

Open Letter to Evangelical and Protestant Pastors Worldwide

Now is the Day to Turn Back to God's Word

by Roger Oakland, Understand The Times

The following letter is to all Bible-believing pastors throughout the world who have been or are being influenced by current trends that are attacking the Word of God through the postmodern humanistic mystical belief system. I have witnessed this deception firsthand on a worldwide basis but am most familiar with what has been happening in the two fellowships I have been part of for the past thirty years – one in Canada and one based in southern California.

It is with a heavy heart I write this open letter to those who consider themselves evangelical or Protestant pastors. While my desire is to do this respectfully and with the love of the Lord, I am compelled with a strong sense of responsibility to write this warning.

The fact is we are living in a time in history where there is great spiritual apostasy (a falling away), and sadly, many pastors don't even realize it is happening. Others realize it but don't know what to do about it, while still others see it but promote it anyway. The purpose of this letter is to shine light on the darkness that has crept into so many churches today.

For many years, I have documented my concerns about this apostasy and presented the evidence to the body of Christ. An article I wrote a few years ago called "Ichabod" described the departing of God's Spirit from many churches. That article was later followed by the commentary "Is Your Denomination a Sinking Titanic?" I believe we are witnessing the sinking of the Titanic at the present time. While most are still dancing around in the ballroom, a few have chosen to get off the boat. How many get off in time is the question that remains to be answered.

While I recognize that I am "marked" by some as someone who has caused division within the church, please understand I do not fear any man. I look to Jesus Christ and am committed to tell the truth whatever the cost. I know I have enemies among the "brethren" who insist that I remain silent. I have also been falsely accused and slandered by gossip as a means of discrediting me.

The Bible teaches that we should never fear man or follow man's ways. "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (*Proverbs 14:12*). We should fear God and His Word alone. Based upon what God revealed to Ezekiel (*Chapter 3: 17-20*), there is a biblical principal that cannot be overlooked. When God reveals deception and darkness, a watchman must speak out and tell the truth regardless of the circumstances and the consequences.

What I find very alarming is that many pastors who gave warnings in the past about End Times deception seem to have now ceased and become silent. Taking the place of the warnings are teachings or promotion on everything from church-growth, seeker-friendly, contemplative spirituality, Purpose Driven, postmodern/emerging spirituality to even a Catholic/Jesuit agenda.

These various teachings are not biblical Christianity, and for many pastors who once taught the Bible faithfully, these seductive teachings have pulled these pastors in a direction that negates so much of what they once stood for. It is not uncommon now to hear these pastors espousing those such as

Mark Driscoll, Rob Bell, Richard Foster, and Rick Warren, all of whom de-emphasize Bible prophecy of the last days and emphasize the “Kingdom of God on earth” now.

Some pastors recognize that their own denominations or fellowships have turned or are turning away from the teachings of the Bible, yet so many have remained active participants of these denominations. As the years go by, these pastors do not speak up – they are silent. Is this silence an indication that they have bought into a sensual, carnal, three-legged stool plan that links hands with those such as Rick Warren and Tony Blair and is on the road to Rome for a One World Religion? I fear that for many that is the case. What may have begun as “looking the other way” has become outright rebellion in many cases. This is the way deception often happens.

We are living in the time of strong delusion that Paul wrote about (*2 Thessalonians 2:11*). If you are a Bible-believing pastor, shouldn't you be helping to lead the way in warning about deception, not promoting the apostate agenda in any fashion?

Ecumenism within the church has been allowed to develop for years.

When a pastor does not warn his flock about ecumenical apostasy, it sends the message that exposing apostasy is just not that important. When a church, organization, or denomination starts down the Road to Rome, there is very little chance of turning back – the pull is just too great. Nowhere in the Bible is it acceptable to join hands with those who promote another Jesus and another gospel like that of the Roman Catholic Church. This is why John warned: *come out of her (the harlot) and be set free (Revelation 18:4)*.

