

## The Doctrine of Jezebel



David Wilkerson January 18, 1988

*I could subtitle this message "The Danger of Being Seduced by False Doctrine." Read Revelation 2:18-29 and you will see that Christ Himself warned the church against the doctrine of Jezebel. "You permit that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (Revelation 2:20). The Greek word here for Jezebel is a synonym for a false teacher. She clearly represents false doctrines. Jesus clears it up by continuing, "...as many as have not this doctrine..." (Revelation 2:24).*

Here is a group of God's people, full of good works and charity, having a form of faith and patience. But the eyes of Jesus appear among them, blazing with flames of fire. With all that is good and commendable, there is something very dangerous going on, something so seductive that Christ warns He will send judgment and make them an example to all the churches. Certain members of the church were selling out to Satan. Their good works, charity, service, faith and patience were overshadowed by a seduction they were involved in, a seduction of false doctrine. They were under the spell of a false teaching, a teaching that came disguised as the true Word but was in fact evil.

### The Seduction of God's Servants

Christ said it was "My servants" being seduced. Ministers. We have come to this very dangerous condition Christ warned about. There are multitudes of pastors, teachers and evangelists completely under the seductive spell of the Jezebel doctrine. These seduced teachers are in turn producing "children of seduction." They teach fornication and the consumption of the food of idols — this is spiritual fornication. This is eating the demonic food of doctrines that excuse sin.

I want to say, in no uncertain terms, that it is dangerous to sit under the wrong teaching. False doctrine can damn you more readily than all the lusts and sins of the flesh. False preachers and teachers are sending more people to hell than all the drug pushers, pimps and prostitutes combined. That is not an overstatement — I believe it. Multitudes of blind, misled Christians are singing and praising the Lord in churches enslaved by false doctrine. Thousands are sitting under teachers who are pouring out the doctrine of demons — and they come away saying, "Wasn't that wonderful."

Christ does not take this matter lightly. His eyes are again piercing the church, and He has come to warn, to expose and to save His people and His servants from this terrible seduction. We had better get serious about it. It is serious where you go to church. It is serious who you are listening to. It is serious, the teaching that has your heart.

God's people are selling out to Satan on every side by giving themselves into the hands of false teachers and pushers of false doctrines. Selling out to Satan conjures up visions of burned-out addicts, alcoholics, of AIDS-afflicted prostitutes and of God-hating atheists. No. It is happening in the church, in gospel meetings and conventions and in great teaching seminars.

*The mark of a seduced Christian is that he is "carried about" seeking some new, different, strange teaching. The*

Bible warns, "Be not carried about with different and strange doctrines" (Hebrews 13:9). Do not be driven thither and yon, taken from place to place. This is not speaking of those rare times a mature believer goes to hear a true man of God preach Christ and repentance. This speaks of running from place to place, seminar to convention, church to church, miracle meeting after healing meeting, having no roots. Their ears are always itching to hear something new, something sensational, something entertaining, something pleasing to their flesh. We get them at Times Square Church — gadabouts, human tumbleweeds riding the winds of doctrines. These kind do not come back because we refuse to scratch itching ears. They want to be stroked, not reproved. So they run back to their teachers — the soothers, the happy positive-thinkers. They resemble the Athenians who "spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21). Paul warned Timothy, "they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (2 Timothy 4:3).

## The Doctrine of Christ

The mark of a mature believer is a refusal to be "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine..." (Ephesians 4:14). Such believers cannot be manipulated by any teacher. They don't need to run around because they are drinking from the Rock. They are growing up in Christ. They are feasting in green pastures. They have circumcised their ears, and they measure every teacher, every doctrine, by how much it conforms to Christ's holiness. They can discern all doctrines that are false, and they are repulsed by all the strange, new teachings. They have learned Christ. They will not be held by music, friends, personalities or miracles, but by a hunger for the pure Word.

There are only two doctrines. They doctrine of Christ and the doctrine of Jezebel. Paul said, "...that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:10). What is Christ's doctrine? The grace of God teaches us that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11,12). The doctrine of Christ will conform you to the image of Christ. It will expose every hidden sin and every evil longing.

Is your teacher rebuking with authority, speaking and exhorting you to forsake sin and to lay down all idols as he is instructed in Titus 2? Are you learning to hate sin passionately? Or do you leave church, still not deeply convicted? Can you go out clinging to pet sins? The message of the doctrine of Christ is, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1).

