**Like Balaam, the false teachers of today are suave and convincing. They can speak out of both corners of their mouths at once. They suppress the truth in order to increase their income. The principal point is that they are greedy, seeking to make the house of God a house of merchandise.**

**Conditions in the Church Today**  
**By Arlen Chitwood of** [**Lamp Broadcast**](http://lampbroadcast.org/)

Corruption seen in the first four parables in Matthew, chapter thirteen ([Matthew 13:1-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.1-33&t=NKJV)) and in the letters to the seven Churches in Revelation, chapters two and three ([Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV)) has to do specifically with a departure from “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” ([Jude 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.3&t=NKJV)), not to a departure from Biblical doctrine in general. In Matthew’s gospel, specific reference is made to “the kingdom of the heavens” and to “the word of the kingdom” ([Matthew 13:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.11&t=NKJV), [19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.19&t=NKJV), [24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.24&t=NKJV), [31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.31&t=NKJV), [33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV)). And in the Book of Revelation, all seven letters, structured after an identical fashion, center around the present works of Christians, with a view to Christians overcoming and occupying positions with Christ in the kingdom ([Revelation 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.2&t=NKJV), [7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.7&t=NKJV), [9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.9&t=NKJV), [11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.11&t=NKJV), [13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.13&t=NKJV), [17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.17&t=NKJV), [19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.19&t=NKJV), [26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.26-27&t=NKJV); [3:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.1-2&t=NKJV), [5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.5&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.8&t=NKJV), [12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.12&t=NKJV), [15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.15&t=NKJV), [21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.21&t=NKJV)).

Thus, a corruption of Christendom seen in either Matthew, chapter thirteen or Revelation, chapters two and three pertains to a departure from truths surrounding the proffered kingdom — the kingdom offered to Israel in the gospel accounts, reoffered to Israel in Acts, and offered to the one new man “in Christ” in the epistles. It is a corruption of that which Scripture teaches pertaining to works emanating out of faithfulness, with a view to the glory lying out ahead.

The Church, at the end of the dispensation, will exist exactly as seen in the final outcome of matters set forth in both Matthew’s gospel and in the Book of Revelation. The Church, in relation to the message surrounding the proffered kingdom, will find itself in a state of total corruption, completely “leavened” ([Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV)); it will find itself in a state described as “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” ([Revelation 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.17&t=NKJV)).

1. A WORK OF SATAN

At the end of the dispensation there will be a complete departure from the central message which was proclaimed throughout Christendom at the beginning of the dispensation. This was a message which had to do with the reason for the very existence of the Church, a message around which all the epistles directed to the Church were built, and a message which was supposed to have been proclaimed throughout all Christendom for the duration of the dispensation.

However, because of Satan’s hatred for this message (note that the message has to do with a change in the governmental administration of the earth — Satan and his angels being put down and Christ and His co-heirs taking the reins of power and authority), he sought very early in the dispensation to counter that which God had begun through the Church (cf. [Ephesians 3:9-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.9-11&t=NKJV); [6:11-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.11-18&t=NKJV)). And the manner in which Satan undertook this task followed a previously established pattern seen in the opening chapters of Genesis, where the first account of his attempting a work of this nature is recorded.

The opening chapter of Genesis records the account of God creating Adam to rule the earth, in Satan’s stead ([Genesis 1:26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV)); and the third chapter of Genesis then goes on to reveal that which Satan did in an effort to counter God’s plans and purposes in this respect ([Genesis 3:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.1ff&t=NKJV)). Satan, knowing why Adam had been created, immediately set about to bring man into a state in which he could no longer be found qualified to rule the earth.

And Satan brought this to pass through introducing a corrupting agent. He introduced sin into the human race. He brought about man’s fall, through sin, in an effort to counter God’s plans and purposes; and this forms a first-mention principle in Scripture, showing the manner in which Satan would act at any subsequent time when seeking to achieve this same goal.

And this is exactly what can be seen in Satan’s work relative to the message surrounding the proffered kingdom very early in the present dispensation. He sought to do away with the message through corruption. He brought in the false teachers and placed a corrupting agent within. He placed leaven within, and this leaven would work until it had corrupted the entire mass.

Apart from the work of Satan, the message surrounding the proffered kingdom would have gone unhindered throughout the dispensation. It would have remained uppermost in the minds of Christians throughout the past two millenniums, and it would continue to be the central message proclaimed throughout the Churches of the land today — as during the first several decades of the existence of the Church in the first century.

But, because of the work of Satan, things relating to the proclamation of this message have gradually moved 180 degrees out of phase. Rather than a progressive proclamation of the message occurring throughout the dispensation, there was, instead, a gradual departure; and rather than any type continuing proclamation of the message occurring today, there is, for all practical purposes, a total departure. This message was proclaimed throughout Christendom during the first century; but today, except in isolated instances, it is not being proclaimed at all. That’s how complete the leaven has done its damaging work.

2. A FURTHER VEILING OF THE TRUTH

When Christ was on earth the first time there were two major religious parties in Judaism — the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees were the fundamental legalists. They believed the letter of the law. They believed in a future resurrection, in angels, and in spirit realities. The Sadducees though were more liberal in their theology. They rejected any thought of a future resurrection, and they didn’t believe in angels or in spirit realities ([Acts 23:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+23.8&t=NKJV)).

But the Pharisees and the Sadducees did have one thing in common. Neither would have anything to do with the message surrounding the proffered kingdom ([Matthew 16:1-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.1-6&t=NKJV)).

And exactly the same thing can be seen in Christendom today. There are two major segments — the fundamentalists and the liberals. And though these two segments have major differences in their outlook on Scripture (as the Pharisees and Sadducees had), they do have one thing in common (as also the Pharisees and Sadducees had). Neither one will have anything to do with the message surrounding the proffered kingdom.

And fundamentalism, in this respect, becomes quite deceptive, for it claims, by its very name, something of itself which is not true at all. Fundamentalism portends an adherence to the fundamentals of the faith, which translates into a return to exactly what Scripture states, as it was proclaimed during the early years of the first-century Church. And fundamentalism, as it is seen in Christendom today, has not wrought a return to such a position. Nor will it in days ahead; nor can it in days ahead.

There is a cry today among a number of those who look upon themselves as fundamentalists for a return to what is called “historic Biblical fundamentalism.” But there’s a major problem. The groups echoing this cry have no understanding of “historic Biblical fundamentalism.” They don’t understand what was taught in the first century Church, and they cannot return to a position which they do not know anything about.

A return to “historic Biblical fundamentalism” is nothing short of a return to proclaiming, as central, the Word of the Kingdom throughout the Churches, exactly as Scripture states the matter, for that’s what was done by those proclaiming the message in the first-century Church, in both verbal and written form. And we have a written record of exactly what was taught in those days, exactly as God would have Christians possess the record; and until there is a return to an adherence to the contents of that record, there can be no return to “historic Biblical fundamentalism.”

But a return of this nature is not going to occur, except possibly in isolated instances, for such a return would be a reversal of the leavening process. Rather, conditions are going to continue in the same deteriorating process until the dispensation is brought to a close by the Son of Man returning and being unable to find “faith [‘the faith’] on the earth” ([Luke 18:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+18.8&t=NKJV)).

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Excerpts from [From Acts to the Epistles by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/FAE.pdf) and/or [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's From Acts to the Epistles](http://bibleone.net/A2E.htm)