Word of God know far more than the most erudite educated people who deny it.

Peter again classifies their ignorance with some pretty strong terminology in 2 Peter 2. He says they are unreasoning animals born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed.

Pretty direct. They're nothing but brute beasts. He says they revile where they have no knowledge. And then he calls them springs without water, they promise to quench your thirst and they're as dry as a sandpit. They have no wisdom. And Jude says they are clouds without water. They promise rain, they give none. They are autumn trees without fruit. They promise food, they have none. Wild waves of the sea that only reek havoc, doubly dead, uprooted. He calls them wandering stars, floating all over with no set course, can't be tracked, can't be followed.

It's all useless.

And then he says, look at verse 4, in their knownothing status they are occupied with something, he is proud knowing nothing but...and the Greek would be translated this way...having a sick craving concerning questions and word battles. They have, and here's the pathological terminology, a sick craving. They have a disease. They're diseased. And their disease is a preoccupation, a morbid

sick unhealthy unwholesome diseased infectious preoccupation with useless questions and word battles.

Fussing about terminology. The term there that says "disputes", pardon me, that says "questions" is the term zetesis, it means idle speculations. Pseudointellectual theorizing...fussing about all kinds of theory instead of the simple truth of God's Word.

You know, it's an amazing thing when you read all that's written from a liberal or neoorthodox viewpoint on Scripture. You just get literally lost in the verbiage of all this speculation when all you need to do is accept the simple truth of the Word of God. And then they get into logomachias(?), word battles, battling each other over terminology. I believe the Bible says God created the world in six days, do you have a problem with that? It just says it. First day He did this, second day He did this, third day He did this. You say, "Well, are those real days?" Well, it says the evening and the morning was the first day, the evening and the morning was the second day, the evening and the morning was the third day...and I don't have to be Phi Beta Kappa to tell you that's probably a twenty four hour day.

"Well," you say, "it's not intellectual to believe that."

No, it's just...it's just sensible to believe that. You just have to read it and then you say that's true, that's what it says. But you know, we get these people who come along and they're were those some years ago who advocated, "We can't accept a sixday creation, that's not intellectually admired today and if we want to be admired by the intellects of our world we've got to come up with some kind of a condescension to evolution." And you know, the evolutionist says that once there was a puddle and we don't want to talk about where the puddle came from, but there was a puddle and in the puddle was a onecelled thing and the onecelled thing said, "I think I'll be two." And then he was two. And then he really got carried away and here we are. And that...that is intellectualism, that is astute science. And so we don't want to...we don't want to knock that, so they came up with a term, a word and they came up with the idea that we are theistic evolutionists. What does that mean? Well, that means that we have to accept the scientific data about evolution because we can't poopoo the scientists, but we believe in God so we have a theistic evolution which means evolution is going along and every once in a while God zaps it and does something very special and something that only God could do.

And then somebody else came along and said, "No, no, we advocate progressive creationism." What is that? Well, we want to emphasize God so we say God is creating but He's doing it through a progressive evolutionary process. And so the theistic evolutionists argue with the progressive creationists. And then lately Dr. Smith, dean of our seminary, was telling me there is a new one called "progressive providentialism." And I'm not real sure what that means except that God sort of providentially, sort of progressively and evolution sort of normally all sort of go along and here we are. And they sort of give each other PhD.s for that kind of stuff. And the rest of us pick up the Bible and say, "Oh I see, on the first day He made this, the second day He made that, third day He made that, fourth day He made that, fifth day He made that, sixth day He made that and then He rested.

That's pretty clear. Let's go to the next chapter."

And it isn't enough to accept the Bible, you take the first five books of the Bible and the Scripture

says they were written by Moses and along come the critics and say, "Now wait a minute, we can't have those books written by Moses. We have a better solution." And they invented what was called "the documentary hypothesis" words, words, the documentary hypothesis. You say what is the documentary hypothesis? That means Moses didn't write the Pentateuch. Who did? J.E.P. and D. Who are J.E.P.

and D.? Every time you see Jehovah, that's the "J" writer, every time you see Elohim that's the "e" writer. Every time you see a priestly passage that's the "P" writer. And Deuteronomy was written by the Deuteronomists. And these are unknown people who much later than the Bible claims got a whole lot of documents and did their little thing and mishmashed it all together and a bunch of redactors and editors came along and changed this and changed that and fixed this and fixed that. And that's how we got the Bible. And you say, "Where does it say that?" Oh it doesn't say that.

Well, then when the Bible claims that a certain person wrote the book, is that the truth? No, no, that's not the truth. So we deny the Scripture. We postulate the documentary hypothesis.

