

# LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

## PREFACE

The contemporary gap between Christ and church membership should be obvious to all. It hardly matters which church or denomination as you look at church members around you, and then look at the Christ of the Bible and the teachings of Christ, there is little similarity. The discouraging aspect of the gap is that it is getting larger each year. That means that it is diverging; and if it is diverging, it is conceivable that shortly the churches and Christ will be going in opposite directions. Horrible, yes; but what is the answer. What is the cure for this obvious and serious problem that has gripped the world of Christians?

The answer is for church members to Learn Christ. Which Christ? The Christ from the apostles and prophets of the Bible.

If one passage of the Bible were chosen as a gist or theme for this Bible commentary, LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, it would be Ephesians 2:19-22.

*"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22 NJKV)*

I know the classic reply for church leaders. "No human can be perfect", and "at least they are trying."

No, that is the point. The churchmembers are not trying. They are doing what they want to do. They are not making positive efforts to be like Christ and to be like God which is demanded in the Bible from the apostles and prophets. The description of what is presently happening to churchmembers is like the description from the Apostle Paul in II Timothy 4:3,4

*"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers, and they will turn their ears from the truth..." (II Timothy 4:3,4 NJKV)*

You see it is not longer a negative thing of "we are trying...our heart is in the right place...but we just cannot reach perfection." No, that is not it! It is a positive matter of first, a lack of tolerance for sound doctrine—church members will not listen to sound doctrine, church members will not go to hear sound doctrine, and church members will not tolerate preachers and teachers who preach sound doctrine.

You see how horrible that is as compared to the excuses from the heaped teachers of itching ears.

Church members, according to the Apostle Paul's description, are motivated not by any effort to be like Christ and any effort at perfect, but are motivated by their own human desires; that is, "according to their own desires," and "because they have itching ears." In short, church members are doing what they want to do and they are believing what they want to believe. What they want to believe is things that will tickle their ears. Things that will give them pleasure like, "nobody is perfect" and "you are the people of God", and "at least you are trying". Maybe 20 or 30 years ago that was true; but not now.

And the apex of the gap in Paul's description is that they pile up or heap to themselves teachers. It is much like building a dirt fortress or batiment around themselves in order to protect themselves from sound doctrine. They buy books from teachers that feed their desires; they run off teachers and preachers that offend their itching ears with the truth; and they call as pastors, teachers, and administrators those "teachers" that will teach according to their own desires.

The whole motivation is to turn away from the truth. Now, brother, that is a positive thing. It takes a lot of effort for so-called "Christians" to turn away from the truth of the Bible. It takes a lot of effort for church members to cease to Learn Christ; and in the place of learning Christ to learn some kind of church membership that is based on "desires" and "itching ears".