

Christ in Prophecy
Conference 17: “James Walker on the Challenge of Apostasy”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Christianity is under attack. It is being assaulted by Islamic Fundamentalists, Evolutionists, Humanists, Atheists, and Government. But none of these constitute the greatest threat to Christianity. The most deadly threat to Christianity is one that comes from within, and that is apostasy. The Church of the 21st Century is being decimated by an epidemic of apostasy. And by that I mean that everywhere we look today we see individual churches and complete denominations departing from the fundamentals of the faith. For an expert’s analysis of the internal threat of apostasy, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy.

During the past two weeks we have been taking a look at presentations that were made at our 2011 Bible Conference, the theme of which was “Christianity under Attack.” Two weeks ago we shared with you some excerpts from a presentation by Kerby Anderson of Probe Ministries. It was entitled “The Challenge of Islam.” Last week we focused on “The Challenge of Government,” and the presenter was Dr. Frank Wright, the president of the National Religious Broadcasters. In this program we are going to present excerpts from another of the great presentations that were made at our 2011 Bible Conference. James Walker, the president of Watchman Fellowship, made a presentation at our conference entitled “The Challenge of Apostasy.” He based his presentation upon the last sermon that Paul delivered to the leaders of the church at Ephesus a sermon recorded in Acts chapter 20. Mr. Walker called his presentation, “Famous Last Words of the Watchman.” Here now is James Walker speaking on the challenge of apostasy within Christendom today.

James Walker Presentation

James Walker: Thanks Nathan. Thank you Nathan. Thank you Dr. Reagan. Such a pleasure to be here. Now I know with a name like Watchman Fellowship you’ve got to be good. Now I am all over the country and some international and it’s confusing in the entire English speaking world because people hear Watchman Fellowship, I am President of Watchman Fellowship but sometimes they hear watchman but they think watchtower. Watchtower, why do we have the Jehovah’s Witnesses at our gathering, at our conference? At our church? Well I want you to rest assured, rest easy we are not the Watchtower. We are Watchman Fellowship. We take our name from Ezekiel 33 God places a watchman on the wall. We are the good guys. And what we do at Watchman Fellowship as Nathan shared with you is in the area of apologetics and the area of cults, the occult and new religious movements, etc.

I am the President of Watchman Fellowship. I'm actually not the Founder of the organization. My background I was a fourth generation Mormon and baptism for the dead in the Salt Lake City temple. And I could tell you that whole story sometime. But as I was leaving out of Mormonism and coming to Christ, as I was making that transition from Mormonism to Christianity. Even when I was saved and received Christ I was still confused on things. My whole life had been based on Mormonism and the prophet Joseph Smith. I remember as a new Christian thinking about a particular verse that was deeply troubling me. I thought now wait a minute was that verse in the Bible or the Book of Mormon- where I heard that verse. And it was so confusing.

I went to the Christian bookstore in Columbus, Georgia where my wife and I were living at the time. And I believed that I probably bought every book they had on the subject of Mormonism. So I take my books and go to check out at the register and the woman asked me, "Sir why are you getting all these books on Mormonism?" I was embarrassed by it but I said, "Well actually I used to be a Mormon and I am still struggling with some of these things. She said, "Sir, sir you'd be so happy to know there is a brand new ministry that just started here in Columbus Georgia and it is called Watchman Fellowship. And it's just for people just like you." I said, "That's okay I just want my books." And she said, "No." I said, "What?" She said, "No." And she stopped and got a business card out from the President the Founder of Watchman Fellowship David Henke and she dialed the phone number and got the Founder on the phone and handed me the phone. "He needs to talk to you." "Yes." "We have a support group. We have a Bible Study. Why don't you come and check it out."

Let me tell you I did and I am so thankful the Lord opened that door for me. And what would have taken maybe years for me to work through. Watchman Fellowship they understood the terminology, the language. They had the resources, the evidence; the things that I needed to answer my questions. And it was so helpful. Of course I never had any idea that one day I would be called into ministry. And that one day I would go to work for Watchman Fellowship. And that later on I would become the President of Watchman Fellowship. But it kind of reminds me of that old TV commercial you may remember the TV commercial about the Hair Club for Men. Where the guy says, "I'm not only the President, I'm also a client." So I am President of Watchman but I am also a client. I remember what it was like when I needed help and Watchman Fellowship was there for me.

