

makes himself an angel of light and his man is to be the final Antichrist.

In the Bible, however, John 17 is offset by Revelation 17 and 18. In these chapters the harlot church, Babylon the Great, united, rides upon the back of the beast, the one-world political power.

The one-world church and the one-world government are the final realities of apostasy in Christendom. Our Lord Jesus Christ will deal with it in judgment by His unveiling, His revelation before all the tribes of the earth when He returns with all His saints in power and great glory.

It has been primarily the International Council of Christian Churches, established just ahead of the World Council of Churches, in Amsterdam in 1948, that has carried the churches' burden of exposing this great apostasy and calling God's people to have no fellowship with it, no matter what the cost. This is the final and major battle, the great ecclesiastical struggle of the 20th Century. So it is that John 17 supports the believers of the ICCC and not the unbelievers and apostates within the WCC. The clear meaning of John 17 is the joy and delight of Bible believers, the remnants that may be found in every section of the world today. It exalts the Lord Jesus Christ in His obedience to His Father, who sent Him to the earth to die for sin and rise again from the dead the third day.

It is especially this chapter which Satan uses in this hour to deceive and pervert the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. For these reasons it should and must be a cherished portion of the Word of God for all who seek to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has become a battleground for the faithful.

I. PRAYER

A. John 17 is a prayer; "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said." In perverting this entire chapter Satan enters first into the closest relationship which Christ has with His Father. Here is the interchange within the Trinity, the First and Second Persons. It is the relationship from

before the foundation of the world. Satan could not go any deeper or come any closer to the Son and the Father. Here he attempts to enter the innermost fellowship and confidence which always existed between the two Persons of the holy Godhead.

Satan started all this in Heaven itself. On earth he attacked a sinless man and woman in the Garden of Eden, our first parents. He was working to the same end when he tempted Jesus Christ, the second Adam, and Christ refused to bow down and worship Him.

Now the old Devil would use this conversation of the Son, a prayer to the eternal Father as a basis for destroying the visible churches on earth and uniting them in such a way that they can obtain his end at the end time.

To use God's Word to deceive God's churches and to use Christ's prayer to build the church of the Antichrist goes to the limit of Satan's wickedness. Satan does everything in every way to bind lost sinners within his kingdom to keep them from hearing the Gospel. He here would make Christ's churches on earth not the kingdom of God, but verily the kingdom of Satan; and he does it in such a way that his art of deception is manifested in its highest and most brilliant accomplishment.

B. The first word of the Prayer is the address: "Father." Christ uses this name no less than six times. The fullness and depth of these addresses pull the curtain back and open all heaven, all eternity, to the blood-washed saints on earth. Look at them:

1. "Father, the hour is come." The cross is just at hand. The next move is the betrayal, the kiss of Judas. Christ calls him "the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." Christ has now come to that sacred moment when all the redeemed, the elect of God, will be saved. He is ready to offer the one sacrifice for sin forever, and then sit down on the right hand of God. Eternity designed it all.

2. "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." The cross of Christ, His resurrection, contain the fullness of God's plan to pardon and restore fallen