So many write to us saying, "Our pastor keeps saying, 'I'm not here to preach against sin; I'm here to lift up Jesus.' Or, 'None of that condemnation preaching from this pulpit — I'm here to lift the fear and depression in my people.'" Even with Pentecostal preachers there are two extremes. Some scream a hard, legalistic gospel without love, one of works; while others preach against sin like cowards, taking it all back in the same message. False love and crocodile tears.

The doctrine of Christ is a doctrine of godliness and holiness. "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings" (1 Timothy 6:3-4). Some tell us, "My teacher speaks about holiness." But I do not mean merely using the words "holy" and "godly"; I mean preaching it with all authority. The preaching of Christ's doctrine will bless, strengthen and encourage you, but it will also convict you so deeply you cannot sit under it and still cling to a secret lust.

## The Doctrine of Jezebel

Let us look at this doctrine of demons and see if you are in danger of selling out to Satan. There are three distinguishing marks of the Jezebel doctrine. These were all found in the Jezebel of the Old Testament, the mother and the embodiment of false doctrines. Jesus made her name synonymous with false doctrine. It is a doctrine which teaches that something evil can be good, that the profane can be pure.

Jezebel, in Hebrew, means "chaste, virtuous, without idolatry." Imagine. The most ungodly, most idolatrous, scheming, hateful woman in all the Bible called virtuous, without sin. Something very bad is named good. But ironically it is "chaste?" — with a question mark. How? When? Where? How did she become chaste? When? Where?

And look at Ahab. "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. And it

came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him" (1 Kings 16:30-31). Ahab means "one like father" or "stamped with the nature of his father." Jezebel represents false doctrine and Ahab is its victim. The Bible states that it was not enough that Ahab had a heart bent toward sin, idolatry and compromise. He brings into his life a satanic influence that will confirm him in his sin. "But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up" (1 Kings 21:25).

The message is that the tendency of Christians who hold to secret sin and lust is to embrace and become married to a false doctrine which will only excite and confirm them in their sins. The last thing Ahab needed was a Jezebel. How dangerous. She brought out the worst in him, magnified it and destroyed him. So it is with false doctrine. If there is any sin, lust or worldliness in you, the last thing you need is a doctrine that will bring out your worst. When David sinned with Bathsheba, he did not need a false prophet with a soothing message to tell him how much God loved him. He needed the uncompromising prophet, Nathan, with a pointed finger, crying out, "Thou art the man." Those who preach the doctrine of Christ show the people the difference between the evil and the good. There is no mixture from their lips. "And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean" (Ezekiel 44:23). Ezekiel denounces these false prophets who enrich themselves by bringing a message excusing sin. "There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof. Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and the profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean...and I am profaned among them...And her prophets say, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken" (Ezekiel 22:25-28).

As a result, we have a whole generation of mixed up kids who cannot even recognize evil when they see it. False prophets have deceived them. They call it good when purple haired rockers, dressed as sado-masochists, strut and gyrate sexually in the pulpit, blasting their rock and roll. They are told that sex outside marriage is good as long as you are in love and as long as you truly respect the other person. Preachers and teachers have become the greatest defenders of sin in the nation.

## The Doctrine of Jezebel Promotes Covetousness

"Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to Ahab: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers...The Lord forbade it. And Ahab laid down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite" (1 Kings 21:1-7).

Listen to the doctrine of Jezebel, "You are king. Number one. You have rights. Let nothing stop you from getting what you want." She said to Ahab, "Be merry. Be happy. Rejoice. I'll get it for you." That is the prosperity gospel in a nutshell. "Don't sweat it. Don't feel sad or condemned by those desires that eat you up. I'll get it for you." For centuries the church preached sacrifice and denounced covetousness, calling it a sin to go after material things. But along came Jezebel doctrines saying, "I'll get it for you." Like the deceptive methods Jezebel used, these doctrines twist and misuse Scripture.

The greatest deception in the modern church is the matter of using God's Word to put a badge of approval on covetousness. On the surface the Jezebel doctrine works. (See 1 Kings 21:14-16). It got Ahab what he wanted. He possessed his rights because when a man was stoned for high treason against the king, all his rights reverted to the king. There has never been a question that for many this doctrine of prosperity works. Like Ahab, they are enjoying their possessions.

But Ahab could not enjoy it because of a pesky prophet of God. "And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab...in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?...In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kings 21:17-20).

Imagine Ahab walking about his new possession saying, "Isn't life sweet? Ah, Jezebel. I may not agree with all her methods, but she gets it done." But dogging his every footstep is the prophet Elijah. Ahab reels around, shocked. He knew what was coming. His conscience told him, "You found me, O mine enemy."

