

DISCORD AMONG BRETHREN AND THE SIN OF SILENCE

Psalms 118:24 says, “This *is* the day *which* the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” This should be our attitude every morning when we get out of bed, regardless of our aches and pains and whatever unpleasant tasks we might have to do. This is the day God has made, and I’m going to be happy, and hopefully that joy will spread across my face and draw others to Jesus, because that’s what it’s all about.

I was driving into town a few days ago and decided to turn on the local Christian radio station. As I listened there was a well-known SDA minister preaching, and he was talking about how God hates division and especially those who cause division, and I got the distinct impression that he was encouraging church members not to rock the boat by speaking out when they see or hear things that aren’t right in the church. So to put it bluntly the idea is to just sit down, shut up, and continue to pay your tithe and we’ll let God take care of any problems.

Anyway, I thought this topic of what God says about division would be an interesting subject to explore, because certainly there is more division in the church and in the world in general today than there ever has been.

I want to begin by reading **Proverbs 6:16-19**, because this is the text the minister I referred a moment ago was using in his sermon. “These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: **(the word “abomination” meaning “something morally disgusting,” and these seven things rightly understood should be perfectly disgusting to us as well)** A proud look, **(and remember, it was pride that caused the downfall of Lucifer and the reason he was cast out of heaven, so this one is at the top of God’s list)** a lying tongue, **(this indicates lying without a cause)** and hands that shed innocent blood, **(here I think especially of abortion, because what could be more innocent than a tiny baby in the womb)** An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, **(this could be fantasizing about sinful things)** feet that be swift in running to mischief, **(or hurrying to do that which is evil)** a false witness *that* speaketh lies, **(or one that gives false testimony)** and he that soweth discord among brethren.” And of course “discord among brethren” is what this preacher was focusing on; and being last on the list, it’s probably the least disgusting when compared to the previous six things God hates.

First of all I want you to notice that lying is mentioned twice. God hates “a lying tongue” and He hates “a false witness *that* speaks lies.” Can a minister, such as the one I mentioned

a moment ago, or even myself, have a lying tongue or be a false witness? Certainly. In fact ministers should probably be checked out more carefully than any other person, because they're dealing with eternal life issues, and what could be more important than eternal life, especially knowing that the devil's goal is to keep people from receiving it. And it's possible also that a minister may have a lying tongue and not even realize it because of the way he's been raised or educated. And so we must be very careful what we hear, and know for ourselves what we believe. Now, having said all these things, it doesn't mean we can't learn from others, but our core understanding of the ABCs of salvation need to be ground zero for everything else we believe, and then hopefully we will be able to detect error when we hear it.

The word "discord," as used in **Proverbs 6:19** doesn't necessarily mean "division," but it certainly can, because what it means is "disagreement" or "having a differing opinion." You may remember what the apostle Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 1:10** where he says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." That's the ideal, right? But that seems to be a very rare thing today. But the word "discord" here in this verse means more than brethren having a friendly disagreement, but an angry disagreement, and we know that that kind of anger is not a godly attribute, unless of course it truly involves righteous indignation.

In ***The Desire of Ages*, page 310** it says, "It is true there is an indignation that is justifiable, even in the followers of Christ. When they see that God is dishonored, and His service brought into disrepute, when they see the innocent oppressed, a righteous indignation stirs the soul. Such anger, born of sensitive morals, is not a sin." In other words, when we "see that God is dishonored, and His service brought into disrepute," or damaged somehow by what people say or do, it's OK to be angry about it, and we ought to be.

Now think about that for a minute. If someone, especially a minister, says or does something by which God is dishonored, or by which His cause is "brought into disrepute," anger is, and justifiably so, the response of the Christian who knows what is being said or done is wrong, and being silent at such times is not being Christlike, because remember what Jesus said to the Old Testament religious leaders who were leading people astray? He said, "woe unto you scribes, pharisees, hypocrites?". And He said "You are of your father the devil?" He also called them serpents and a generation of vipers, and how can you escape the damnation of hell? Jesus wasn't being what we would call "nice" was He?

