

## MY REMINDER

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### AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM – ITS CONDITION IN 1894

*Signs of the Times*, March 5, 1894, p. 279

Again, we ask, is not American Protestantism dead? Has not the church “abandoned what constituted its life?” Has it not sought “alliance with the world”? And is it not finding in this alliance “a destruction full of desolation”? Let Dr. David H. Moore, the editor of the Western Christian Advocate (Methodist), in the issue of July 19, 1893, answer:

#### To the Church of Methodists Write:

The great trouble with us today is that the rescue of imperiled souls is our last and least consideration. Many of our congregations are conducted on the basis of social clubs. They are made centers of social influence. Membership is sought in order to advance one’s prospects in society, business, or politics. Preachers are called who know how to “smooth down the rugged text to ears polite, and smugly keep damnation out of sight.” The Sunday services are made the occasion of displaying the elegancies of apparel in the latest fashions. Even the little ones are tricked out as though they were the acolytes of pride. If the “rules” are read, it is to comply with the letter of the law, whose spirit has long since fled. The class books are filled with names of unconverted men and women. Official members may be found in box, dress circle, and parquet of opera and theater. Communicants take in the races, and give and attend card parties and dances. The distinction between inside and outside is so obscure that men smile when asked to unite with the church, and sometimes tell me they find the best men outside.

When we go to the masses it is too often with such ostentatious condescension that self respect drives them from us. And yet, we have so spread out, under the inflation of the rich and ungodly, that they are a necessity to us. The enforcement of the unmistakable letter of the discipline for a single year would cut our membership in half, bankrupt our missionary society, close our fashionable churches, paralyze our connectional interests, and leave our pastors and bishops unpaid and in distress. But the fact remains that one of two things must happen, “the discipline must purge the church, or God’s Holy Spirit will seek other organized agencies. The axe is laid at the root of the tree. The call is to repentance. God’s work must be done. If we are in the way, He will remove us.

Let Rev. Geo. Guirey, Presbyterian Minister, also bear testimony upon this point.

But, is there not some reason for the common impression that the worldly spirit in the church is weakening her power with the public? Are there not evidences at hand that seem to confirm the impression that the history of the church and the Roman Empire, in the 4th Century, is repeating itself in the United States today? This is a Christian country, and the laws are all in favor of religion; but the enervating influence of wealth, luxury, and fashion tells upon the church, producing spiritual declension, neglect of holy vows, and indifference to responsibility. The blandishments of the world are too much for human nature to withstand, and we see the sad spectacle of the great moral and religious activities of the church drop down into the rut of the ordinary routine of mere business affairs, while her beautiful and glorious life is shorn of its spiritual power... the love of the world, the greed for wealth, and the ambition for place and power, leave the church in the hands of a faithful few to bear her burdens and responsibilities, while the great body of her membership joins the world in Sunday pleasuring... and we say to the mixed multitudes that make up her nominal membership. “Fall in”.

Such is the condition of American Protestantism according to their friends, and their testimony is in harmony with the prediction of Christ. On the authority of this word, the writer will change one letter in the last sentence, and, instead of saying to the “mixed multitude” (Babylon) that make up her nominal membership, “Fall in”, will say “Fallen”. “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” And instead of saying “Fall in”, we say, on the authority of the Word of God to the “faithful few” who “sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof”, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

Seventh-day Adventists have, for more than forty years, predicted this fall with all its dire consequences. We have declared, on the authority of the prophetic scriptures, that, as the “beast” was the result of a “falling away” from the principles of primitive Christianity, so the “image to the beast” would result from the falling away of American Protestantism from the principles of primitive Christianity, the Reformation of the 16th century, and the principles of the American Constitution.

We have warned and entreated both the Church and the State not to unite what had been separated by Christ, the Reformation, and the Constitution. Our warnings have been unheeded; that which we have protested against has been done. The Constitution of the United States has been violated. The precedent for religious legislation has been established, and the Constitution, which has stood for more than a hundred years as a breakwater against the angry seas of intolerance, has at last been broken, and through this opening will flow the billows of persecution. “As milder measures fail, the most oppressive laws will be enacted.”

And now, like the mysterious rider, who with the swiftness of the wind, galloped down the Conemaugh Valley, warning the people of the onrushing floods, so we turn from petitioning the nation, and with the “loud voice” of the apocalyptic angels, call to the people to flee for their lives. To give this final warning, we have pledged “our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honors.” Reader, will you unite with us in giving this warning? It will cost you persecution in this world, but it promises, “in the world to come, eternal life.”

~~~~~ END, *Signs of the Times*, 1894 ~~~~~

COMMENTARY: If the above situation existed in 1894, how much the more in 2012? Where is our discernment? Have we become so drunk from the “breath of the dragon’s mouth” that we do not have “eyes to see” and “ears to hear”—that we may become the “remnant of her seed” and be fitted for the “mansions above”?

I am thoroughly amazed at the declension of the professed people of God. Appetite holds full sway as the flesh dominates all aspects of modern secular society. In addition, the professed church is doing after the manner of the world as never before, and those few souls claiming “our high calling” are not exempted from this terminal plague.

I say, “awake to righteousness” or “eat, drink, and be merry,” for those who “walk in the flesh” do not belong to Christ. Awake from your stupor before it is too late—“the hour of His judgment is come.” “Go ye out to meet Him.”

Writing from a peaceful place in Southern California  
Pastor Walter “Chick” McGill  
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