So it is today. God has sent prophets throughout the land, crying aloud, confronting the Jezebel doctrine of materialism, making it so uncomfortable for Christians to enjoy their playthings and acquisitions. They have sold out. They cannot see it, but sin is behind all this. Every time I cry out against the prosperity doctrine, I sense the spirit and power of Elijah upon me. You are going to hear more and more exposing of this Jezebel doctrine. Everywhere, prophetic voices will be heard loud and clear, crying out, "Sin. You possessed by selling out to sin."

## Jezebel Hates God's Prophets and Godly Prophecies

"And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time" (1 Kings 19:1-2).

Christians bound by the Jezebel doctrine have no regard whatsoever for God's holy prophets. They sit coldly, as Jezebel did, unmoved, as Ahab went into detail of the miraculous display of supernatural authority on Mount Carmel. Listen to Ahab, "But Jezebel, maybe we need to listen. I saw it with my own eyes. Our prophets danced and shouted for hours, but there was no power. Elijah just spoke God's word and fire fell. People were on their faces everywhere repenting. They've turned away from all idolatry. God sent a revival of holiness." But Jezebel was not impressed. All it did was turn her resolve into stone.

So it is now. The teachers of the Jezebel doctrine and those like Ahab who are its victims are not open to Holy Ghost conviction, nor to the message of repentance and holiness. They hear it, then go their way more determined than ever before in their doctrines. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

The surest sign of a false teacher and a Jezebel doctrine is the putting down of prophetic warnings and the refusal to hear about judgment. They call it gloom and doom. They laugh, mock and ridicule. They have no respect for any negative warnings. Jeremiah says such shepherds are blind and dumb. The Lord said, "Obey...But they harkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward" (Jeremiah 7:23-24).

Those who teach the Jezebel doctrine claim to be prophets. But there is a test of true and false prophets. Jezebel prophets prophesy good things only, just peace and prosperity. "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness; they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you" (Jeremiah 23:14-17). They do not turn people from wickedness. They speak of dreams and act foolishly in the pulpit. They are jokesters.

## Ahab's Covenant With the World

Ahab did repent at the preaching of Elijah. Elijah's message deeply affected him. He rent his clothes and he walked for a while in humility. God called it repentance, "See how Ahab humbles himself before me" (1 Kings 21:29). From that day on he could look back and say, "Repentance? Yes. Under the preaching of that great prophet of God, Elijah, in my garden at Jezreel..." To him it was a one-time experience, not a daily walk. It did not last very long. The problem was that he had made a covenant with the world. He was in agreement with sin. He had become a brother and friend to the world. "Brother" here means "affinity, one just like me, one I respect." He was in covenant with what God had cursed. And so today there is a shallow, yet true, repentance. But you will go back if you do not break your covenant with the world.

Ahab claimed to love the truth, but deep inside he hated reproof. Ahab and Jehoshaphat were going to war with the Syrians. Four hundred false prophets were preaching success: "Go up and you will prosper. You can do it." So

there stands the one lonely prophet against the 400 false prophets. Listen to Ahab's demand for truth: "And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak. So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord?" (1 Kings 22:14-16). Yet in his heart he did not want to hear it; he hated it. So he jailed the prophet.

Pastors, teachers and those in the congregation today all say, "We want only the truth. Preach it like it is. Go. Pour it on. No matter how it hurts." But in their hearts some are seething, "Too much gloom. Too hard. I can't stand anymore of this."

Ahab was blind to the terrible fact that he was being guided by lying spirits. This lying spirit was not of God, but under His command. Evil, lying spirits must go or come at His word. They are not of God, but they are sent by God. "The Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets" (1 Kings 22:22-23).

This lying spirit caused Zedekiah, a false prophet, to boast that the Spirit of God was upon him. The lying spirit in him could honestly declare, "The Lord sent me." Lying spirits are very persuasive — "Thou shalt persuade him" (1 Kings 22:22). Ahab was now fully persuaded he was hearing God's voice and that he would come back victoriously.

Christians bound by the Jezebel doctrine are 100% sure they are right. They cannot see the deception. Ahab did not go up thinking, "Micaiah is right; he has God's mind. The 400 are false; they have no word from God." No. He went up fully convinced — fully deceived — totally seduced. He was convinced Micaiah was wrong and the 400 were right.

## Why Do Some Christians Fall Into Such Deception?

"Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?" (Jeremiah 7:8-10). There is the answer. A clinging to some pet sin, some secret idol in the heart. A justifying of sin. A walk with the world. A brotherhood with the world. Then they come to God's house boasting, "I'm not convicted." This is an open invitation to lying spirits.

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