Remember also when He overturned the tables of the money changers in the temple? Divinity flashed through humanity when that happened. That was righteous indignation, and if we respond to such things when we see and hear them, wouldn't that also be considered righteous indignation? But too many times we are silent when we see and hear such things because we want to be "nice" and not hurt people's feelings, when in fact it calls for us to speak out strongly against that which is dishonoring to God and that which brings His service into disrepute.

For instance, is it dishonoring to God when a minister that should know better stands in the sacred desk and tells the congregation that they can have a saving relationship with Jesus even while they have ongoing sin in their life? When he tells them that Jesus had an unfallen human nature and wasn't really tempted in all points such as we are? Is it dishonoring to God, and is His cause brought into disrepute when pride month is being celebrated every June by church leaders and presidents of their colleges and universities? Is it dishonoring to God when one high in authority in the church tells its members they are religious terrorists for proclaiming the three angel's messages of **Revelation 14**? Is it dishonoring to God when a law suit is brought against church members who believe it's their duty to call themselves SDAs? Is it dishonoring to God and does it hurt His cause when a minister teaches that the atonement was finished at the cross and that there's no such thing as a heavenly sanctuary or an investigative judgment? Is it dishonoring to God when a minister teaches that perfection of character is not necessary or even possible in this life and not to worry about it because Jesus is going to change our character when He comes? Is it dishonoring to God to teach the Catholic trinity rather than a three person Godhead? And the list goes on and on. Is it dishonoring to God for a church to elect a transgender man as head elder like what happened at the Hollywood Seventh-day Adventist church. Is it dishonoring to God for the church to join the United Nations whose agenda it is to push climate change, which in turn is leading to a Sunday law? And is it dishonoring to God when someone is disfellowshipped because they speak out against such Babylonian errors, and by so doing causes "discord among brethren?" I think we can see clearly that division is not always a bad thing, but when handled correctly can be the natural result of speaking truth to power. And remember, there's always two sides to a coin. Just because God says He hates those who sow discord among brethren doesn't mean that we should just go along to get along.

We need to understand that one of the worst sins in these last days is the sin of silence. You say, "where is that in the ten commandments?" It's right there in number eight where

it says not to bear false witness, and keeping silent when we hear a lie becomes a lie itself. Notice what it says in ***Testimonies for the Church, volume 3, page 280***, “If God abhors one sin above another, of which His people are guilty, it is doing nothing in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God.” Is the church in a religious crisis today? It certainly is when church leaders are advocating and allowing things like a I just mentioned a moment ago.

I’m thinking of Elijah, the children of Israel, and the false prophets up on Mount Carmel. You probably remember the story. In **1 Kings 18:21** it says, “Elijah came unto all the people, **(the whole church)** and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the church **(did what? they)** answered him not a word.” By saying nothing they committed “a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God” that day; they committed the sin of silence, and we just read that this is what God’s professed people are guilty of. Church members see many of the things I mentioned a few moments ago going on in the church, but they sit back and say nothing. They say and do nothing and they keep putting their tithes and offerings in the plate as it’s past around Sabbath morning, and as long as they keep doing that, they can be members in good and regular standing, but the minute they speak up when they hear error and especially withhold their money, they come under church discipline, and if they don’t recant they receive the left foot of fellowship.

Remember the story about the young man Jesus healed who was born blind? And do you remember why his parents were reluctant to tell the religious leaders that it was Jesus who healed him? **John 9:22** says, “These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he **(Jesus)** was Christ, **(or the Messiah)** he should be put out of the synagogue.” So this is nothing new, is it? People keep silent today for the same reason, many of them believing that there salvation depends upon their connection to their church organization. But here’s the truth, and this is one of the most important things we can know. In ***Review and Herald, February 10, 1891*** it says, “We are not saved as a sect; **(Do you know what a “sect” is in this context? It’s a smaller subgroup that has broken away from a larger religious organization, which means just because you have left the larger church organization and are now supporting a smaller independent ministry, that can’t save you any more than the larger church can)** “We are not saved as a sect; no denominational name has any

virtue to bring us into favor with God. We are saved individually as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

It’s interesting to me that this quote can only be found in one place in the Spirit of Prophecy, and I have to wonder why? Could it be that church leaders don’t want you to know this important truth? You can read some statements over and over again in various compilations and devotionals about not calling the church Babylon and staying with the ship and so forth, but this particular truth is only in one place, and in a place where most Adventist will never see it. I can tell you one thing however, it’s to the church’s benefit to have you believe that your salvation depends upon your membership like the Catholics do, because that way they have control of you and your finances, and that’s really what it’s all about.

