

## ***Christ in Prophecy***

### **Conference 6: “Conference Highlights”**

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#### **Opening**

**Dr. Reagan:** Christianity today is being bombarded by heresy and apostasy, all in fulfillment of end time Bible prophecies. In response to this crisis, Lamb & Lion Ministries recently sponsored a conference on the theme of “Spiritual Apostasy in the End Times.” Our four speakers discussed a variety of topics related to apostasy in the Church today. For some highlights from the conference, please stay tuned.

#### **Part 1**

**Dr. Reagan:** Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. For the past few weeks we have been in the process of showing you excerpts from sermons presented at our recent Bible Conference which was dedicated to the theme of “Spiritual Apostasy in the End Times.” In this program I want to share with you some highlights from the conference that have not been shown in our past five programs. The first is from a presentation by Dr. Ron Carlson on the question, “Are there many roads to God?” Dr. Carlson is the Founder and Director of Christian Ministries International in Minnetonka, Minnesota. In this excerpt he talks about the difference in Christianity and all the other religions in the world.

#### **Dr. Carlson’s Presentation**

**Dr. Carlson:** My freshmen year in college I lived with a fellow from Thailand who had been a Buddhist until he was 18. He had become a Christian while studying here in the states we happened to be roommates. And I asked him one day I said, “Lou explain to me why you became a Christian.” I said, “Tell me what is the difference between Buddhism and Christianity.” And he put it this way, he said, “Ron when I was a Buddhist it was like I was drowning in a big lake and I did not know how to swim.” He said, “I was going under for the third time,” and he said, “Buddha walked up to the edge of the lake, and Buddha began to teach me how to swim. Buddha said, ‘Start moving you arms and legs’ but Buddha said, ‘you must make it to shore yourself.’” He said, “Then Jesus Christ walked up to the edge of the lake, and Jesus Christ did not stop there, but Jesus Christ dove into the lake and he swam out and He rescued me, and He brought me to shore, and after He brought me to shore, well then He taught me how to swim, so I could go back and rescue others.”

You see friends there is a vast difference as we conclude tonight between Christianity and any religion. Please understand Christianity is not a religion. What are the religions of the world? You study religion folks as I have and you find that all the religions of the world are men and

women's attempts to reach God. That is what religion is, religion is people trying to get to God through their rituals through their sacrifices, through their good works, through their traditions, through their money. But the Bible says that all of our righteousness put together is as filthy rags before a Holy God. You see the Bible says that God is Holy, that men and women are effected with a spiritual disease called sin that separates us from a Holy God. So people have been trying to create all kinds of religions trying to get back to God, but they are never able to come into the presence of a Holy God because of their sin. You see the great truth of Christianity folks is this: It is Romans 5:8, "God proved His love for us that while we were sinners Christ came and died for us." See religion is men and women trying to get to God. Christianity true Christianity is God reaching down to men and women and making a way through His shed blood on Calvary's Cross, that we could have our sins washed and cleansed and forgiven and we could be restored back into that personal relationship with God our Creator for which we were made.

See that's why they call it the Gospel. The Gospel means what? It means good news, friends the Gospel is very good news to people caught up in manmade religions, and manmade cults, and manmade philosophies it is good news because the Bible says it is the gift, the gift of God. And why does the Bible say it is a gift? For two reasons; it is a gift because you can not earn it, you can not work for it, you can not buy it, it is a gift. And why is it a gift? It is a gift because it has already been bought and paid for when Jesus Christ took your sin and He took my sin. He nailed it to the cross, and He covered it with His own blood as the ultimate payment the infinite sacrifice once for all times Hebrews 10:10 says. And Jesus said it is what? It is finished, it is finished. And He stamped paid in full, paid in full, there was nothing more that you could do, He paid it all. And He says, "I now have a gift, you can't earn it, you can't buy it, it is a gift." And He said, "Anyone who will receive that gift by faith, He says, the old things will be washed away, and behold all things become fresh and new."

