

## **Strange Fire: Mystics In The Church Of God**

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October 13, 2009

### **Strange Fire**

Something is wrong, bad wrong! Are there mystics, soothsayers and spiritists in the Church of God?

Many people are pursuing prophetic ministry and it seems there is no lack of confusion surrounding its proper function. Whether you are called to prophetic ministry or just serving Christ with all your heart, you will be faced with many odd, even strange things that will require much spiritual discernment during your walk with God. Spiritual discernment will come from the Holy Spirit and find confirmation in many Scriptures throughout the written Word of God.

Let me say this: The Holy Spirit is not strange, weird or mystical. He is the third part of the Trinity. He is a gentleman, a statesman and a loving Spirit Who lifts up Christ, the only begotten Son of God. He is not a female presence. He is not an "it," a "thing," a "mist," a "feeling" or some orphic force.

History has introduced many divagating leaders with strange manifestations. Your advantage is 4,000 years of written biblical history, from Adam to Christ, to serve as your guide to accuracy. One cornerstone for staying biblical is using that written history as your foundation for measuring truth. When strange things happen, look to the Word for biblical examples. If you can't find any, then something is terribly wrong.

Experiences, even vivid, powerful, and supernatural ones, are not measurements for truth. In my generation I've seen meetings where gold dust, feathers, gems, and people barking and roaring like lions were showcased. A search through the Scriptures gives no evidence that the Holy Spirit used any of these manifestations to confirm Christ's resurrection. These are only a few examples of strange fire.

Someone may tell you the things of the Spirit can't be understood by the natural man. That's not true at all because the Holy Spirit can be understood. He never violates the

written Word. The things of the Spirit are understood by the logos, the Bible (Hebrews 4:12). Again, the Holy Spirit is not strange, weird or mystical.

### **Prophets of Deception**

In my generation, Jezebel and Baalim prophets are the prevailing enemies of true prophetic ministry. In the last 20 years these spirits have grown sophisticated. They've built their own network of churches, followers and training schools. They've written books and produced many training videos. These spirits intend to hijack the prophetic ministry and hold themselves out to be the "experts" in the field. They condemn criticism as irrelevant, unloving, ignorant and judgmental. Hopefully by the time you read this material you will see their folly and will escape their deceptions. More than likely things will grow worse. If so, you will find them as your strongest opponents.

The prophetic groups of Jezebel and Baalim – and others you will encounter – have all types of strange signs and wonders in their meetings. Just remember not all wonders, no matter how mystical and exciting, are from the Holy Ghost (1 John 4:1). Even legitimate miracles in meetings do not confirm these ministers are flowing right. Scripture says, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:22-23).

*"Everything I am commanding you, you are to take care to do. Do not add to it or subtract from it. "If a prophet or someone who gets messages while dreaming arises among you and he gives you a sign or wonder, and the sign or wonder comes about as he predicted when he said, 'Let's follow other gods, which you have not known; and let us serve them,' you are not to listen to what that prophet or dreamer says. For Adonai your God is testing you, in order to find out whether you really do love Adonai your God with all your heart and being. You are to follow Adonai your God, fear him, obey his mitzvot, listen to what he says, serve him and cling to him; and that prophet or dreamer is to be put to death; because he urged rebellion against Adonai your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from a life of slavery; in order to seduce you away from the path Adonai your God ordered you to follow." Deut 13:1-6 CJB*

One particular trait among some ministers is the love of money that finance extravagant lifestyles. Some who embrace these spirits are merchandisers. A merchandiser sells prophecies, healings, religious oils, potions and various products that reinforce their message. Typically they work within their own networks, focusing on getting as much money from people as possible. They have all kinds of gimmick offerings that manipulate people. They are always recruiting followers to join their groups. I have seen some work every kind of evil when it comes to stealing from God's people.

One young man, we'll call him Scott, hooked up with one of these merchandising networks. He came to meet with me recently, looking to repent. Scott offered up his ordination papers from the various ministers within the network and renounced his involvement. He went on to reveal the purpose of their many conferences: to raise money, not to advance the ministry of Christ. After these services the organizers divide the offerings among themselves. Scott shocked me when he shared the mindset of these merchandisers. They believe that the amount of money one raises confirms the level of one's prophetic anointing.