Now, speaking of the Christians of the first century, notice what ***The Great Controversy, pages 45, 46*** say about a church espousing doctrinal errors and abandoning the faith once delivered unto the saints. “After a long and severe conflict, the faithful few decided to dissolve all union with the apostate church **(this is in reference to what happened to Christianity in the first century when it united with paganism, and what eventually became known as the Catholic church)** the faithful few decided to dissolve all union with the apostate church if she still refused to free herself from falsehood and idolatry. **(underscore these two words, “falsehood and idolatry”)** They saw that separation was an absolute necessity if they would obey the word of God. They dared not tolerate errors fatal to their own souls, and set an example which would imperil the faith of their children and children’s children. To secure peace and unity they were ready to make any concession consistent with fidelity **(or faithfulness)** to God; but they felt that even peace would be too dearly purchased at the sacrifice of principle. If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, then let there be difference, **(or “discord among brethren” if you will)** and even war.”

Question: would it be a form of idolatry for a minister to do what he’s told by his church superiors in order to continue to receive a paycheck each month when he knows it would be dishonoring to God and the truth to keep silent about the errors he sees in the church? Do you suppose something like that has ever happened? Oh yes my friends, many times. I know of ministers today who have been let go because they continued to present the truth after being told to shut up about the three angel’s messages, but unfortunately that kind of courage is a rare thing these days. By the way, this is the compromise that ADRA

has made with the United Nations in order to receive government funding, which totally guts the message that we were raised up to give.

ADRA stands for Adventist Development and Relief Agency. Did Jesus say we are to help our neighbors who are in trouble? Of course. But did He say we are to gut the three angel's messages in order to receive government funds to do so? Because that's what's happening.

Friends, *Testimonies for the Church, volume 9, page 19* says we "have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention." When you think about it, there are plenty of other organizations that have been raised up who's main focus is to help people when disasters strike, like The American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, Samaritan's Purse, FEMA, and on and on. If Seventh-day Adventists want to do this kind of work, then they should do it without being an NGO of the Federal government that tells them they have to keep quiet about the messages of **Revelation 14:6-12** or be cut off, plain and simple!

Now let me get back to the point about a church that refuses "to free herself from falsehood and idolatry." Isn't idolatry whatever takes first place in a person's life other than God? You don't have to bow down to a statue or an image in order to be an idolater. As a Christian, all you have to do is have other priorities than following the dictates of the Holy Spirit. Two thousand years ago we read that "the faithful few decided to dissolve all union with the apostate church" because she "refused to free herself from falsehood and idolatry." And wouldn't it also be right today to do the same thing if the church you're attending and supporting is dishonoring God and bringing His service into disrepute through some of the errors I've already mentioned?

Continuing on with the quote from *The Great Controversy, page 45*, "Well would it be for the church and the world if the principles that actuated those steadfast souls (**of the first century**) were revived in the hearts of God's professed people. There is an alarming indifference in regard to the doctrines which are the pillars of the Christian faith. The opinion is gaining ground, (**"in the hearts of God's professed people" as we just read**) that, after all, these are not of vital importance. This degeneracy is strengthening the hands of the agents of Satan, so that false theories and fatal delusions which the faithful in ages past imperiled their lives to resist and expose (**resist and what? Expose**), are now regarded with favor by thousands who claim to be followers of Christ."

Now, by exposing “false theories and fatal delusions,” that would cause division, wouldn’t it? But according to what we just read, this is something God expects us to do, whether it cause division or not!

