

Chapter 8

A Diluted Faith

The founder of the Salvation Army, William Booth – who was always quick with a quotable quip for the press once responded: “In answer to your inquiry, I consider that the chief dangers which confront the coming century will be: Religion without the Holy Ghost, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, politics without God, and Heaven without Hell.”

Author Daniel Sweet says American Christianity is already there: “In a society in which there are no absolutes and every individual is a free agent, we are taught to be self-reliant and independent. Christianity is no longer the automatic, default faith of young adults.” And that’s a problem. But is it the main one?

In 2005, cancer patient Georgia Hayes won a \$2.2 billion court settlement against her pharmacist, who had diluted her chemotherapy drugs with water. In the process, she had lost her best chance for recovery. While \$2.2 billion is a lot of money, it’s little comfort when you don’t have long to live.

Dilute: to make thinner, to lessen strength, to adulterate, to reduce value or efficiency, to make fainter, or to water down

What could be more deadly than diluted cancer medication? Maybe placebo pills for a cardiac patient. Or diluted insulin for a diabetic.

Actually, the most deadly medicine is a watered-down gospel—because the tragic results are eternal.

Jesus says there will be two groups of people in the end times. One group He calls few, the other He calls many. “*Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? ... and done many wonders?’ ... And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’*” (Matthew 7:22, 23).

Evidently, the majority of Christ’s professed followers are self-deceived. They know His name. Their religious activities seem to have the marks of genuine ministry, but Jesus, with a broken heart, will declare to them, “I don’t know you.” Why? Because they live a compromised life full of sin.



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