

#7 "Three Great Departures"

1 In His sermon "The Spoken Word is the Original Seed" from paragraph number 7, brother Branham speaks of God holding things back until the departure of the church. Therefore I would like to speak on this subject but first let's hear what he had to say to the church in this sermon.

2 7 Our heavenly Father, You said in Your Word: "If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto Me." And, that is our purpose in life, is to lift up before a dying generation of people, that Jesus Christ is still the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. And I'm so happy to know that I live where there's people who believe that, and along with the thousands that has accepted Him as their Saviour. And knowing that after this life is finished, there will be a life on the other side that'll be so glorious that this toils and few hours that we're passing through these shades and shadows of life here in the testing ground, that we are merely entering into the orbit now, waiting for the countdown, for soon there will come a time that when God's time is fulfilled. The great arm, that's held back the time so long, will finally let go, and His church will move off from this earth in space out yonder into a land where there'll be no sickness, sorrow, old age, death. That's why we are gathered today, Lord, is to express our feeling about these things.

3 This morning I would like to speak on the subject of "Three Great Departures".

4 Number 1) The Departure from The Faith.

5 Number 2) The Departure of the Church from this earth.

6 And Number 3) The Departure of God's Parousia Presence from the Earth.

7 Now, if you know your scripture you will notice that brother Branham is making reference in this 7th paragraph to 2 Thessalonians 2 where he is speaking of God holding back until the departure of the church. Let's read it for ourselves for our text this morning.

8 2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the Parousia of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

9 Notice here that the apostle Paul is speaking of the time of the Great Parousia of Jesus Christ and notice also that at that time there is to be a gathering together of the church. And notice further that this gathering is said to be unto Him. Now, Who is He? John 1:1, In the beginning was the What? The Word, and the Word was and still is God Himself.

10 So we see that the One who will be in our midst at this time is God Himself who is the Word. And Paul warns us about this time when he says,

11 2. That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

12 Now, the Wuest translation translates it this way, Now, I am requesting you, brethren, with regard to the coming and personal presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, even our being assembled together to Him, not soon to

become unsettled, the source of this unsettled state being your minds, neither be thrown into confusion,...

13 Then Paul says, ³Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

14 So we see the day of the Lord will be earmarked by a great falling away of the church. That's Number One in our study this morning of the "Three Great Departures". First and foremost before the other Two Departures can take place, there must be this Departure from "The Faith". Then if there is to be a departure from The Faith, then there has to be people ordained to come into The Faith first in order to leave it.

15 Now, let's read again from verses 5-7 to see what the Wuest Translation says, "Do you not remember that while I was still with you I kept on telling you these things? And now you know with a positive assurance that which namely, the departure of the church, the saints being assembled together to the Lord, is preventing his being disclosed as to his true identity, in his strategic, appointed time, for the mystery of the aforementioned lawlessness is now operating . Only He (the Holy Spirit) who is holding (the lawlessness down), will do so until He goes out from the midst (of humanity.)"

16 So you see God is the One that is holding back the wrath to come, and he is doing so for the Elect's sake. Then when God takes out His elect, the all hell break's loose, Literally. That is when the antichrist will come into His own Parousia (personal presence).

17 Now, You shouldn't think it is a strange thing that Christ has a Parousia and Satan has a Parousia, because after all satan was on the scene when Christ was here to even try to tempt him while he fasted 40 days.

18 Paul speaks of this in 1 Timothy as well in chapter 4.

19 Hebrews 6:4-6 ⁴For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, ⁵And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, ⁶If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

20 Even Jesus in His parables spoke of a falling away from the Word as we see in...

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22 Luke 8:9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? ¹⁰And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. ¹¹Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. ¹²Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. ¹³They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

23 So you see if they have no roots then they have no source in Christ, so it is not meant for them to have it. Jesus said that none of those that the Father gave Him would be lost, so these ones that fall away, they are those who come among us and although it is said that they hear and believe, yet because they were not from Him, nor are they His, then it is only natural that they would fall away because after all, it is not meant for them anyways.

24 That is what John said about those that fall away in 1 John 2:19

25 1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

26 So you see, we should not be sad when they fall away because it is manifesting time, and all that are not meant to be following this Pillar of Fire will be shaken off from following it. As John said, they must go out from us because they are not of us. For if they are of us then they no doubt would remain with us.

27 In 1 Timothy 4:1 we read, Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from The Faith, (and what will cause them to depart from The Faith?) giving heed to seducing spirits, (not genuine spirits, but imposters right in the Message,) and doctrines of devils; (not correct doctrine, but doctrine of devils) 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; (what do you mean speaking lies in hypocrisy? Well, they are hypocrites, and they know the truth but will not speak it, nor will they affirm that it is true although they know that it is. And why would they do this? Paul says,) having their conscience seared with a hot iron; And when the conscience is seared that means it has turned hard, and since they have knowingly turned away from The Truth, there is no more repentance or change of the mind.

28 And again in 2 Timothy 4:1 Paul says, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

29 And we even hear Jesus speaking of this falling away as though it is a divorcement in Matthew 7:16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. 28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

30 Jesus is speaking here of the great divorcement of the church, and Doctor Hoyer who was perhaps the Greatest Greek Scholar in the United States said the correct translation of this is, "I used to know you as my wife but I do not know you as my wife any longer."