## **Part 2**

**Dr. Reagan:** Another of our speakers, Pastor Robert Jeffress of First Baptist Church in Dallas, also emphasized the uniqueness of Christianity in his presentation which was entitled, "Absolute Truth." I think you will love the way he summarizes the difference between Christianity and all other world religions in just two simple words.

### **Pastor Jeffress' Conference**

**Dr. Jeffress:** It is the Bible that is the depository of God's truth, Jude 1:3 talks about the faith that has once for all been delivered to the saints. Absolute truth is something that is revealed and received. Number three absolute truth is exclusive. You know in a sincere effort to promote harmony among people, people will say, "Well maybe we are both right, maybe we are both right, because quite frankly that is a lot more politically correct to say then to say I am right and you are wrong." It is a lot easier to say, "Maybe we are both right, maybe nobody has a corner on the truth and we both are looking at the truth from different angles." You know the truth is if there is absolute truth, then there has to be absolute wrong as well. And I think the reason we

have such a hard time understanding and accepting that is; we have confused two terms, diversity, and pluralism. Diversity is the recognition that there are many different belief systems out there. And we all accept diversity, we all realize that there are thousands of religions in the world.

You know I like what G. Campbell Morgan said one time. Somebody asked him how do you explain all the thousands of religions in the world? He said, "There aren't thousands of religions in the world, there are only two. All the other religions of the world are spelled D-O. Do this, do this, do this, do this, do this, do this and you might earn your way to God. But there is only one religion Christianity that is spelled, D-O-N-E, done, it has all been done through Jesus Christ."

But we recognize that there are lots of different belief systems out there, that is diversity. And were not trying to stop that, we are not trying to say in our country we're going to throw in jail anyone who doesn't believe like we are. That is diversity we allow for that, our country was founded on that. But pluralism goes one step further and says, because there are a diversity of beliefs no one religion can claim to be truth. Pluralism says all ideas are equally valid. And yet any thinking person knows that can't be true. A person who accepts the notion of absolute truth must be willing to label some beliefs as wrong.

R.C. Sproul talks about the time that he was watching the hearings on the television trying to confirm Clarence Thomas as a Supreme Court Justice. Remember he was accused by Anita Hill of sexual harassment. And R.C. Sproul said as he watched those hearing going on he really couldn't tell for sure who was telling the truth. But one thing he said was, "I knew they both couldn't be telling the truth." Somebody was telling the truth, somebody was lying.

And it is the same way when it comes to Christianity. Not all religions are telling the truth about God. For example let's take Christianity and Islam. Christianity says the only way to God is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His work on the cross. Islam says that the way to God is through following the path of righteousness and this list of good deeds and if you do these things you will see Allah. Now the fact is, hang on with me here, it is theoretically possible that both Christianity and Islam are wrong. Theoretically it is possible that both religions have it wrong. But it is impossible for both religions to be right. If Islam is right, that the way to God is through good works then Christianity is inherently wrong. But if Christianity is right, that Jesus Christ is the only way to God, then Islam is wrong. If we are going to be willing to stand for absolute truth we must believe that some things are absolutely wrong.

Now I believe that there are some Christians quite frankly who have misused absolute truth. They have used it as an excuse to persecute, mistreat other people, and we are never advocating that. But just because some people have perverted this idea of absolute truth, the fact that some people have misused it should not force the rest of us into what somebody has called a forced neutrality in which we dare not say anything that might offend another person.

### **Part 3**

**Dr. Reagan:** One of our speakers, Mike Gendron, emphasized the ways in which the true Gospel has been perverted in modern times. Mike is the founder and director of Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries in Garland, Texas. He is a widely recognized expert on Christian doctrine. In this highlight from his presentation, Mike presents a definition of the true Gospel of the Bible.

#### **Mike Gendron's Presentation**

**Mike Gendron:** But what is the true Gospel? Can I give you 6 characteristics? First of all it is unique. It is the only message of salvation, it is the only message of hope, we see that in Ephesians 4 there is one faith and that is faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel is also eternal. We see in Revelation 14:6 that this Gospel that was first announced in the Garden given to Abraham will go throughout the world and then the end will come. It is the same message for every generation, for every tribe, for every tongue and for every nation.

