

Destruction From Within

Written by M. J. Buffington

Destruction From Within

by M. J. Buffington

"For from within, out of the heart of man..." (Mark 7:21-22). It is very plainly pointed out by Christ in the above Scripture that destruction comes from within.

I heard the president speak over the radio a few days ago (1972) about a visit that he had made to Athens, Greece. He said that as he looked at the large columns still standing, that had been there for two thousand years or more, that had supported a large building (believed to have been the building on Mars Hill where the apostle Paul preached in Acts 17) he could not help but think that this nation surely must have been a very highly educated people, and that history points out that they had the very best weapons of that time. He said as he stood there and looked at all these things, he was reminded that their destruction had not come from without, but from within. Moral decay had been their downfall. He pointed out that other nations had fallen the same way. Pagan Rome, who had conquered the world, was destroyed because of immorality from within. The president warned the people that our greatest danger now is not from without, but from within.

This is also true in the spiritual realm. This will apply to our own individual bodies and it will apply to the body of Christ (the Church).

Destruction comes from within. There are no words that are ever spoken, or actions ever performed that do not first originate in the mind—the spiritual heart of man. "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things" (Mt. 12:35). He also states in this same scripture that "an evil man out of the evil treasures of his heart bringeth forth evil things."

Our minds are either controlled by Christ and his Word, or by the devil who is our adversary. If the adversary has control, he will discourage us in reading the Bible. He will have us to engage in the pleasures of this world. He will discourage us in having family study of the Word of God and in prayer, but rather he would have us spend our time watching or reading something else

Destruction From Within

Written by M. J. Buffington

that has nothing to do with building up the spiritual person that is within. Let us face up to the facts! The devil is on the inside, seated at the controls and is maneuvering the lives of the majority of the peoples of this world today.

The thing that concerns me most is, he is also in the minds of many members of the church. They are being guided into believing sinful things. The devil will whisper softly in their minds and tell them: "You have your rights!" "Do your own thing!" "Live it up while you are young!" "Fight back!" "Don't be told what to do, especially by Bible reading people!" "Do what your fleshly person desires to do and you will enjoy the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life!" If the devil is at the wheel driving, he will cause a person to do the very opposite of what is right. Destruction comes from WITHIN, out of the heart. The only way the devil can be removed from the control room (our heart) is by letting the Word of God come in and take over. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7). "Whom resist steadfast in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:9). Remember, if the Word of God is seated at the controls of our heart, there is no room for our adversary, the devil.

The Body of Christ

The body of Christ is the church that he loved "and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27).

This is the way the church should be. This is the way that Christ presented it to himself! The devil knows that if he is ever successful in destroying the church, that he must do so from within. Paul says that it "is no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. 11:14-15). "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18).

Destruction From Within

Written by M. J. Buffington

Paul knew of the great danger of destruction from within when he warned the elders of the church of Ephesus. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30).

In the letter that was written to Pergamos (Rev. 2:13) the Lord informed them that he knew where Satan's seat was. Oh yes! The devil has a seat in the church and many times a very prominent part in the service. It has been because of the influence of the devil that the church has been divided and many digressions have come in, causing destruction from within. It is no wonder that Paul warned, "Know them which labor among you" (1 Thess. 5:12). The elders at Ephesus were commended because they had detected the false apostles which had come in among them. They tried them and found them liars (Rev. 2:2).

I certainly believe in true Bible love, for without love we are nothing (1 Cor. 13). This word however, is sometimes used to cover up sin. John says, "We know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments" (1 Jn. 5:2). Keeping the commandments of God is true love. We should never use our liberty "for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God" (1 Pet. 2:16).

Just as moral decay from within will corrupt and destroy a great nation of people, the same is also true of the church. Amos sounds out the warning, "Hate the evil, and love the good" (Amos 5:15). Paul says, "Abhor (hate) that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9).

Failing to do what we have been commanded to do, or doing that which God forbids, will bring destruction from within.