31 Now, in getting back to our text from 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, we will pick up at verse where Paul is speaking of the incarnation of satan in the Anti Christ. 4 Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (Now, we of course know that this is to be fulfilled in the Pope who calls Himself the Vicar of Christ. Now, Vicar means in the stead of, and anything that places itself in the place of Christ is antichrist.)

32 Then the Apostle Paul speaks to the people and basically tells them that the things he is speaking of should not be new to them, because after all, He's been telling them these things that are to come for quite some time during his ministry. ⁵Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

33 And then He tells us that God is holding back all these things, until He leaves the midst of humanity with His Elect. ⁶And now ye know what with holds that he might be revealed in his time. ⁷For the mystery of iniquity doth already work (Paul is assaying, look this spirit of antichrist that exalts itself above Christ is already at work in the church, so it should not be a new thing to you that I am telling you, but this is what I want you to know for certain, that this spirit that is now manifesting itself in the church will one day incarnate itself in a man that will rule as God over the masses of humanity. Then he says, that God is now allowing this spirit to manifest itself in a small way in the church, but when God Himself leaves the church and takes the elect up and out of the midst of humanity, then that which God has been holding back will suddenly manifest itself in a way that there will be nothing hidden but all shall be unveiled at that time. That is what these words,) "only he who now lets will let, until he be taken out of the way." ⁸And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his Parousia:

34 Now, this total unveiling of the antichrist comes by the total unveiling of the Christ. And thus the anti-Christ's spirit's hold upon the Elect is nullified by the unveiling of Christ.

35 ² Thessalonians 2:9 Even him, whose parousia is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, ¹⁰And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

36 Now, notice here that Paul speaks of a deceivableness of un-right-wise-ness in them that are perishing. Now, the Wuest Translation words this exceptionally brilliant as it says, the wicked deception is geared to the Gullibility of those who are perishing, and then he tells us that this gullibility is caused by the fact that they did not accept the love for the Truth that they might be saved. And because of this God will send them a deluding influence that will result in their believing the lie, in order that they all might be judged who did not believe the Truth but had pleasure in un-right-wise-ness. And what lie is The lie? The same lie told to Eve. "Thou shalt not surely die!" And notice that they did not delight in The Truth, but took pleasure in a wrong understanding.

37 Why are we not a denomination? ^{58-0927 P:126} She was a mother of harlots. What made her a whore? Her doctrine. What made them a harlot? Her doctrine. And that's the reason we don't tolerate with their denominations and their dogmas. We stay clean with this Bible. I don't know how well you live it, but you're taught It, anyhow. That's right. That's up to you. I can't make you live it. I can only tell you what's the Truth. That's why we're not a denomination. I wouldn't want to defile ourselves to get into such a stuff as that, have to knuckle down to some kind of a dogma. I'd rather take the way with the Lord's despised few. I'd rather stay clean and pure before the Word and God, and stand there, and say there's no man's blood upon my garment. That's why we stay at the Branham Tabernacle. That's why we're not Assemblies. That's why we're not Oneness. That's why we're not Jesus Only. That's why we're not Methodist. That's why we're not Baptist. It's just a little tabernacle here. We don't have no denomination at all. We're free in Christ. That's why we stay the way we do. And God has blessed us and God helping us.

38 Now, look, he said that the wrong doctrine is what made the Catholic church a Whore church and that is what made the daughter churches harlots, it's their doctrine, and then he identifies both Trinity and Oneness as Whore doctrines. It couldn't get any plainer than that.

39 Choosing of a bride ^{65-0429E P:66} And the Bible said that's the condition that they'd get into. How could a true prophet ever miss seeing it? I don't know. Drifting right into all of our churches everywhere. Just look at it.

Just in a modern trend. The old whore and daughters of Revelations 17 giving to the poor, blind, miserable people her doctrine of theology contrary to the Word of God. And they found in her the souls of slaves and men and women of everywhere. Instead of attracting the people... Christ vindicates His Word which attracts the people. He don't attract the people of churches that are attracted by big denominations, and big doings, and great big carrying-on, and fancy things, but the Word of God attracts the Bride of Christ.

40 Five identifications 60-0911E P:28 Therefore, the waters that the woman was setting upon, up over, she had control of the nations, peoples, multitudes, and tongues. She controlled it all: a woman, a ill-famed woman. Now, if a woman is ill-famed, if we know a woman was called that in the natural, to a woman, we would know that she was untrue to her husband. That's what she'd be called. Then she would be pretending to live true to a man, and living untrue to him. Is that right? Well, then this is the church that says that Christ is her Husband, and her doctrine is contrary to His Teaching. She's a whore.

41 2 Thessalonians 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe The lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

42 So we see here that God says, for this cause He will send them a Strong delusion. Not just a little one, but a strong delusion.

43 13 But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: So notice the way in which we are saved. It is through sanctification of the spirit which comes by believing the Truth, for we are washed in the water of the Word. 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. And notice also that we are called to the obtaining of the glory which is the Doxa of God. It is his opinion, assessment and judgment that we are called unto. 15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. 16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, 17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

44 Now, the Second Great Departure is not the church but is the Bride into Glory. But before she can ascend up into Glory she must become Glorified, according to 2 Thessalonians 1:10. She must be filled with God's Glory. And If God is the Word, which He is, then this Glory that we are speaking of must also be God's Word. For it is the Greek Word Doxa which is the opinion, assessment, and judgment which is God's that she must become glorified in.

45 2 Thessalonians 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. 11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: 12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

46 Next week we will look further into this Second Great Departure, so let's just bow our heads and our hearts in a word of prayer.