

3rd February 2019

## Beware – Pt 3 –Beware of evil workers

This is our third study on our topic – Beware. In our previous teaching we encouraged you to (1) Beware of those who appear to be brethren but are inwardly ravening wolves, (2) you will know them – they will a) walk in long robes and love greetings in the markets and highest seats, b) make long prayers for a show, c) proclaim false doctrine and d) be abominable and disobedient – in every good work reprobates. In this study we beseech you to (1) beware of evil workers, (2) beware of men who spoil you, and (3) beware lest ye be led away with the error of the wicked.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

### 1. Beware of evil workers who add works to faith for salvation.

“Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil.3: 2 & 3).

Some Jews in the early church desired “to have you circumcised, that they may glory in the flesh” (Gal.6: 13). But God requires a man to be circumcised in “the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter” (Rom.2: 29), “God...shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith”. And salvation is “Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph.2: 8).

### 2 Beware of men who spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, and after the traditions of men, and through the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col.2: 8).

The meaning of the word “spoil” in Colossians is to “seduce”, and we see John writes – “concerning them that seduce you” – they are men of this world – the wicked (Ps.17: 4). When the Lord Jesus warned his disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees He used the word “beware” with the phrase “take heed” (Matt.16: 6 and Mk.6: 15). And the fruit of men who spoil you or seduce you is – deception, and the Lord says – “Take heed that ye be not deceived” (Lk 21:8, see also Deut.11: 6).

### 3 Beware lest ye be led away with the error of the wicked

“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness” (2 Pet.3: 17).

An illustration to help apply the teaching to our life today.

When one of our own came and preached another gospel that required believers to be saved by living sinless lives (works), he was first listened to, then we received his beliefs in writing, once confirmed he was admonished from the scriptures in accordance with the scriptures. Until finally when he hardened his heart and declared us to be false teachers, he received a strong and swift rebuke before all, marked, and side-lined, until such a time, “if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (2Tim 2:25).

Question to think about.

Why would we take such strong action against a man who was previously one of our own.

Our answer from the scriptures.

Because he caused “divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned...For they...by good works and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Rom.16: 17 & 18). The scriptures say – “whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not...Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith” (Tit.1: 11 & 13).

Therefore we warn you – beware of evil workers who add works to salvation, who spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, lest ye be led away with the error of the wicked.