The Gospel is also exclusive. It dares to say that all other faiths are false. And that is because the Gospel is about one person who said, "No one comes to the Father except through me."

The Gospel is also a Gospel of grace. Anyone who perverts it by adding anything to the Gospel of grace is under a curse. We see that in Galatians 1:6-9, Paul said, "Even if we or an angel from Heaven come back and preach a Gospel other than the one you have received from us they are to be accursed." And He was accursing the Judaizers because they came into Galatia saying, "If you're a Gentile you not only need to believe in Jesus but you also need to be circumcised." Paul's response was condemnation to be turned over to God for destruction for daring to pervert the Gospel of grace.

The Gospel is also the power of God for the salvation of all who believe it, that is the theme verse of our ministry, Romans 1:16. It is so important the Gospel is according to Scripture alone. The Bible does not point us to any other authority to any other book, everything we need to know about our salvation is completely contained in Scripture. That was the cry of the reformers, "sola scriptura." You want to know how to be saved look to the Word of God but yet so many churches and religions want to take you outside the Word to their own traditions.

Well emerging Church leaders have redefined this glorious Gospel of Jesus their emphasis is no longer on the atonement or sin or eternal salvation, instead they are calling for everyone to live in a kingdom community while trying to act like Jesus Christ. Well whenever I witness and proclaim the Gospel and share it with others I always want to try to remember six P's it is really a good way to follow the Gospel. We always start with God, God's perfection, He is our Holy Creator, and He is our righteous judge. Then we move on to man's problem, the Gospel must be addressed to man's problem, our problem is sin. Sin has separated us from God, has brought us under the condemnation of a Holy Judge in Heaven that is our problem. The cure is the Lord Jesus Christ, God's greatest provision to us through His shed blood we can be cleansed of our sin. Through His mediation we can be reconciled to God. The Lord Jesus Christ is

our only hope. Once man receives God's provision, the only response to the Gospel is that of repentance and faith, that's our part.

We come to the cross bringing nothing but our sins we leave everything else behind because the only way God will save us is through grace. Empty hands of faith that is what we bring. So our only response to the Gospel is repentance and faith. What is God's promise to those who repent and believe? Eternal life, no condemnation, power over the power of sin, we have the indwelling Holy Spirit the power to say, "No" to the flesh and "Yes" to the Spirit, and what is man's privilege? To worship God throughout all eternity to glorify our great God and Savior in Heaven as His adopted children. My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, this Gospel is the greatest news that you can ever share with the lost. It is the greatest news because it speaks of the greatest gift they could ever receive from the greatest man who ever lived, the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope all of you want to share the Gospel with those who are perishing it is indeed their only hope.

#### **Part 4**

**Dr. Reagan:** I was also one of the speakers at our annual conference. I spoke on the theme of the conference, "Spiritual Apostasy in the End Times." I presented a very detailed overview of the gross apostasy in the Church today, and then I ended my presentation by emphasizing some positive spiritual signs that point to the Lord's soon return. Here's what I had to say:

#### **Dr. Reagan's Presentation**

**Dr. Reagan:** I want to conclude this morning on a positive note. Not all the spiritual signs of the end times are negative in nature. The Bible clearly prophecies that there is going to be a great out pouring of the Holy Spirit in the End Times. The prophecies concerning this out pouring are often expressed in symbolic terms as the early rain and the latter rain. This of course is a reference to the two rainy seasons of Israel, that symbolism is used to express the idea that there will be two great out pourings of the Holy Spirit. The first was at Pentecost that was the early rain. But Joel chapter 2 says point blank, that the second great out pouring of the Holy Spirit, the latter rain, will occur after Israel is re-established in the land. After the children of Israel are re-gathered from the four corners of the earth and put back in the land. That occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is continuing today, and of course it began to accelerate after the establishment of Israel on May the 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948. Today as we look around the world, we can see many manifestations of this out pouring of the Holy Spirit. For example world evangelism, in 1949 Billy Graham's ministry took off like a rocket. And since that time his ministry alone has reached more people with the message of the Gospel than all of the evangelist in the history of Christianity for 2000 years before him, due mainly to the use of modern technology like satellite television and radio.

