

The new money lenders in God's temple

We usually have the image of Jesus as a meek and mild person who loved everyone.

But this is not an accurate image of our Lord. Jesus sometimes addressed people with very harsh words. "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape the sentence of hell?"(Matthew 23:33) Jesus said to the Pharisees. The way he condemned them certainly did not fit the image of someone who was meek and mild at all times.

But there was someone else who encountered a far fiercer image of Jesus than the Pharisees did.

It was the money lenders in God's temple.

The money lenders simply provided a service enabling the Jews from different areas to pay their contribution to the temple and by doing so they made a good profit.

God's house, the temple was the ideal place for a business. The temple was full of people. People equal money and since there was a constant flow of people who required a service there was a great opportunity to make money.

The Priests did not seem to have a problem with that as they were all part of the religious system of the day. Everything seemed to work together well until one day. Until the day when one man stepped inside the temple and became furious with anger, picked up the tables of the money lenders and turned them upside down (and most likely also smashed their chairs in the process).

When Jesus encountered the money changers in the temple it was the only time that he actually turned violent, that he physically attacked somebody with his own hands.

The image of Jesus attacking a person does not fit into our mind!

There are very few paintings which show Jesus attacking the money lenders. It contradicts the image that we have of Jesus, the image that we have so grown accustomed to. It is too hard for us to relate to Jesus if we think of a man who also acted in violence.

We know all about his healings, how he raised the dead, how he walked on water and how he feed large numbers of people.

But we can't picture a Jesus who turned very aggressive, who walked up to someone with a quenched fist and then acted violent towards that person.

The reason why we don't know much about it is because we have chosen not to know much about it. It simply does not fit our image of Jesus.

And after all those money changers are now a thing of the past.
It's all history now since the temple has long been destroyed and the money changers have become a thing of the past.
If such people do exist today we may find them in our banks or financial institutions where they make a profit from other people's money.
But are those events really a thing of the past?

God's temple today is the church.

It is the church where we gather together in order to offer our worship and our praises to God. God dwells in the church among us when we meet in order to worship him (not in every church, only in the church that truly seeks to worship him).

But what we can witness today is a subtle return of the money changers in a new outfit.

Even during the middle ages the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Church had always had their eyes set on money.



The Popes throughout history have consistently desired material wealth. Money was always the real God of the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic Church even invented some of its own doctrines in order to increase its material wealth (the purgatory was one such invention, a doctrine that was invented for the sole purpose to raise money for the church) This is the real reason why the church grew so immensely wealthy

over the centuries. Gold has always meant so much more to the Popes than God. The riches of the Vatican are a clear proof of that.

The church in essence was not there to provide a service to its people. In reality the people were there to provide a service to (enrich) the church.

God was simply a tool to manipulate the masses in order to fill the pockets of the wealthiest institution on earth.

This was then but little has changed if we look at some churches today.

Today a new gospel has been invented. It is the 'prosperity gospel'. This gospel has been created for one sole purpose. It was created in order to create wealth

for those who promote it. And the people who invented this gospel (which is not a gospel the apostles had preached) have grown immensely wealthy from it. The promise of wealth, of almost unlimited access to money has filled many churches with large crowds of people. It has created large congregations all over the world.

Those churches have not grown large in numbers because its members want to follow Jesus. They have grown because the messages which are preached are skillfully tailored to suit the desires of man.

Health, wealth and anything else that is beneficial to men are the cornerstone of this new gospel. It is not a gospel of discipleship and of total surrender; it is a gospel of what I can acquire, of what is beneficial to me, of how much is in it for me. Hillsong is one such example. The sermons of Hillsong are not focused on Jesus and on the sobering implications of following in the footsteps of our Lord but they are very powerful motivational talks which appeal to the masses. And of course hidden behind it is always the focus on money.

Popular T.V. preachers of such large churches (man like Brian Houston, Joseph Prince and others) have turned into multi-millionaires through their new church enterprises.