In **John 13:35** Jesus said, “by this shall all men know that you are my disciple, if you have love one to another.” Tell me, is it the loving thing to do to keep silent when error is being taught in order to keep from creating “discord among brethren?” Of course not, rather “let there be division and even war.” That’s what’s going on in Adventism today, and largely this war is because the sacred tithe is being diverted from the Conference coffers to independent ministries that are exposing that which is dishonoring to God and bringing His cause into disrepute. My dear friends, we should understand that if it wasn’t for the money, there wouldn’t be near the commotion going on, but let someone support a “sect,” or a smaller independent ministry by withholding their money from that larger organization, and all hell breaks loose.

Now don’t let that word “sect” throw you as something that’s bad, because the Christian church was considered a “Sect” by the Jews when Christians quit attending their synagogues. When the apostle Paul was taken prisoner to Rome, he called the chief of the Jews together to speak to them and they wanted to hear what he had to say, because they didn’t know much about Paul except that he was part of a movement that was everywhere spoken evil of, and they wanted to know why. In **Acts 28:22** they said, “we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, **(of Christians)** we know that every where it is spoken against.” So I don’t mind it at all if someone wants to call me part of a “sect” like that, do you?

While we’re on this subject let me read you something about what Satan thinks of a certain “sect.” **Early Writings, page 266**, “I saw that Satan bade his angels lay their snares especially for those who were looking for Christ’s second appearing, and keeping all the commandments of God. Satan told his angels that the churches were asleep. **(That’s true)** He would increase his power and lying wonders, and he could hold them. “But,” he said, “the sect of Sabbathkeepers we hate; they are continually working against us, and taking from us our subjects, to keep the hated law of God. Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with cares. If you can make them place their affections upon these things, we shall have them yet. They may profess what they please, only make them care more for money than for the success of Christ’s kingdom or the spread of the truths we hate.”

What is the thing the devil hates? It's the message of the third angel, because it upholds the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus with special focus on the fourth commandment. How about this for a website, "thesectofSabbathkeepers.com." Somebody might want to grab that before someone else does.

Many Adventists are totally oblivious to what I'm about to tell you, but Ellen White herself is the one who began the self-supporting work by diverting her tithe, and that of others, by supporting ministers in the South that were being neglected by the General Conference, and by doing this she said, "money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury." Read the Watson Letter in *Spaulding and Megan, pages 215, 216*. The Lord's treasury is wherever the truth is being presented and where those who are preaching that truth need means to be able to continue to do so, even if they are a small "sect." And by the way, if you are returning your tithe to a church that is teaching any of the errors I've already mentioned, your money is being withheld from the Lord's treasury, because God does not support error.

I just heard recently from a retired conference pastor that the denomination is having trouble finding enough ministers to go around, many of them having three and four churches to take care of. Why? Because people are finally waking up to what's been going on in the church for the past several decades, and they refuse to support it any longer. Instead they have started supporting a small "sect" that isn't afraid to speak out when they see God being dishonored and His cause brought into disrepute.

I'm going to read something from *Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, pages 209-211*, and please take the time to read the whole chapter, it's titled "The Seal of God," because this chapter is present truth for today. "The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling figures show that the time for God's visitation has about come. Although loath to punish, nevertheless He will punish, and that speedily. Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; **(do you see the signs friends? If not, you're sleeping and you need to wake up before it's too late)** Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; but they are not to sit in quiet, unconcerned expectancy of the ruin, comforting themselves with the belief that God will shelter His people in the day of visitation. Far from it. They should realize that it is their duty to labor diligently to save others, looking with strong faith to God for help. 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'

“The leaven of godliness has not entirely lost its power. **(Thank God for that! Sometimes we tend to think that the Holy Spirit can't get through to some people, but don't you believe it. The Holy Spirit is still working and hasn't been totally withdrawn yet, so keep working and praying for that person or that family member)** At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be **(doing what?)** sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world.

“The earnest prayers of this faithful few will not be in vain. **(PTL!)** When the Lord comes forth as an avenger, He will also come as a protector of all those who have **(now listen)** preserved the faith in its purity and kept themselves unspotted from the world. **(You see, that's the true definition of Christ's church, "those who have preserved the faith in its purity and kept themselves unspotted from the world.")** It is at this time **(she says)** that God has promised to avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them.