Now one of the things we do at Watchman is to provide tools and resources you need to be able to build a bridge to reach out to people of other faiths. And one of the resources I wanted to mention to you is our free bi-monthly profile. Every other month our ministry produces a four page document called the profile. And every other month we deal with a different issue. We've been doing this now for 17 years; and so every other month. Now the one that is about to come out is already written is on the controversial minister who wrote the book, *Love Wins*, his name is Rob Bell and if you don't know about that you need to. But every other month it is something new and we want to give you an opportunity to get a free subscription. If you would like that free subscription if you'll look at the outline I think on the chair that you are sitting on we placed an outline for you with my message. And on the back of that there is a form that says free profile subscription and there is a place to print your name and address. If you'll just drop that off at our table afterwards I'd love to make that available to you.

Well the title of my message today is "Famous Last Words of the Watchmen." Now I am hoping when I say famous last words of the watchmen I am hoping these are not my last words to Lamb and Lion Bible Prophecy Conference. I hope I get to come back and have some other words with you later. It's been a long time since I've done something for Dr. Reagan I think it

was in the 1980's was the last time. But every two decades he feels like it's important to bring me back. And I am hoping I'm still alive and able to do that in a couple of decades from now. And I hope it's not my last words.

It's the last words of the Apostle Paul, not his actual last words. But let me tell you why I am interested in this; I have a fascination maybe it's a morbid curiosity about people's last words. It's always interested me. Have you ever thought about that? If you knew you only had a few minutes to share some last words. Have you ever thought what would you want, if you had one minute what would you want to say for your last words? I've always been interested in that come to find out there are whole books on the subject of last words. A couple of years ago I got this as a Christmas present; it's a book compiled by Ray Robinson it's on people's deathbed, last words what they said. It's called *Famous Last Words, Fond Farewells, Death Bed Diatribes, and Exclamations Upon Expiration*. It's a fascinating book and I just want to share a couple with you, famous last words from the book. One of them that really stuck in my mind, some of them are very tragic. Some of the last words are tragic. Some are insightful. And some of them are downright humorous.

But one of them that stuck in my mind was Karl Marx. Karl Marx of course the founder of Marxism; the father of communism. How many millions of people have been under bondage and persecution and even killed because of the doctrines of Karl Marx? Famous Atheist, he died in 1883. And on his deathbed his housekeeper knew he was in poor health and tried to elicit some kind of statement for all of posterity, something that would go down in history. So she asked him, "Mr. Marx can you give me your last words?" And he angrily said this, "Go on. Get out. Last words are for fools who haven't said enough." And ironically immediately he died. Last words are for fools. And ironically gave us his last words, which he said were for fools. It reminds me what the Bible says, "The fool says in his heart there is no God."

Another one that sticks in my mind was from the Civil War this was from General John Sedgwick who is called by his troops Uncle John. He was the commander of the Union forces in the famous battle of Spotsylvania. And right before the battle broke out in 1864 in the midst of the Civil War he noticed his troops were lacking the courage they needed and were skittish, and the Confederate Army was very close. So he gets in front of his troops and he boldly says, "Be of good courage, be strong, be faithful." He said, "Don't worry boys they couldn't hit an elephant at this dis....." In the middle of the words a musket ball from a Confederate sharpshooter found its mark and he gave us his last words.

A more recent example this is from Spike Mulligan. Spike Mulligan was an Irish comedian, playwright, writer, musician. He died in 2002. His famous last words, "I told you I was ill." I guess he got the last words in on that. He gave us his famous last words.

These famous last words I want to share with you are actually the words of the Apostle Paul. And these are not Paul's actual last words. Paul died church history tells us as a martyr in Rome we don't have his last recorded words. But we do have Paul's famous last words to the leaders of the church in Ephesus. And so if you will turn in your Bible to Acts 20 these are Paul's famous last words. So let's pick up Acts 20 we will begin in verse 17 and Luke who wrote the book of Acts records verse 17. "From Miletus he sent," this is Paul, "sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church," the leadership of the Church. Now what had happened was in chapter 19 Paul had spent three years training, mentoring, equipping, disciplining the church, the young church there at Ephesus. Then he continued on with his missionary journey. Now he is on his way back to Jerusalem. But on his way back he gets close enough to Ephesus. He is in the

nearby town of Miletus it is close enough he can send a messenger to get the elders down, to get the leaders down for one last message for some famous last words.