We have all these people trying to figure out how J.E.P. and D.

could do all this, especially when you have J.E.P. and D. in the same verse, are they just passing the quill back and forth? You come into the New Testament and then you've got people who want to deny the authorship of the epistles. I can take you book after book after book on introduction to the New Testament where the whole approach to the author is to deny that Paul wrote the Pauline books, James wrote his epistle, deny Peter wrote his and all the way through...deny, deny, deny and postulate some...some speculative issue that they themselves have developed. This is typical. You can go back to allegorism where they were making things in the Bible mean mystical things that they didn't mean at all. For example, the old rabbis used to say that in the name Abraham you give numerical equivalence to the consonants and they add up to 318. And every time you see the word Abraham that means that he had 318 servants. That's bizarre, absolutely bizarre. And that kind of stuff goes on and on.

I was trying to enroll in a doctoral program at Claremont School of Theology one time and they said you'd be fine in this doctorate in religion except you have too much Bible. And I think I told you they wanted me to take a course called "Jesus and the Cinema." I said, "I don't need that." And that was the end of that program.

I remember a professor who is well known to my family in a seminary, a very wellknown seminary, who got into these kinds of speculations and these kinds of word games and became so totally frustrated that he went into an apartment one night, shut the windows, turned the gas on and gassed himself. Clouds with no water. Raging seas foaming out nothing but shame. Wandering stars. Their minds know nothing and they engage themselves in useless speculations about words that only start battles, logo machias, semantic battles.

So, the disease of the false teacher is seen in his refusal to affirm the Word of God as the sole source of spiritually healthy teaching. His rejection of the Word of the Lord as inferior to his own. The resulting loss of any kind of godliness and behavior and arrogantly he engages in useless speculations hatched in the depravity of his own mind leading to hassling over words that are nothing but ignorant all together of spiritual truth. What a pathology.

And where does it lead? Number four, the effects. What are the effects of this? This is very simple. In one word, chaos and confusion, another word. Verse 4, "Of which comes...out of which comes envy, strife, railing, evil suspicion, perversed disputings among men." That's what you get. You want to hear something? A little earlier I told you that you can tell truth because truth can be revealed in conduct, right? Godliness is the ultimate test of truth. Let me give you a second test of truth. Unity is the test of truth. The thing that unites us is a common commitment to truth. That's what unites us. And because we all believe the same truth, we're all linked together.

It's interesting, for example, in the process of going through accreditation with the Master's Seminary. Some people who come to us from other liberal seminaries to evaluate us in that sort of state or process...that sort of state, I guess wider than the state, that commission process, can't figure out how it is that all of us, and we have a large group of people, I guess a handful, anyway, of five people in the seminary, we're adding five new fulltime professors in September, how can all of us possibly agree on our direction...they can't understand that. As one seminary president confessed to us, he has 15 different faculty members, basically from 15 different viewpoints. Can you imagine trying to get a common goal out of that and a common curriculum and go a common direction?

But, you see, with us it's very simple because we all believe the same thing. We all believe the Bible from cover to cover so as one little boy said, "From genius to Revolution, we believe the whole thing." And so we accept all of that. We don't have to debate that, we don't have to argue that, we know where we're going, we know what we believe, we know what our objectives are. They can't understand how we could have figured that out so fast. But, you see, truth unifies. Now you have everybody teaching his own thing and everybody teaching what's right in his own sight and everybody being his own sort of ego motivated teacher, everybody adding his stuff to the Scripture, everybody denying Scripture in favor of what he teaches and because everyone becomes then his own standard, you pit everyone against everyone else, all you get is discord...all you get's chaos. That's why when students go to schools like that, or exposed to that kind of teaching, they come out totally confused because there's no uniformity among error.

Verse 4 and 5, the end of verse 4, let's follow the little path here. Starts with jealousy, jealous, the inward discontent with the advantages enjoyed by someone else's popularity and prosperity and the following they're getting. So, first of all, you've got one guy trying to teach one thing, another guy trying to teach another and they're jealous of each other and the success they might be having. That leads to strife...that's the battle that comes about. Strife leads to blasphemies, or insults called railings in the King James, it's the word for blasphemies.

That's the slander and the insulting of someone who disagrees with you. That leads to evil suspicion which means to ascribe to someone bad motives, evil motives. And that leads to constant incessant wrangling called perversed disputings of men. The word is a very interesting word. It's a double compound word, diapatribē, it means to be mutually rubbing together, constant friction, constant hassling, constant irritation. In fact, Chrysostom used to say it was like two diseased sheep rubbing their diseases into each other.