“The command is: ‘Go through the midst of the city, **(a reference to the church here as we will see)** ‘Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.’ These sighing, crying ones had been holding forth the words of life; they had reproved, counseled, and entreated. **(you see, they weren't silent)** Some who had been dishonoring God repented and humbled their hearts before Him. **(Again, PTL!)** But the glory of the Lord had departed from Israel; **(and in a minute we're going to see that the glory has also departed from those who claim to be spiritual Israel)** although many still continued the forms of religion, His power and presence were lacking.

“In the time when His wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings. While others try to throw a cloak over the existing evil, **(nothing to see here)** and excuse the great wickedness everywhere prevalent, those who have a zeal for God's honor and a love for souls will not hold their peace to obtain favor of any. **(again, they refuse to commit the sin of silence)** Their righteous souls are vexed day by day with the unholy works and conversation of the unrighteous. They are powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity, and hence they are filled with grief and alarm. They mourn before God to see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. **(That's a term used over and over again as a**

reference to Seventh-day Adventists) They lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church. **(Do you know what “avarice” is? It’s “an extreme, insatiable desire to gain and hoard wealth or material possessions.” Don’t let that be your downfall)** The Spirit of God, which prompts to reproof, is trampled underfoot, while the servants of Satan triumph. God is dishonored, the truth made of none effect.

“The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. **(That’s how serious it is)** The Lord commissions His messengers, the men with slaughtering weapons in their hands: ‘Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.’

“Here we see that the church—the Lord’s sanctuary—was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their trust. They had taken the position that we need not look for miracles and the marked manifestation of God’s power as in former days. Times have changed. These words strengthen their unbelief, and they say: The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil. He is too merciful to visit His people in judgment. **(again, they just stay with the ship, because no matter how deep it goes into apostasy, it’s still God’s church)** Thus ‘Peace and safety’ is the cry from men who will never again lift up their voice like a trumpet to show God’s people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins. These dumb dogs that would not bark are the ones who feel the just vengeance of an offended God. Men, maidens, and little children all perish together.”

Oh friends, these things are about to be fulfilled, and yet, today we have “sleeping preachers preaching to a sleeping people.” **(2T 337)**

You may have noticed that Sister White here quotes from **Ezekiel 9** where it talks about a man clothed with linen and a slaughtering weapon in his hand and those that follow Him, that slaughtering weapon is the truth, and He goes forth to slay those who don’t have God’s mark on the foreheads. And why don’t they have God’s mark? Because they’re not sighing and crying “for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.”

Have you ever read what the Spirit of Prophecy has to say about this reference in **Ezekiel 9**? In the **1888 Materials, page 1303.1** it says, “We are amid the perils of the last days, the time will soon come when the prophecy of Ezekiel 9 will be fulfilled; that prophecy should be carefully studied, for it will be fulfilled to the very letter. . . **(Then she says)** “Let these prophecies be studied on your knees before God.” And so, it’s pretty important for us to understand, isn’t it?

By the way, who or what is represented by “the man clothed with linen?” Is it Jesus? Yes, but Jesus has others who follow Him and work for Him down here on earth, does He not? Let’s put a few inspired quotes together to see what we can learn about this. First of all, does this man clothed with linen have a sealing message to give? He certainly does, He places a mark on the foreheads of those who will be saved. And what is the sealing message we’ve been given to proclaim to the world in these last days? It’s the third angel’s message, the last message of mercy this world will ever hear. You know, that message that we are to proclaim to the world without being absorbed with other things.

In **Early Writing, page 88**, the context being the vision of the train going with lightening seed to perdition, says the following, “I asked the angel if there were none left. **(oh Lord, is the whole church going to be lost?)** He bade me look in an opposite direction, and I saw a little company **(there’s that little company again, that little sect)** traveling a narrow pathway. All seemed to be firmly united, bound together by the truth, in bundles, or companies. Said the angel, ‘The third angel is binding, or sealing them in bundles for the heavenly garner.’”

This is the same work the man clothed with linen does and those that follow Him. And **Testimonies for the Church, volume 1, page 76** tells us who are represented by the third angel. “I was shown that the third angel, proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message and raise the voice of warning to the world.” Again, this little company is not keeping silent, but is raising their voice in warning.

