

TO BE CAST OUT.

“If the salt have lost its savor,...it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden underfoot of men.” – MATT. 5:13.

The careful student of Jesus' words will find in them convincing evidence that he foreknew the history of the Christian Church from its inception to its close. It was through him, beyond doubt, that Paul was enabled to point out, for the guidance of the faithful, the great apostasy which was to extend through centuries of her history, and the final *revelation* of the man of sin. 2 Thess. 2.

In the epistle to the Romans (chap. 15), Paul alludes to and explains something of God's plan relative to the casting away, and subsequent restoration of the Jews; and hints at the casting away of the Gentile Church for the same cause, viz., unbelief. That this was more than a surmise on the Apostle's part, events have clearly demonstrated.

From our standpoint we can readily discern that what was apparently but an admonition was really a prophecy as well.

We cannot estimate the value this fore-knowledge of our Lord has been to his Church. Amid all the persecutions that have befallen his followers, they could "rejoice and be exceeding glad," assured of "great reward in heaven." How else could they have remained faithful among the faithless?

That the words quoted as our text are also prophetic and descriptive of the final unsavory condition of the Church (nominal) is more than a presumption.

Has this condition already been reached? This is an inquiry from which no Christian should shrink, and in the solution of which every Christian should be interested.

It is but fair to say that opinion is divided on the subject. While many mourn over the waste places in Zion – while they recognize and deplore the absence of spiritual life and power, the great majority see in the interest displayed in the erection of fine churches, in a highly-cultured ministry, the large sums annually expended in sustaining these, and in multiplying their member, sure evidences of prosperity.

Add to this the cordiality which the world displays in furthering her enterprises, and there seems little more to be desired.

The few who recognize the loss of the real essentials of a true Church, hope for their recovery and a new lease of spiritual power. Vain hope! The student of the *Word* need not be misled by any such deception. Either this hope is delusive, or many scriptures must be false. Jesus says that at the time of his coming (presence) the Church will be made up of both wheat and tares. He teaches us that many who profess to be his followers were never recognized as such, and will be rejected. They may have taught in his name, they may claim to have cast out devils in his name, they [R778 : page 4] may have done many wonderful works in his name, but all this will avail them nothing. Many "wonderful works" that are highly esteemed among men are an abomination in God's sight.

While the world may have applauded these claimants, Jesus never recognized them as his followers, nor their works as contributing to the success of his cause. Much that is done in Jesus' name is *really* done to gratify pride and selfishness. Millions of dollars are expended with no higher motive than that of having the finest church edifice, the largest and "best-equipped" Sunday school, or the most eloquent minister.

Jesus made no attempt at a reformation of the apostate Jewish Church. His work was to inaugurate and carry forward the harvest; and with fan in hand he separated the wheat from the chaff. He accepted the faithful – the unfaithful he rejected.

Like all former dispensations, the present will give place to another when its allotted time has expired. The nominal Church having become a great worldly institution, has signally failed to bear witness to the truth, and is unfit for the greater work now becoming due.

Seeming conscious of her impending doom, she eagerly attempts whatever promises to save her from destruction. But Ichabod is plainly written over her portals. On her walls is the inscription, "Weighed in the balance and found wanting." Like her type, she compasses sea and land to make one proselyte, and with like result.

The world, quick to discern the condition of affairs, has already withdrawn a large portion of its respect, and accords her a much lower place than she formerly occupied. Her influence is sought more for worldly advantage than for spiritual aid. Her ministers no longer wield the moral power that was once theirs by almost universal consent; and it seems beyond dispute that the Saviour's prediction is about to be realized, and the aptitude of the comparison admitted by all, "Good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden underfoot of men."

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