So, what do you have as the legacy of error? Chaos, one errorist pitted against another jealously fighting back and forth, blaspheming, insulting each other, suspicious of the motives of each other, creating nothing but constant unending irritation and friction. They produce no good effect. It produces nothing good at all...nothing good.

Peter speaks of the product of false teaching. He says, "These people and their teaching cause the way of truth to be maligned. They exploit through false words. They entice unstable souls. They forsake the right way. They have gone astray. They promise freedom but are the slaves of corruption."

Jude says, "They are like unreasoning animals who follow their depraved instincts to destruction. They have rushed headlong into error. They have gone the path of self-centered disobedience and perished in their own rebellion." Jude says, "They are hidden reefs in your love feasts." They want to sink your boat. Their effects are all bad. They damn. They condemn.

They confuse. They cause chaos because error can never produce unity, because for as many false teachers as there are, that's how many false teachings there are. Only truth unifies...only truth unifies.

The mark then, heresy. The attitude, pride. The mentality, ignorance. The effects, chaos. Number five, just briefly, the cause of false teachers. Now I don't mean by that the supernatural cause, the Satanic or demonic cause, I mean the source within them. Look at verse 5 again, "These perverse disputings come from men of corrupt minds." There's your basic cause. What you have is an unregenerate mind. You have a mind that's never been transformed. You have the mind that is at enmity with God that Paul calls in Romans 8 the carnal mind is at enmity with God. It's an enemy of God. It is that...that earthly wisdom James refers to, that fights against God. Corrupt minds, Romans 1:28, Paul says a reprobate mind, given over to every evil thing. Their mental faculties no longer function normally in the moral or spiritual realm. They do not react normally to truth. They are natural men, 1 Corinthians 2:14, who cannot understand the things of God. So the pathological source of their disease is a corrupt mind. The deadly virus of ignorant words comes out of an abnormal mind. They don't understand God.

They don't understand truth. They can't understand truth. Their minds are darkened, Ephesians 4 says, their minds are alienated from God, Ephesians 4 says. Their minds are totally wicked. It says in Colossians 1:21, "Your mind is basically attached to wicked works."

So alienated minds, wicked minds, darkened minds, carnal minds, corrupt minds, that's the source. They've never been transformed. They have not received what I love Colossians...or 1 Corinthians 2:16 says, "But you have received the mind of...whom?...of Christ." They don't have that mind. They don't have that mind. They don't have the renewed mind that Paul writes about.

And that's the source. You're dealing with a corrupt mind.

You're dealing with a regenerate mind. They may have degrees coming out their ears. They may have religious involvement.

They may be a part of a cult or an ism or whatever it is but their mind is corrupt. And out of a corrupt mind come ignorant words. That's the cause.

Number six, the condition of false teachers. What is the present pervasive condition? Verse 5 again, he says not only are they men of corrupt minds but and destitute of the truth...and destitute of

the truth. This is their condition. Their present condition is they are bereft. The word "destitute" means...it comes from a verb that means to steal, rob, deprive. They have been deprived of the truth or it could be a middle voice, they have deprived themselves of the truth. They have robbed themselves of the truth or they have been robbed of the truth.

The forms are the same. If you take it as a middle voice verb it would say that they were in contact with the truth but they have deprived themselves of it, they moved away from the truth on their own volition. It's not saying they were ever saved, they had a Bible, they read the Bible, they knew the truth but they moved away from it.

On the other hand, it could be a passive, someone took it away. Maybe they came under the influence of someone who pulled them away from it. We might warn folks to be careful who you listen to and what you read so that you're not a victim of that.

These are people who once were in proximity to the truth. They once had contact with the truth, maybe nothing more than having the Word of God in hand, and that's enough...having a Bible. But now they have been deprived of it, or they have deprived themselves of it. They have literally fallen into Hebrews 6, Hebrews 10, those who were once enlightened and now have abandoned that which they once knew. They have seen and known and now rejected. And so we say their condition is apostasy.

Their condition is apostasy. Their effect is chaos. Their condition is apostasy...they have departed from the faith.

Who have they been listening to? The father of all lies, John 8:44, Satan himself. They have departed from the truth.

They have deviated from the truth. As it says in 2 Timothy 2:18, they have erred concerning the truth. They are ever learning, chapter 3 verse 7 of 2 Timothy, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. It says in the next verse, "They resist the truth because they are men of corrupt minds...here it is...reprobate concerning the faith." Corrupt minds, destitute of truth, reprobate concerning the faith, it all goes together.

It all goes together. Their condition is one of apostasy. They have deviated from the truth.