Well look at verse 26, here is what he says verse 26, "Wherefore I take to you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." So Paul wants to introduce his last words by letting everyone know he is pure of the blood of all men. Now that is kind of odd. Of all the things that Paul could share he wants them to know he is pure, he is innocent, he's pure of the blood of all people. What in the world would he mean by that? Does he mean he never hurt anybody? Or he never drew blood? Or he never physically harmed anyone is that his last words he wants them to know?

Well you know that is not the case because we know Paul's story earlier in the book of Acts. We know before his name was Paul his name was Saul. And he wasn't innocent of everyone's blood in that regard because this same Paul was once a co-conspirator in the death, the stoning death of the first recorded Christian martyr Stephen. He was guilty of that. Paul knew that so he wasn't meaning he was innocent of blood in that regard. So what is he talking about? He says, "For I've not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Almost without hesitation the commentators agree that Paul, this is in your outline, innocent of the blood if you are taking notes in your outline. He's making a reference, fill in the blanks, he is making a reference to Ezekiel 33; innocent of the blood is a reference to Ezekiel pure of the blood, a reference to Ezekiel 33 where God places a watchman on the wall. And Ezekiel records that the duty of the watchman was to scan the horizon for any kind of danger, any kind of attack that was going to impact that community, that city. And the watchman was to pray for the city, but he is to pray with one eye open because he is also looking. The idea is to watch and if the watchman sees danger coming, does anyone know what's the first responsibility? It's not to fight the battle. What's the first responsibility of the watchman? To blow the horn, sound the trumpet, to blow the shofar.

Now see the shofar has many purposes in the Bible. The shofar the Second Coming of Christ is going to be announced with the sound of a trumpet that's the shofar. Now some of you thought the shofar simple means the next session is about to begin. I guess that's a purpose too. But the other purpose we want to talk about is that the shofar is used by the watchman. Now what Ezekiel 33 says if the watchman sees danger coming. Now this is inexplicable. But for some reason the watchman sees the danger. There's the shofar, there's the danger he doesn't blow the trumpet. He doesn't pick up the shofar. He doesn't sound the alarm. The city is overrun. The Bible says the blood of those people destroyed, the Lord says, "I will require at the watchman's hands." The watchman's duty was to blow the shofar. The watchman failed. That is what Paul means. I am innocent I am pure of the blood of all men. Paul was referring to himself as a good watchman. Here's what Paul meant; anytime God gave him an opportunity to share the whole counsel of God, the whole Gospel. Now anytime God opened the door, this would be before kings, Agrippa, before Festus. He was before the philosophers at the Areopagus at Mars Hill, whether he was in the chain between two roman guards. If he was at the Agora, if he was at the market place, wherever if God gave him an opportunity what did he share? Repentance towards Gods, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; he shared that whole Gospel. So therefore he could say to the people you know what I am like I am innocent, I am pure of the blood of all men.

Would it be that we could also be pure? So I want to ask you in your outline who is the watchman? Who is that watchman? You can make the case that Paul is the watchman because he is obviously referring to himself to Ezekiel 33 or you could try to argue that Ezekiel was the watchman because that is the Bible reference we are looking at. Or you could try to put the blame on me, James you are the President of Watchman Fellowship so that makes you the

watchman. But really God calls every one of us who claim the name of Christ to be that kind of watchman. These are Paul's last words, "You've got to be a watchman." So if you are filling in the blank put your own name in there. Put "I am," write your own name in there. Who is the watchman? I am. And then Paul concludes his remarks with insights with principles of how to be effective, good watchmen.

