



# RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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*Paul and Gretel Haglin*

EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

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## Letters of Faith

April 2014

**“But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness,  
your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.”**

2 Corinthians 11:3 NASB

Dearly Beloved,

The deceiver is in high gear in the world today — and in the Church as well.

The apostle Paul's writings were filled with bold and fearless warnings of the deceiver at work within the newborn Body of Christ and with instructions and examples of what to do about it. He warned the Galatians (3:1) that they had been **“bewitched”** by the Judaizers who put their faith in the flesh instead of the Holy Spirit: **“So then, does He who provides you with the [Holy] Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?”** (Gal. 3:5) And he certainly didn't pull any punches when he addressed the almost unbelievable immorality in the Corinthian church: **“It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife.”** (1 Cor. 5:1) Paul follows this shocking revelation with precise instructions of the "faith and tough love" approach to deal with this situation.

When the Holy Spirit actually lifted the lead verse off the pages of my new Bible and smacked me in the heart with it almost 40 years ago, I was shocked to see the apostle Paul say that he feared something — that there was anything that could frighten him.

He didn't fear being stoned in Lystra — after he was resurrected, he walked right back into town! (see Acts 14:8-22)

He surely was not afraid to dress down the popular false prophet/magician in front of the Roman ruler in Paphos: **“But Saul, who was also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze on him, and said, ‘You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord? Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time.’ And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand.”** (Acts 13:9-11) As a result of Paul's fearless confrontation of this deceiver, the proconsul sought the Lordship of Jesus! (vs. 12)

But Paul was not afraid to declare that he did fear something: that he was afraid — afraid of deception working into the heart of young believers! Frankly, Beloved, if the mighty Paul was afraid of this, this Paul had better be also—and I am—and so should all of us. That's why the lead verse is still so strong in my heart after all these years.

Mark tells us that Jesus declared there will be deceivers in the last day's church who will attempt to mislead (deceive) even the “elect” (God's chosen ones) away from the truth: **“...for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect.”** (Mark 13:22) How very easy we all find it to let displays of supernatural power lead our minds and hearts away from **“...the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.”**

Most of us have been carefully warned against the deceivers who the apostles declared would come to destroy our theology. Most of us focus our attention on abhorrent theology, false teachings, and lying signs and wonders whenever we think of deception.

However, we want to declare to you right now that the enemy of our souls has launched a deadly attack on the Body of Christ which we call the “*deception of the false believer.*”

Yes, Beloved, the deception of the false believer — meaning: men and women active in the church who are *pretending to be believers* in the Lordship of Jesus and posing as Holy Spirit-filled saints, but who are actually neither! By saying pretending, we are including those who really think they are believers, but who have never actually given their lives up to the Lordship of Jesus—those who intellectually profess Jesus as Lord, but have never experientially received Him and yielded to Him as King of their lives. Of course we also include those who are actually deceived by demonic spirits into thinking the spirit realm they are operating in is the Holy Spirit realm.

We are not just talking about a brother or a sister with wrong or fuzzy theology! We are talking about heathen impostors who are at least tools of the enemy, and are at worst servants of Satan like the magician at Paphos.

How dare we even think of challenging another's salvation? Jesus told us how when He said: **“For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit.”** (Luke 6:43-44a)

For example, the early and very controversial period of ministry of Todd Bentley had to be discerned by the “fruit test” if we were to be protected from making an unrighteous judgment or from being misled by lying signs and wonders, as Paul warned us in his second letter to the church in Thessalonica (2 Thess.2:8-10): **“...that lawless one will be revealed...that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.”**

This is painfully applicable today, Beloved, because the deception of the cessationist doctrine is again overwhelming a portion of the Body of Christ, just as the Holy Spirit is once again pouring out fresh, new anointings for signs and wonders everywhere He is invited, acknowledged, and “turned loose.”

Beloved, the repeated failure of the Church to confront false believers when the Holy Spirit gives us discernment of their falseness has resulted in the deep wounding of thousands of saints. We must stop being put off by scriptural cliché's like “Don't touch God's anointed!” We are responsible for knowing what God, or god (rather, demon spirit), is doing the anointing, and for responding scripturally when we discern the anointing is from a “false-god” (or Satan's minion) through a false believer.

Now please don't fall into the trap of becoming a “watchdog for God” or becoming a constant accuser of the brethren! We are not saying that! But building on the truth about relying on the presence of God's Holy Spirit as we walk with Jesus, we can, and we must, be alert to *spot and disclose* false believers before they can perpetrate their deception on any part of the Body of Christ.

If you doubt this admonition, I suggest you talk with someone who has experienced the shock of finally recognizing the “deception of a false believer.” Someone perhaps like Joyce Meyer, or any member of her team, or one of the top charismatic leaders she fellowshipped with who failed to discern the falseness of her head of security and failed to warn Joyce about him!

Beloved, this is actually a life and death warning — physical as well as spiritual life and death!

It is a warning that is as old as the Scriptures, yet as new as yesterday's headline news: **“These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.”** (Jude 12-13)

Beloved, we must abide in God as He abides in us, and put our trust in His presence! Then we will be hard to deceive and we will be bold and fearless when we discern deceivers, for Jesus declared: **“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless**

**you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.”** (John 15:4-5)

And the fruit we will bear will be Holy fruit of the Holy Spirit and it will release grace and peace: **“...having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”** (Phil. 1:11)

Hugs,



**Ministry Report:**

Higher Ground International Church’s pastor, Joe James, is presenting an anointed series of teaching and ministry sessions on Sunday mornings. I strongly recommend all St. Louis area saints come to hear him (10:30 at the Maryland Heights YMCA).

If you are committed elsewhere, you can download the audio at <http://www.highergroundstl.org>. For some it will be eye-opening, and for others it will be a renewing refreshment. For all, it will reignite your focus on the Person of the Holy Spirit and His desire to move among us in the community *and* in your church sanctuary!