Seventh, as we look to a conclusion, just one more after this, seventh...what's the prognosis of false teachers? What is their prognosis? This is implied in the statement "destitute of the truth," and their prognosis is judgment. Anyone who is utterly devoid of truth, anyone who is bereft of truth is headed for judgment. In fact, in Hebrews 6 if you turn away from the truth there's no hope of ever coming back to salvation. In Hebrews chapter 10, if you trample under your feet the blood of the covenant, you are headed for a disastrous and eternal judgment. Peter says in 2 Peter 2 again, they bring on themselves swift destruction. He says their destruction shall not sleep, their judgment from long ago is not idle. And then he gives illustrations by saying, verse 4, "If God didn't spare the angels that sinned but cast them down to hell, and if God didn't spare the old world before Noah but destroyed that world of the ungodly, and if God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah turning them into ashes, if God did all of that to those apostates, then you can expect He'll do the same to these." And so he goes on then describing these apostates and what God is going to do to them.

Jude in his little epistle gets very direct. He says they are of old, verse 4, ordained to condemnation. And then he says about them in verse 15 that God is going to come and convict all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. Judgment...the prognosis of false teachers is judgment...eternal hell and the severest hell of all because they having seen the truth, touched the truth, apostatized from it.

And lastly, why would they do this? Understanding all of the pathology of false teachers, why in the world would anyone do this? Here it is, the motive...supposing that godliness is a means of gain...supposing that godliness is a means of gain. The Authorized then says, "From such withdraw yourself," but earlier manuscripts don't have that. Apparently some scribe added that later. The verse ends, "Supposing that godliness is a means of gain." You know why they're in it? Very simple, why are they in it? Money...money. They have the audacity to presume that their godliness...and it's used sarcastically there, ironically...their kind of false piety is a way to make money. That's why Paul, you see, in Acts 20 when he says to them, "I know that these wolves are going to come in and perverse men are going to rise up and so I commend you to the word of His grace which is the only antibiotic against the AIDS of spiritual error." Then turns around in the next verse, verse 33, and says, "I have coveted no man's garment, no man's silver, and no man's gold." Why?

Because those typically who were false teachers were in it to fleece the people not feed the sheep.

And so Paul says I'm not like that. I seek nothing. He says to the Corinthians, "I didn't come to you expecting anything." He says to the Thessalonians, "We wouldn't want you to pay for anything so I worked with my hands to provide my own living." And he says earlier in chapter 3 that an elder and a deacon cannot be covetous, cannot be a lover of money. Why?

Because the potential in the religious field to use it to make money has always been the motivating factor of false teachers.

Peter says, again 2 Peter 2, "In their greed they will discredit you. They have followed the way of Balaam who loved the wages of unrighteousness," you remember Balaam the prophet who could be bought and would give a message to the highest bidder? Jude says they have rushed headlong into that error of Balaam and they flatter people for the sake of their own advantage.

In Acts 8, Simon wanted to buy the Holy Spirit. He would have paid everything he could to buy the power he saw revealed because he knew with that power he could make back that and a thousand other fortunes just like it. Do you know...are you aware...can you see with your two eyes the religious charlatans are a steady parade across your eyes in this society who are in it for the money? They're everywhere...everywhere. That's the pathology of false teachers and their deadly spiritual AIDS.

Let me review it very briefly, listen carefully. Stay away from people who teach contrary to Scripture. Stay away from those who deny the truth. Stay away from those who are not Christlike and godly in conduct. Stay away from and don't listen to those attitude is arrogant, who are totally ignorant of the spiritual reality and truth and constantly theorize about useless speculation which generates word battles leading only to chaos, confusion, disorder and disunity. Stay away from and don't listen to

those who spin their arrogant teaching out of corrupt minds which have forsaken the truth and are headed for eternal judgment. Stay clear of those who are desirous of personal enrichment at your expense. They'll give you spiritual AIDS.

They're infected. And the prognosis for them and those they infect is very, very sad.

Let's bow in prayer.

Lord, we thank You that You have given us sufficient warning in Your Word so that we can know and be aware of the encroachment of error on the truth. Father, thank You for the Word of God, for faithful teachers, for the Holy Spirit. Help us to be such students of the Word that error is recognized by us immediately, that we may stay clear and never be infected with such a deadly virus. Father, I just pray that no one here would ever be led astray by the myriad of false teachers. And we thank You for a church where Your Word is upheld. Help us to know the whole counsel of God. Help us to have the sword so we can stand and fight every battle. Protect us from the evil one and his lying agents. Keep Your church pure. And we thank You in Christ's name. Amen.

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