And so what he addresses first of all (1) in your outline he addresses the question: Whom should you watch? If you are going to be a watchman you've got to answer the question: Who are you supposed to be watching? And so he addresses that in verse 28 when he says, "Take heed," now take heed means what? Watch, you've got to watch if you're going to be a watchman okay. Take heed, watch, "therefore," look at this, "unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers. To feed the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood." So what we see in the Scriptures to be effective good watchmen, we've got to really be watching two things. We've got to "A" be watching, it says first of all yourselves. Now let me tell you what it is like. You know you can't save somebody who is drowning if you don't know how to swim. It is not recommended. If somebody is drowning in 10 feet of water, you don't know how to swim, but you are going to save them? Well we'll end up with two people drowned. You've got to first of all guard yourself from the culture we are living in. It was in Paul's day, but in our day as well. We are living in a culture where there are all kinds of doctrinal error. I am going to deal with that in a little bit. It is doctrinal error even in the church. So we've got to make a covenant, a commitment that we are going to first of all guard our own heart; doctrinally, spiritually, morally. Don't you know that Satan wants you to be disqualified as an opportunity to be a watchman? So all these areas you've got to first of all guard yourself. But notice this he also says, "Guard your flock." God has given each watchman a flock you have to be shepherd over.

Now who is your flock, that's what I want to ask you today. Who is your flock? And I want you to write some names down there in your outline. Who is your flock? Now if you are a pastor, I know there many pastors here obviously God has given you a flock that is pretty obvious. But what about the rest of us? I believe we all have a flock. Students sometimes know friends at school that they have a relationship with a Christian that no other Christian, I would not have that relationship. Their parents, no pastor would. Maybe that student is to be a watchman that is their flock. Parents do we have a flock? Obviously our children, our grandchildren. And I know that many of you have a commitment to take the information that you are learning here and you are already strategizing how you are going to get this information into the hands of your children and of your grandchildren. That is part of being a watchman. That's what it's all about. So you have to guard yourself and also your flock.

And then Paul addresses the question: What should you watch? Okay we should watch our self and our flock but what should you be watching for? Let's pick up in verse 29 the Apostle Paul answers that question. He says, "For I know this, that after my departing." In other words before Paul gets out the door good, he is on his way to Jerusalem, he already knows what is going to happen. He said after my departing shall look at this, "grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing," What? "the flock." Your flock is in danger. There are going to be some hungry wolves coming. If you are going to be a watchman you have to be watching for these wolves, hungry wolves coming in. So you've got to first of all watch out for these dangers from without, this is "A" in your outline. What should you watch? You need to be watching the Scriptures tell us for dangers from without. Now this is not part of your flock these are wolves that are going to come in from the outside of the flock. Now we know some biblical principles though. This is reminiscent of Christ's own words when He said, "Watch out for false prophets which come to you," How? "in sheep's clothing. They're actually hungry wolves." Watch out for these. They are

wolves, but they are going to look like what? Sheep. One of the principles of false teachers is no one is ever going to come up to you and say, "I'm a false prophet do you want to join our group?" It doesn't work that way, you know? No one is going to say, "Excuse me, I am demon possessed. Can I teach you something?" Not it is going to look Christian. But these are very real dangers from without that we have to be watching for. Our ministry Watchman this is what we are helping people do giving them resources for that. We have information, all kinds of different things that we need to be watching for, external dangers, dangers from without.

Dr. Reagan: You are watching James Walker speaking on the challenge of apostasy to Christianity. Mr. Walker is the president of Watchman Fellowship, a ministry that is devoted to identifying and monitoring cultic and occultic groups and also false religions. Mr. Walker proceeded to discuss the religions of Wicca and Islam. His third example of a threat to Christianity from the outside was from his own experience as a Mormon.

James Walker Presentation Continues

James Walker: Mormonism started with just six charter members in the year 1830. They now have over 13 million members worldwide making it one of the fastest growing religions in the history of the world. They come across as being Christian, wholesome. And they are some great people let me say many of my family are still Mormons and they are good people. I love the Mormon people, but it is not Christian. Who would have ever thought we would have 2 Mormon presidential candidates for the upcoming election? So Mormonism is very powerful in the United States and around the world. And the doctrines of Mormonism are completely non-Christian in nature. When I was a Mormon I was taught that God before he was God he was once a man on another planet. I was taught that God is married. In Mormonism you have heavenly father, and his wife heavenly mother. As a Mormon I was taught that I could become a god myself one day if I went through the secret temple ceremonies, was obedient to laws and ordinances of the gospel. So it's certainly not compatible with Christianity. But the Mormons have claimed that they are baptizing into the Mormon Church 282 Southern Baptist every seven days. That is just the Southern Baptist, that doesn't count other groups as well.