For several hours, Scott spoke of many individuals, some well-known and others obscure. He disclosed numerous evil strategies for meetings across our nation. I learned that they even merchandise one another! They look for young naïve upstarts to turn into devils like themselves. There is every sort of evil working behind the scenes among these people. These are "professional prophets." They watch videos and listen to audio with the intent purpose of learning the sayings and particular mannerisms of true ministers of the Gospel so they can imitate them (Jeremiah 23:30). Avoid them and don't do any meetings with them – and don't attend them. Beware their accolades, flatteries and smiles toward you. At first they will flatter you. If that works, then they will merchandise you. If that doesn't work, they will blackball you. Just remember, if you can be flattered, you can be bought. Christ's servants are not prostitutes.

### **Psychics, Mystics and Spiritists**

A spirit of rejection may attack you if these leaders shun you. If you feel that way just think of it like this, rejection is protection. You don't need anybody's approval save Christ's. God's servants can't be bought at any price! Don't try to learn anything from them. You are not a psychic, mystic, spiritist or soothsayer. You are a minister of Christ. You have a responsibility to use your gift as a faithful steward to serve the Body of Christ. The purpose of the anointing is to establish and advance the Kingdom of God, give witness to the love of God and confirm to the world the resurrection of Christ our

Savior. True prophets are also called to turn the heart of people toward God, walk in holiness, confront sin and build the Church of Christ. Avoid fame, accolades from men and vain glory, and mind your motives in all things (Proverbs 4:23).

The flow of New Testament prophets is primarily used for edification, exhortation and comfort (1 Corinthians 14:3). This gift also helps turn logos, the written Word, to rhema, a life-giving Word, as the Holy Spirit wills. Again, New Testament prophets are not psychics. A psychic uses demon powers to prophesy. As already said, prophets are not mystics. A mystic is one that uses spirit counterfeits to appear like they have some sort of special access or favor with God.

False prophets can release fear and curses. I have heard some tell people they are endangering themselves if they don't obey their prophetic words. That type of stuff is nothing but witchcraft. Bind it up and carry on for Jesus. No prophet is anointed by the Holy Spirit to curse people. Paul said "bless and curse not" (Romans 12:14). Cursing is a sure sign of a false prophet. Balaam, a true prophet gone bad, did the same and lost his life for it. God doesn't send storms, hurricanes and earthquakes to judge people, cities and nations for their sins. Jesus said these things would increase before His return. Yes, one day there will be a judgment of the living and the dead but fear does not lead people to Christ. God's loving kindness, the good news does, and the offer of forgiveness of sin to the repentant (John 3:16).

### **Searching Hidden Secrets**

Prophets of Christ depend only on the Holy Spirit and the written Word of God. They don't need objects from people's clothing, locks of hair or photos to assist their prophetic utterances. Nor will they need to astral project into the spirit world. True prophets will not blend the New Age teachings of the god-self into their teachings or try to unlock hidden meanings or secrets within Scripture. They will not sell prophecies, potions or elixirs. They are not occultists, soothsayers, mediums or shamans. Occultists search for hidden secrets and "knowledge of the hidden." They use various methods to find obscured 'truths' like numerology and the reading of Hebrew symbols and letters. Numerology is the study of relationships between numbers and objects needed by spiritualists for divination. Kabala practitioners, for example, look for knowledge of the hidden in numbers and symbols. This is not biblical!

I have seen people use the Hebrew calendar and its annual symbols to prophesy events of the coming year. This is not the working of the Holy Spirit but the sign of

ancient Babylonian soothsayers. Jannes and Jambres are biblical examples. Scripture says the secret things belong to our Lord and what He has chosen to reveal are found in His Word, only occultists search for the forbidden. “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

Some things will not be easily discerned. In some cases you will have to wait for the appearance of fruit (Matthew 7:17). As you wait for the fruit to appear remember that the Holy Ghost doesn't produce unstable, bizarre or flaky people. They will be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. They will be full of love, power and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7).

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