Some Personal Ministry History:

- In June 1981, Chuck Smith, the founder of the Calvary Chapel movement, invited me to fly down from my farm in Saskatchewan, Canada to speak at Costa Mesa at a four-night conference called “The Bible: Key to Understanding Science, History and the Future.” Seven years later, in the fall of 1988, Chuck Smith asked me to join the staff at Costa Mesa. My family moved to Orange County, California from Saskatchewan, Canada.
- My position at Costa Mesa involved being an outreach from CCCM as an apologist in the area of creation and evolution. I also showed the association of the New Age Movement and its relationship to Bible Prophecy.
- In 1991, after being on staff for three years, Understand The Times was founded as an independent ministry, separate from CCCM. However, UTT was still closely associated with CCCM and was given missionary support. The UTT association with Calvary Chapel pastors and missionaries encompassed the world for about twenty years.
- During a fifteen year time period, UTT had an office on church property at CCCM from time to time. Understand The Times had a five-minute radio program that aired on KWAVE and CSN for over ten years. I also had close relationships with members of the Smith family including Chuck's brother Paul and his son Jeff.

While many of my experiences and associations with those in Calvary Chapel had been good over the years, I observed many serious problems in the Calvary Chapel movement, especially in the last five years. Many Calvary Chapel pastors I know have admitted they also see these same warning signs, but most have not felt they could speak out.

The reason I am writing this letter as an open letter to all pastors is because I believe that many of the problems I witnessed while part of the Calvary Chapel movement are the same problems that many other Christian organizations and denominations are experiencing today. And many of these kinds of problems lead to deception and apostasy.

Common Problems in the Churches

Today many evangelical and Protestant pastors are operating on the principal or idea that if their churches are small, there is something wrong with them. The “doctrine of big” has replaced the doctrine of being faithful to the Word of God. Along with this doctrine of big comes the subtle attitude that any “offensiveness” must be removed from the church. Thus, a watered-down gospel takes effect; and thus, people in the churches are not hearing the true Gospel. Crosses are removed, Bibles are left at home, hymns are stopped, and talk about the blood of Jesus and His atonement for our sin ceases.

As Bible-believing Christians, we should be able to discern that there is a flaw in this doctrine of big. As churches get bigger, more funds are required to accommodate bigger budgets. The bigger the budget the bigger the offering is needed to meet the budget, and big donors become more and more important. Now you have a situation where the pastor preaches carefully so as not to create controversy. Controversy can cause powerful donors to leave. Pastors who once feared God now become man-fearing where doctrine is determined by men and their motives, and not by God’s Spirit and His Word.

Over the past two decades, I believe the Lord led me to author or co-author six books warning about the ecumenical one world religion movement and how it is impacting Evangelical Protestant Christianity. These were: (1) *New Wine or Old Deception* (2) *When New Wine Makes a Man Divine* (3) *New Wine and the Babylonian Vine* (4) *How Marian Apparitions Plan to Unite the World’s Religions* (5) *Another Jesus: The Eucharistic Christ and the New Evangelization* (6) *Faith Undone: The Emerging Church – a New Reformation or an End Time Deception*. God has put in my heart all these years a passion to warn of impending spiritual danger.

On March 6, 2011, I attended the Peace in a Globalized Society Forum that was held at Saddleback. Rick Warren and Tony Blair both explained what they are doing to set up a one-world religious program for peace. Yet even though it has become most apparent to many discerning Christians what is taking place with Rick Warren and his “new” reformation, very few pastors are publically denouncing the Purpose Driven Peace Plan. In fact, prominent pastors like John Piper are embracing Rick Warren and his teachings.

The Jesuit Connection

As I have written in some of my books, Ignatius Loyola was the founder of the Order of the Jesuits in

the Catholic Church. The Jesuit goal is to turn the inerrant Word of God into the word of man while at the same time promoting the word of the pope as the word of God. In addition, the Jesuit ambition is to bring the “lost brethren” back to the “Mother” church (read *Another Jesus*). This is no minor thing. I have been to the city of Rome. I have seen the multitudes worship and adore a man (the Pope) who carries a wafer and a vial of juice that is supposed to be Jesus. Martyrs in earlier centuries were murdered for rejecting the papacy and the Eucharist. And yet today, I am horrified to watch once Bible-believing pastors turn their hearts and their congregations toward Rome, often through a Jesuit influence. Instances of this are occurring more every day.

