

“DECEPTION”

BY BRIAN WOODHEAD

Pastor, “Power, Prestige, and Wealth are all Yours, if you just Tell Them What They Want to Hear”



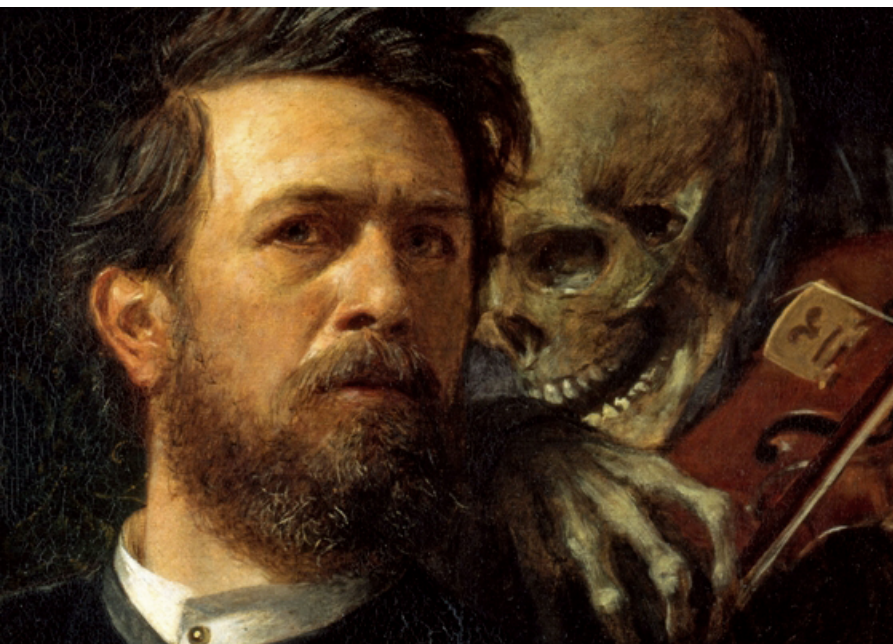
“Self-portrait with Fiddling Death,”
by Arnold Böcklin 1872

This is perhaps the most insidious of all the heretical deceptions to biblical Christianity. It is characterized by catering to the desires of the people. Instead of being inculcated with God’s Word and having our personal world view and behavior be patterned after God’s Word, The New Evangelicalism, Seeker Sensitive, Emergent Church gives the people what they want.

One New Testament passage clearly predicts this reversal of worship of God to worshipping man.

Romans 1:25:

“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”



The idea with this new wave of apostasy is meant to soft-sell the Bible and salvation. It is not attempting to save anybody from the fires of Hell but from an aimless and meaningless life here on earth. Our experiences and quality of life here are more important than the total service to God and the blessed assurance that He will soon come to lift us out of this sinful decaying world.

Salvation is given lip service and evangelism with real confrontation is thought to be too divisive. This apostasy does not want to upset anybody.

There is never any mention of Hell and the outcome of an unsaved life. They may say that they believe strongly, but their actions differ sharply from what they say.

Usually their Bible teaching is characterized by an over emphasis on application. This of course is the middle of the road approach. They avoid doctrine as too divisive.

Paul warned us that the end times would be characterized as a departure from sound doctrine and a departure from the truth.

II Timothy 4:3-4:

“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; And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

With the divisiveness they believe that they will lose members of their congregation and therefore funds. Or they are concerned with money and man-made approaches to self-help. A total dependence on God for their resources is abandoned for “sound business” practices or “fundamental marketing techniques.”

Total reliance on God by elders through prayer and patience is exchanged for parliamentary procedure and schemes for man made self-advancement and career goals. The pastor is considered as a CEO, not the teacher of God’s Word. Mission statements and strategic plans are formulated to accommodate personal plans. The Bible is subordinated to man’s desires.

The thought of prophecy is anathema to the New Evangelical for they say it causes division. This division of course is between those non-literal Bible expositors and the literal Biblical expositors. Some have characterized the New Evangelical as being seduced by the world spirit of this present age.

You can see it in the leaders who are popularized. Usually they have a high degree of prominence in the government or sports and their testimonies are sought after for paid speaking engagements and book endorsements.

You will never see a Sunday school teacher or poor inner city pastor held up by them as pillars of the faith. Christ went to the lowest members of society to bring the truth to the world. He did not go to the popular and prominent.

This is a spirit of disobedience and a mood of compromise. It is a rejection of many of the negative aspects of New Testament Christianity. It is an attitude of positivism. They would rather be diplomats not fighters, positive rather than militant, infiltrators rather than separatists. They would not be restricted by a separationist mentality. The New Evangelical would rather pursue dialog, intellectualism, and appeasement than Biblical Militiantism. Psychology is fast becoming their guide.

The use of psychology is rapidly becoming the norm in Christian Schools and churches.

Our culture has become deeply and extensively psychological. The weakness and carnality of the church in recent decades has allowed this psychological mind-set of the world to flow into the church. This process has brought about a redefining of many foundational matters of the Christian faith. We used to correctly understand that man's problem was sin and God's remedy was His saving and transforming grace (Romans 5:12, 17).

Now, the trouble is the disorder of codependency, and the solution is group therapy. Formerly, we understood that man tended to stray from God to follow his own self-willed path (Isaiah 53:6), and that he needed to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Christ (Luke 9:23).

Now, we think that man must esteem himself, affirm himself, and actualize himself. All of this new thinking is coming from psychological theory, which is primarily a philosophy of life. We are strongly warned in the word of the Lord not to be guided by the philosophy of the world.

Colossians 2:8:

“Beware lest anyone take you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ”

Beware of the leaven of the new-evangelicals.