Or consider the rediscovery of the Holy Spirit, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century both Catholics and Protestants taught cessationism both taught the Holy Spirit retired had retired in the First Century. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century after the impact of the Pentecostal movement, the

charismatic movement, the third wave movement by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> nearly all churches were teaching the Holy Spirit is alive and well. The Holy Spirit indwells the believer, the Holy Spirit gifts the believer, the rediscovery of the Holy Spirit it self is a sign that we are in the finally outpouring.

Another would be Messianic Judaism. Last night Marty Goetz you saw an example of what God is doing in Jewish hearts. In 1967 following the Six Day War the Spirit of God fell upon Jews all over this world. Thousands and millions of Jews began to turn to Jesus and accept Yeshua as their HaMashiach in 1967 when the Six Day War occurred there was not one Messianic congregation on planet Earth, not one. Today there is over 500, and there are hundreds of thousands, even millions of Jews all over the world, who are celebrating Yeshua as their Messiah. In fact Marty left this morning to go to a major, the biggest Messianic convocation of the year that is held in the Philadelphia area, where thousands and ten of thousands of Jews will be celebrating Jesus as their Messiah.

Another would be the understanding of Bible prophecy. Over and over it says in the Old Testament both in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, that the end time prophecies will not be understood until the time comes for them to be understood, Daniel chapter 12. Daniel said, "Lord I don't understand these prophecies." You know what God told him? "It's not for you to understand, it is for you to write them. When the time comes for them to be understood, they will be understood." And what happened in 1970 Hal Lindsey wrote a book called, "*The Late Great Planet Earth*," and the New York Times recently certified that that book was the number 1 best selling book in the world, second only to the Bible for 10 consecutive years, from 1970-1980. And what did he do? All in the world he did was stop providing supernatural explanations of Revelation, and instead providing down-to-earth realistic explanations, because suddenly people could understand things in the book of Revelation they had never understood before. And why was that? Historical developments and technological developments. For example all of end time prophecy focuses on one thing, Israel, Israel. How could you understand those prophecies before 1948? How could you understand them, when Israel did not exist? How could you understand them when there was no prospect that Israel would ever exist? Up until the very day Israel came into being people said, "It will never exist." And when it came into being people said, "It will be gone within a week, the Arabs will destroy it." To this day Israel continues to exist because God says in Amos 9, "I will put you back in the land and you will never be uprooted again." And He is keeping that promise; He who watches over Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

So just the very understanding about this, so many, many prophecies that can not be understood apart from modern technology. For example, in Revelation chapter 11 it says there is going to be two great witnesses of God who will be preaching the Gospel all through the first half of the Tribulation and then suddenly they will be killed by the Antichrist, and the whole world will rejoice and their bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 1/2 days and the whole world will look upon them. There was no way to understand that prophecy before the late 1960's. How could the whole world look upon two bodies lying in the streets of Jerusalem? Today we don't even stop and think about it, you just point a TV camera, zap it up to a satellite and the whole world can watch two bodies lying in the streets of Jerusalem. There are many, many prophecies

like that, that we are understanding for the first time as a result of the development of history and like the development of the European Union and technological developments.

Or another, Davidic praise worship. The Bible says in the end times the tabernacle of David will be resurrected again. The Tabernacle of David was a tabernacle of praise, where people clapped their hands, they danced they sang, they shouted, they had expressive worship. Never in the history of Israel, never had there been expressive worship. It had always been ritual worship, the ritual worship of sacrifice, there was never any joy, the only joy you can find of worship in Old Testament Scriptures is spontaneous. When for example Pharaoh and his armies were killed, drowned in the Red Sea, Marion began to dance and sing, but there was nothing in the actual worship of Israel until David came on the scene and revolutionized all the worship. And the Bible says in the end times that kind of worship will be raised up again. It began in 1980 this is a photograph in 1987 of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. But in 1980 when Israel said Jerusalem is ours, and they officially annexed Jerusalem all of the embassies of the world moved to Tel Aviv what an insult except the International Christian Embassy and they said we are going to stand by Israel and they invited Christians from all over the world, 4,000 came they got the best practitioners of Davidic Worship in the world to come, like Randall Bane and they put on a display of Davidic worship. It was video taped and 4,000 Christians took it back home to over a 120 countries and suddenly Davidic worship just exploded all over the world, just as the Bible said it would in the end times.