Dr. Reagan: At this point in his presentation, Mr. Walker shifted to a discussion of modern day apostasies within the Church. And, like him, I must admit that I have been shocked and appalled by both the degree of apostasy and the speed at which it has been accelerating. For example, who would have believed 20 years ago that today churches would be ordaining homosexuals and performing same-sex marriages? Or that major Christian leaders even so-called Evangelicals would be denying the reality of Hell and arguing that Christianity is just one of many roads to Heaven?

The brutal fact is that we have Christian leaders today who are denying all the fundamentals of the faith, including the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection and the Second Coming. The only positive thing we can derive from this gross apostasy is the fact that it is a fulfillment of end time Bible prophecy. For the Bible specifically prophesies that the end times will be characterized by a great falling away from the faith due to "doctrines of demons," and due to people desiring to hear messages that tickle their ears rather than challenge their souls. Mr. Walker concluded his presentation with these words.

James Walker's Presentation Continues

James Walker: Paul wraps up and let's do the same with (3) in your outline: How should you watch? One verse he says, "Therefore and watch and remember that by the space of three years I cease not to warn everyone night and day," how "with tears." Two principles we see from verse 31, how should you watch continuously. Paul said, "I remember that I warned you night and day." Now that would be am and pm the entire three years, night and day. Now 365 days a year, that is over 1,000 days. In the morning in the evening it's got to be continuous. We can't be watchmen by coming to a conference and then be done with it until next year. This has to be a commitment that in the am and the pm morning and evening we are going to be guarding our flock. We are going to be watching our own selves, and then the flock that God has given us, continuously but also compassionately.

Paul says he did this night and day. How? With tears. It's with tears flowing down Paul's cheeks. This was not a bash or a rant, or an attack. This broke Paul's heart. When he talked about Hymenaeus and Alexander it's, "Hyme." "Alex." These are his friends. These are people he has dealt with. This broke his heart. This is the same Paul who once said if he himself his salvation could be eliminated if he could be accursed for the Jews that the Jewish people, his family, his heritage could be saved he would give his salvation up. That's the kind of compassion. That's the kind of watchman that Paul was. So he could say his famous last words, "I'm pure. Look at this see my hands I am pure of the blood of all men." Now I just want it to be if we came back a year from now and we gather together in this same place that you could say, and I could say to you, you could say to me, "You know as best I could tell when the Lord gave me an opportunity whether it was at the Starbucks, whether it was at the workplace with a family member with somebody when God opened the door I shared that Gospel of grace. And I was able to be that watchman and watch over my flock the best God gave me the opportunity. So we could come back a year from now and say with Paul that we are pure of the blood of all men. Thank you very much and God bless you. [clapping]

Dr. Reagan: I want to invite you to join us again next week when we will broadcast another of the presentations made at our 2011 Bible Conference. Our featured speaker will be Dr. John Morris, the president of the Institute for Creation Research. His topic will be "The Challenge of Evolution." If you would like to get a video copy of the entire presentation you have been watching by James Walker about apostasy in the Church today, you can do so by requesting this album: "Christianity under Attack." The album contains three DVDs that in turn contain all six of the presentations that were made at our 2011 Bible Conference. Each presentation runs approximately 50 minutes in length, so this album contains 300 minutes of fully illustrated presentations by six different speakers on the following topics: "The Challenge of Islam," "The Challenge of Government," "The Challenge of Apostasy," "The Challenge of Evolution," "The Challenge of Humanism," and "The Promise of Victory." You can get the album for a gift of \$25 or more plus the cost of shipping. Just call the number you see on the screen and ask for the album by name: *Christianity under Attack*. Call Monday thru Friday from 8 am to 5pm Central time. You can also request the album through our website at www.lambliion.com.

I'd like to take this opportunity to invite each of you to attend our 2012 Bible Conference. It's scheduled to be held in the Dallas, Texas area during the last weekend in June: June 29 & 30. The theme will be "Israel in the End Times." Our featured speakers will include Jeff Seif, Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Mark Hitchcock, Gary Frazier, and White House Correspondent Bill Koenig. Our featured musician for the conference will be Ted Pearce, who is considered to be one of the foremost Messianic song writers, performers, and worship leaders. The conference is free of

charge, but registration is required. You can register at our website or by calling the number you see on the screen. Seating is limited, so if you want to attend, please call and register as soon as possible. Again, the theme of the conference will be "Israel in the End Times." I hope you will be able to join us. Well folks that's our program for this week. I hope it has been 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