Now that Rick Warren and Tony Blair (who converted to Catholicism) have announced they will be working together to set up a One World Religion as they did on March 6, 2011 in southern California, how will Christian pastors respond to this? Or will they at all? History shows, most probably won't. What is known as fact is this: the emerging/postmodern, Purpose Driven ecumenical, contemplative mindset in the Evangelical or Protestant Christian church has not gone away. And it is not popular to speak against this growing apostasy. It is a lot easier to go down stream than upstream. The Bible foretells we are in the Last Days. What do you as Christian pastors want to be: dead salmon washed out to sea or true fishers of men?

Check out the Bible! There will be a One World Religion. Do you want to be part of the problem, or do you want to be standing up for truth? The latter is not easy and carries with it a high price.

A Wake Up Call to Pastors

Teaching and preaching the Word of God is a high calling. You should always be true to your calling and remain true to the Word. And yet, many know that something is seriously wrong, but they say nothing.

Saying nothing can be as detrimental as outrightly supporting the lie. It is time to wake up! We are in the last days, and many sheep are being deceived, and pastors have a huge role in that deception taking place. When the sheep have the wool pulled over their eyes, they cannot see. This is not acceptable. What about the wolves who are among the flock? Good shepherds should never allow that to happen.

While there still remain faithful Christian pastors who look to Jesus Christ as their Good Shepherd and still believe in the inerrant Word of God, the fact that so many pastors have moved away from the basics of biblical Christianity toward a man-made apostate church will result in much of the flock drifting with them.

And may I say this to any believer who now realizes his or her own pastor is compromising the Word of God and embracing apostate teachings: If you have done what you can to warn and exhort your pastor(s) to turn back to the truth, and if your warnings and exhortations are rejected, perhaps it is time to get out of that church. Paul addressed this when he said: *“Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition” (Titus 3:10).*

Deception has crept in, unnoticed to many, and even at times been purposely covered up. Jude warned this was happening in his day (*Jude 4*). The same is true in the perilous days in which we live

(2 Timothy 3: 1-5).

As of last fall, I am no longer affiliated with the Calvary Chapel movement, although I am still friends with and associate with some of the pastors, ones who have sought to remain faithful to the Lord and His Word.

As do many leaders in the body of Christ, Calvary Chapel pastors who have veered need to get right, and they need to do it quickly. According to the Word, our redemption draws near, and He could return for those who are ready at any moment.

If you are a pastor who has succumbed to the present-day spiritual apostasy, get back to the Word of God, and preach it, and teach it! If your congregation shrinks, so what! Better to have a few who are solid and can go out and be fruitful for the Lord than have a mega church full of participants of a social gospel that is being prepared for the coming One World Religion.

While the large-scale move toward apostasy has been taking place for some time, and postmodern/emerging, Purpose-Driven ideas are widely accepted, there still may be time if pastors will repent and return to the purity of the Gospel and God's Word.

Many pastors reading this open letter who belong to an organization or denomination may feel fearful about leaving the security of such a "covering." Perhaps you have never been out from under that umbrella. But at some point, you are going to have to ask yourself the question, Am I really "*counting all things but loss*" in order to gain Christ (*Philippians 3:8*)? Am I taking up my cross and following Him, no matter the cost (*Matthew 16:24*)? I have heard stories now of pastors (both in the Calvary Chapel movement and in other groups and denominations) who finally did make that decision to separate themselves from any apostate associations. If you are one of those, continue on with the ministry God has given you and follow Jesus Christ alone. You can never go wrong by being obedient to Jesus and His Word.

The Lord Jesus Christ is coming soon. May we be found ready and waiting.

Sincerely in Christ,

Roger Oakland

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion. . . . Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD. ~ Isaiah 52:8, 11

But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. ~ Matthew 15:13-14

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