

Kingdom Feature, October 2014

The School of the Prophets

“Stay On Course”

Part 1

By Apostle Jerry Upton

Proverbs 20:24 “Man’s goings are of the Lord; how can a man understand his own way?”

Psalms 37:23-24 “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.”

Course: Onward movement in a particular direction and path.

I heard the Holy Spirit speak deep within my spirit and soul and prompted me to write this newsletter entitled “STAY ON COURSE”. Immediately I had this knowing that there may be many of you who are reading this newsletter who have been tempted and are even being tempted right now to take a detour, alter the path, and possibly seek an alternative direction from God has told you to follow.

First of all, let me exhort you to look at a very familiar scripture found in Proverbs 3:5-7:

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.”

Although these verses are known and regularly quoted by many believers, seldom do they realize what is actually imparted by these scriptures. In a day when uncertainty, bewilderment, confusion and havoc are so abundant, those of us who are fully committed to walking in a trusting relationship with our God are given a Divine Promise that the Almighty God Himself will “DIRECT OUR PATHS.”

Because of our covenant relationship with God, we don't have to depend on chance, luck, trial & error, guesswork, or "whatever will be will be." No, we can be fully assured that we are walking the path and following the purpose that God has ordained in our lives. Many have a tendency to just take matters into their own hands and make something happen when things are not working out exactly like they expected. This is one of the reasons that so many believers find themselves in debt, despair, depression, discouragement and ultimately defeat. Notice what it says in Jeremiah 17:5-10:

(5) Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.

(6) For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.

(7) Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

(8) For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

(9) The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

(10) I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

From these scriptures alone, we see the following revelations:

vs. 5 1. By trusting in the strength of man's wisdom, power, or might, we release a "curse" upon our lives; and many times we don't even realize what is happening. I have found over the years that many believers are more than dependent on what their favorite preacher is preaching rather than basing their complete trust in God's Word. The Word of God clearly shows us what will happen in the last days..."For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim 4:3-4

It is extremely clear that we are living in this very day and time right now. I am finding that many believers' "trust in God" is totally dependent on the "latest fad" that is being promoted, packaged, and marketed either in TV, Christian magazines and books, or seminars and conventions that they have recently attended. It really reminds me of what we declared in Ephesians 4:14...

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

Rather than being steadfast, immovable, and abounding in the word and work of God, believers by the multitudes are searching for someone to tell them what God is requiring of their lives. They are not seeking God for themselves.

Please hear me loud and clear, God has not send any man or woman into your life to replace the need for your spending time with God and trusting Him for yourself. God did not ordain and give gifts unto men and women in order for your trust, knowledge, and faith to be based on what they say or do; but rather the Bible declares in Ephesians 4:11-13...

"...that these gifts were given in order to increase your knowledge of Jesus, and to bring us into the stature of the fullness of Christ."

(Please read these scriptures for yourself.)

The classic answer that many believers give is that "whomever they are listening to has been sent to them by God." What they fail to realize and admit is that now they can't discern God's voice for themselves; they are constantly in need of a "spiritual fix" and a new revelation from someone else; their lives are empty of God's daily presence and they don't even know how to seek God for themselves; and finally, although they are continually hearing from others what God's word can do, it is far from a reality in their own lives.

I realize each day that God has called and anointed me to be a spiritual mentor and teacher to many men here in prison, but I have learned to make it extremely clear to those men that God has called me to train — that in no way, shape or fashion am I a replacement or a substitute for them to put their trust in; they must seek my presence more than they seek God for themselves. I have learned that the reason many ministers don't want their people to make the slightest move without consulting them is not because their true motive is not to provide Godly counsel. In many cases (though not all), they desire to "control" the people of God. The result of being under "man's control" is that you have removed yourself from the divine flow of God's blessing and have placed yourself under a "curse" instead.

vs. 6 2. Trusting in the arm of the flesh will produce dryness and spiritual barrenness in your life, cause your spiritual discernment to turn into blindness and the inability to see God's goodness, and produce a life with no fulfillment and no manifestation of fruit. While I fully realize that we must constantly "fight the good fight of faith," many believers are actually more depressed and discouraged than they've ever been in their entire lives. Why is this? Well, one reason is because God insists on our doing things His way; and when we choose to "Be wise in our own eyes," "Depend on our own human wisdom and understanding," and "go in any direction that we decide to in our own ability," then the result is a "curse" and not God's blessings.

The truth of the matter is quite simple: "God has called us to place our trust and dependence in Him, and many times the only way He is able to get our attention or

cause us to examine where we are with Him is by reminding us when we do things in our own human wisdom and ability that we won't have Godly results in our lives.