

## The truth of False Religion

God has blessed and encouraged me thoroughly by the 'Word of the Week' by Zac Poonen. I am publishing it as is here with due credit to him. Read and be blessed. WORD FOR THE WEEK 21 February 2010, Christian Fellowship Church, Bangalore, India <http://www.cfcindia.com>.

### The Essence of Babylon - From Man, Through Man And To Man Zac Poonen

In Genesis 11:4 we read that the people of the world decided to build a tower. They said to each other, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city and a tower whose top would reach to heaven." They wanted their tower to be the gate of God (Babel). Human effort to reach God is a major constituent of false religion. False religion is always a religion of works – and not one of faith and dependence on God.

The leaders of false religion are always strong personalities with the charisma of film stars. They are not weak, unimpressive men like Paul, nor are they men with no reputation like Peter. The leaders of false Christianity are people who seek fame and honor for themselves.

The true prophets of God however are always misunderstood and called "heretics" and cast out by religious Christendom. That's how Jesus and the apostles were.

There can be a lot of unity in Babylon. It says here that the whole earth used the same language (Gen.11:1) - not just the same language in terms of speech, but also the same language of human cleverness, human ability and human glory. That is the language spoken by the world and that unfortunately is the language spoken by many "Christian" leaders as well. Jesus Christ however was crucified through weakness and there was no beauty in Him to attract people (2 Cor.13:4; Isa. 53:2). He was a servant Who washed people's feet. He was not a General Director or a Superintendent or a Pope. He called himself an ordinary man ("son of man") and had no title whatsoever.

These are the identifying marks of a true servant of God.

In Babylon they say, "Come, let us build." They don't need to consult God about such matters. They could build the gateway to heaven themselves! False religion does not depend helplessly on God for its every need. They may pray. All religions have prayer, but it will be meaningless prayer. The prophets of Baal prayed for hours on Mount Carmel, but nothing happened? Elijah prayed for one minute and the fire of God fell from heaven! Some of us may glory in hours spent in prayer. That may be good. Jesus spent all night in prayer too. But prayer has value only if it is an expression of our helpless dependence on God for His guidance and help. Babylonians however do not need to seek God's will, for they depend on human cleverness.

False religion begins with man, not with God. It's motto is: "In the beginning man," not "In the beginning God," (as in Gen. 1:1). False religion originates in man, it is done through man's power and it is propagated for man's glory.

The Bible speaks about building with wood, hay and straw or with gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor.3:12). What does it mean to build with gold, silver and precious stones? The answer is found in Romans 11:36: "From God, through God and to God". This is how Jerusalem (the true church of God) is built. The opposite of that is "From man, through man and to man." That is how Babylon is built.

Babylon is built by man's ideas. A lot of Christian organizations are doing their work today through human ideas and not God's. They follow the principles of multinational companies and large business corporations, rather than the teachings of the apostles. They run their organizations like business enterprises and not like the churches that the apostles built. Why didn't Jesus give His

gospel to an advertising agency? Wouldn't they have done a better job than those twelve apostles? But that would have been man's method.

God's methods are different..

Very few people know God's methods, because very few people know God.

Man is a religious creature (*while God is Spirit*) and he would rather have religion than God (*and therefore prefer religion or spirituality - emphasis added*). It is uncomfortable to live with God. It is comfortable to live with religion. You cannot live with God and be a great man in the world. But you can have the "Christian religion" and still be a great man.

People don't want God. Even most believers would rather have Christianity than God Himself. They don't want the yoke of Jesus Christ on their necks. Babylon is built through man's power. It does not need the Holy Spirit's anointing or the supernatural gifts that God gives. With natural gifts, good music and electronic gadgets, the job can be done!

No wonder our work for God is of such poor quality! We do not know the power that the early apostles knew. The baptism in the Holy Spirit that many people claim to have experienced today, I am convinced is a counterfeit baptism of their own human soul – a psychological experience that satisfies them but far removed from what the apostles received on the day of Pentecost. Few today have experienced that genuine anointing of the Holy Spirit that came upon Jesus and the apostles. I would urge you to seek for that genuine endowment with power that Jesus promised His apostles, before He ascended to heaven.

Thus alone can we truly serve God. Why do I say that a lot that goes on today in the name of the Holy Spirit is counterfeit? Because Jesus said that we would be able to identify false prophets by their fruits..

The love of money is so glaringly obvious in most of those who claim to be baptized in the Holy Spirit today. Such fruit is certainly not from God, for the Holy Spirit is not a lover of money. These people love power, position and the honor of men. These are not the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Then their "power" must be coming from some other source, from some other spirit.

Babylon is built for man's glory. "Let us make a name" is what we read in Genesis 11:4. Years later, we read in Daniel 4: 30 that Nebuchadnezzar looked over the city of Babylon that he had built. I have heard that it was built as a square, 25 kilometers long and wide, with walls that were 87 feet thick and 350 feet high. It had a beautiful hanging garden that was one of the wonders of the world.

And Nebuchadnezzar said, "Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built, by the might of my power for my glory?" It was built from man, through man and to man. Nebuchadnezzar lived nearly 2000 years after the building of the tower of Babel. But he had the same spirit..

2500 years after Nebuchadnezzar, we find the same spirit in operation in Christendom today. This is what Babylon is - From man, through man and to man. And it is the very opposite of Jerusalem.

We read in Genesis 11:5 that "the Lord came down to see what man had built". Remember that the Lord will come down to examine whatever we build. He does not come to examine the size of our church or organization, but the motive with which it was built. For whose glory was it built?

If He were examining the size of the Tower of Babel, it was very impressive. But God came down looking for something else at that time.

And He comes down looking for something else today as well.

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