Friends, if we are faithful and alive to see these things fulfilled, the man clothed with linen is giving those who know the truth instructions to give the sealing message that will determine the final destiny of those who hear! That is an awesome responsibility, and only those who are sighing and crying will be giving that message; all the rest are those on that train headed to perdition, have a good old time until the train crashes at the end

of the line, and the sad part is, most will never jump off that train before it crashes and burns!

But here's the point, is this a message that will create "discord among brethren?" You bet it will. And if we are one of those who receive the third angel's message and raise the voice of warning to the world, we will be blamed for the division and separation it causes, in the church and in the world. This message of sighing and crying is not a pleasant work, let me tell you, I've been trying to give it for over 30 years and by God's grace I'm going to continue to give it until my last breath, and so will you if you are sealed with the mark of God on your forehead, and of course this warning message will "embrace the Sabbath of the Lord." And take note of this, all of those people on the train who are going with lightening speed to perdition are those who have kept silent when they should have spoken up.

In Testimonies for the Church, volume 6, page 400, it says, "As trials thicken around us, both separation and unity will be seen in our ranks. **(and the word "ranks" spoken of here is not the denominational organization, and as we read on we'll find out what it is)** . . . Those who have had great light and precious privileges, but have not improved them, will, under one pretext or another, go out from us. **(who are "us?" Read on)** Not having received the love of the truth, **(by contrast those that love the truth are "us," and what "our ranks" represents)** Not having received the love of the truth, they will be taken in the delusions of the enemy; they will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and will depart from the faith. **(When understood correctly, it's those who stay in an apostate church that will depart from the faith and not those that separate from it. It's the opposite of what church members are being told)** But, on the other hand, when the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold **(or those who truly belong to the shepherd)** will come back to **(the denomination? Is that what it says? No)** will come back to follow the great Shepherd."

And why can't "our ranks" and "us" and the "fold" be speaking of the church organization? Because, "We are not saved as a sect; no denominational name has any virtue to bring us into favor with God. We are saved individually as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ."

You see how important it is to understand this? If we can keep this one truth in mind, we won't be fooled by slick talking preachers who would tell us to squirt the glue in the church pew and stay put no matter what, or tell us to just stay with the ship and everything will

be OK, because a ship that is loaded with cargo that consists of packages of lies is not going to sail safely into the heavenly port.

I want to be one of those who do not depart from the faith, and I want to receive the love of the truth. I want to follow the great Shepherd, how about you? Friends, if we follow Jesus here, we will follow Him throughout eternity as we travel around the universe bearing our testimony that God is true and faithful and a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. It's true that we don't want to be among those that cause "discord among brethren" for no good reason, but if that happens because we refuse to keep quiet about the errors being taught in the church, then let there be division and even war.

In *Early Writings, page 124* it says, "I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a deadly poison to the soul and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. The influence of such gatherings is not good. If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth." Are you at liberty and rejoicing in the truth today, my friends? Oh, I hope so, I truly hope so.

I'd like to close by reading a quote from Cindy's daily email devotional that she sends out, and if you're not on her list I encourage you to get on board. This is one she sent out a couple weeks ago and a good way to close our study today. It's from *Heavenly Places, page 184*, "The mighty surges of temptation will beat upon all, and unless they are riveted to the eternal Rock they will be borne away. Do not think that you can safely drift with the current. **(and isn't that what's happening today, church members just going along to get along while their ship is sinking)** If you do, you will surely become the helpless prey of Satan's devices. By diligent searching of the Scriptures and earnest prayer for divine help prepare the soul to resist temptation. The Lord will hear the sincere prayer of the contrite soul and will lift up a standard for you against the enemy. But you will be tried; your faith, your love, your patience, your constancy will be tested."

And then Cindy personalized her prayer after the reading by saying, "Dear Father, I pray that I be riveted to the eternal Rock, that I be not borne away when the mighty surges of temptation beat on me. May I not drift with the current lest I become the helpless prey of Satan's devices. By diligent searching of the Scriptures and earnest prayer for divine help, may I prepare my soul to resist temptation. Thank You for hearing my sincere prayer and

lifting a standard for me against the enemy. I know I shall be tried; but may my faith, my love, my patience, my constancy stand the test of time. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."