So we have many manifestations that we are living in this period of the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And the question is how do you and I respond to all of this? Well one thing we do is we open ourselves up to the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Basically the Church today is polarizing between those who are open to the Spirit and are being energized for powerful service in the Lord's Kingdom. And the majority who are rejecting the Holy Spirit and compromising with the world. Jesus prophesied that this would take place in Matthew 13 beginning with verse 24, He told the parable of the wheat and tares and He prophesied there would be a dual ripening in the end times of apostasy and revival depending on whether or not people opened themselves up to the Spirit.

The second thing we are to do is test everything by the Word of God. Oh, how we need that today. The problem is that most Christians can not test anything by the Word of God because they don't know the Word of God. There is an average of 5 Bibles in every home in America. It is the least read best seller of all times. And if you don't read it, you don't know it, how can you test anything? But we are told to test everything. Paul commended people for testing him, he was an apostle of God, and he commended them for testing him with the Scriptures to see whether or not what he said was true.

A third thing we are to do, we are to stand for truth and righteousness. If we don't do it, nobody will, if we don't do it nobody will. We are to be salt, we are to be light, we are to speak out, we are to stand up. Don Wildman is one of my Christian heroes because he was a pastor of a little Methodist church in Topello, Mississippi when God tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Stand up and speak out." And he did and within 10 years he had one of the biggest ministries in the United States speaking out against the filth and immorality, the violence on television, and

movies. All of Hollywood is scared to death of him, New York the media is scared to death of him. They don't understand why he has so much power because he is just a guy from Topello, Mississippi. God has a great sense of humor. From Topello, Mississippi who has all these people scared to death because he speaks out. And you know who says is his greatest critic? He says his greatest critics are pastors. He said, "Everyday I receive at least 10 letters from pastors saying, 'Why do you waste you time on this? You are losing the battle, things are worse then when you began.'" He said, "Let me tell you something God didn't call me to win, He called me to stand. Jesus Christ is the one who is going to win." [Clapping]

Fourth we are called to commit our lives to holiness, commit our lives to holiness. And what does that mean that means to simply make Jesus Lord of everything. Is he Lord of what you eat? Lord of your music? Is he Lord of what you read? What is He Lord of, make him Lord of everything, that is what called holiness.

And finally we are called to share the Gospel with as many people as we can, as quickly as we can. So often pastors say to me I never teach on Bible prophecy because I consider it irrelevant, it is all pie-in-the-sky. I have to deal with problems here and now. I have every problem known to man in my church, I got to deal with them. I say to them, "You do not understand Bible prophecy, because if you could ever convince a person, number 1 that Jesus is coming back, really convince them not here, but in their hearts. And number 2 that is an event that can occur any moment. Do you know what will happen? They will commit their lives to holiness and they will start sharing the Gospel with as many people as they can." How much more practical could that be, I don't know.

One final thing I would encourage. We are to live with an eternal perspective. Get our eyes off this world. I tell you recently I just stopped listening to the news, because all the news does is get me mad. My wife said, "If they would take a TV camera and focus it on me while I watched the evening news it would be the greatest reality show in America." As I am screaming and yelling and you know I just want to throw something through the TV. And finally I decided I can get along without that, I can just get along without it. I want to keep my eyes on Jesus and not what is going on in this world. I want to live with an eternal perspective with our hearts tuned to the Lord's return. And every morning getting up and looking up in the sky and shouting, "Maranatha, Maranatha, come quickly Lord Jesus." That's what we ought to be doing as we wait for the coming of the Lord. Thank you and God bless you.

## **Closing**

**Dr. Reagan:** Well folks that is our program for this week. I hope it was a blessing to you. Until next week, the Lord willing, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb and Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

## **End of Program**