“Silver and gold have I none “said the Apostle Peter when he encountered a crippled man and then healed him in the name of the Lord. But the new catchphrase of the ‘prosperity pastors’ is “silver and gold have I plenty and so can you”! Those man understand how money can be made in a church.

Large churches stand for big money for large churches are made up of large numbers of people who have money to spend. Large churches are an instant platform for financial success; they stand for the sale of thousands of books and motivational talks which the pastor can market throughout his large congregation and far beyond.

Those man differ very little from the money changers which Jesus once had encountered in the temple.

A pastor who uses a church to make money has never received his inspirations from God!

As much as such man claim to have received visions and dream, you can be totally certain that they are nothing but lies.

God does not speak to anyone who use His temple for his own selfish gain!

The pastors of America’s largest ‘prosperity churches’ travel in their own personal jets. The lifestyle of such pastors is so far removed from that of the average person in his own congregation who has made him so incredibly wealthy.

Such men sincerely believe that by promoting themselves and their life' style they can set an example to the rest of their followers.

But do they really believe that by doing so they will one day escape the anger of the Lord?

What they do not understand is that one day they will have to confront Jesus. One day they will have to stand in front of His face.

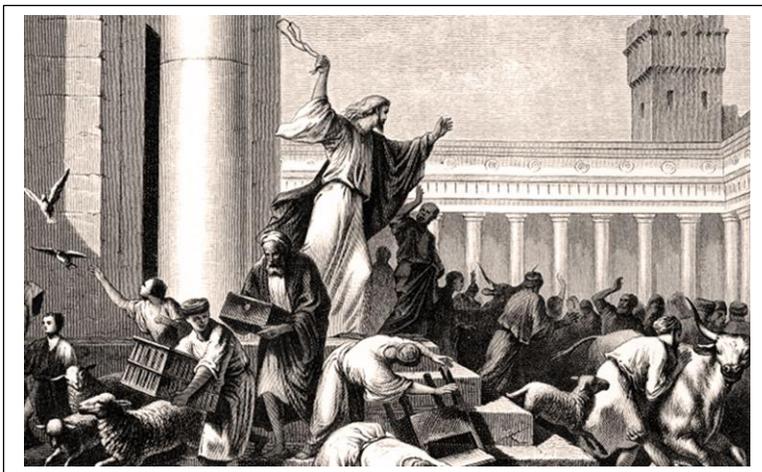
On that day they will be confronted with the furious anger of God Himself for what they have done to His temple, to the church, to His house.

If Jesus was physically angry with the money changers in the temple, how much more will his anger explode when the man who preached a false gospel will one day stand directly before him?

To face a violent Jesus will be so frightening that you would scream for the mountains to fall on you to cover you and hide you from His terrible anger (And they said to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb) Revelation 6:16 The Lamb is a direct reference to Jesus!

The church is sacred to God. Anyone who is using God's sacred temple, the church for his own personal financial gain is committing a grave and a most terrible sin. To use God's church for selfish material gain is one of the gravest sins that a person can ever commit.

There would be many people in those churches who have great material and physical needs (some very desperate for money) but who had been exploited by the greed of their 'pastor' who simply used them for his own personal gain. Instead of looking out for the needs of his congregation such man of greed have only used God's temple to enrich themselves.



One day they will have to stand before Jesus and encounter the wrath of the lamb. On that day they will not face a meek and mild Jesus. On that day they will encounter the same Jesus who had once attacked the money changers in the temple. On that day he will turn over the tables in their

life's and he will leave them with nothing except with many regrets.
Such man will end up facing eternity with their hands totally empty for they have already received their rewards.

Their reward was the millions which they once made from their congregations and it was also the praises of men (which was due to their great popularity).

God will never reward someone who used His temple for his own personal gain. He will make sure that such men will end up with empty hands when their time has arrived, on that great and terrible day when they have to face their creator.

