

# STRAIGHTWAY

*And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him [Mark 1:18].*

## CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

The Witness Outreach of Foundations Bible College  
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## **The Spiritual Mongrelization of the Institutional Church**

Dr. H. T. Spence

No other book in the Bible typifies our dark days before the coming of the Lord with greater clarity than First Samuel. It would be hard to pinpoint what chapters bespeak the heart of our present days; is it to be found in the chapters dealing with Samuel, or Saul, or the years of David's flight? All portray the spiritually integrated concept of the remaining days of this Laodicean church age. The story of Saul's becoming king reveals what the people desire in a ruler; he was the product of the people. In contrast, there are the aged Samuels who are waning in influence over the people. Finally, there is the Elect, men after God's own heart, who are in flight from cave to cave in providential appointment, influencing a remnant.

The first four chapters of First Samuel present ten groups of people who depict the gamut of professing Christianity today. The Bible is replete with the variety of *professing* Christians living at any given time, and by no means are we to say that all are saved. The four different types of ground found in Matthew 13 give evidence of diversity of profession; even the good ground differs in its fruit-yielding of forty percent, sixty percent, and a hundredfold. The seven churches in Revelation 2-3 declare the diversity in churches and even a commentary on different realities of professing Christians. The beautiful book of Song of Solomon presents eighteen different groups or individuals. Yet in First Samuel 1-4 there is the roll call of the end-time professors.

In this article they will not be presented in the chronological order of their appearance in the historical unfolding, but rather in order of their influence and prominence in Christendom today.

## 1. The People

The People, though not mentioned until chapter four, give to us the backdrop of the days and somewhat of an insight to other religious categories.

A predominate characteristic of “the people” is found in the uniqueness of the days of the Judges. The events of First Samuel take place in the last sixty years of the Judges. While the book of Joshua is the book of victory (with seven nations being conquered in seven years), the book of Judges is the book of defeat with seven apostasies, seven oppressions, and seven deliverances. The faith and obedience that overthrew the walls of Jericho and conquered those seven nations turned to unbelief and disobedience. This sad

condition continued for more than three hundred years.

During the time of the Judges God’s people became slaves to the nations around them. A remnant of these nations was first permitted to remain in the midst of Israel. But as time passed “the people” became insensible to these sources of evil and misery. In Joshua they possessed their inheritance; in the book of Judges they despised it. The cycle of their existence became fourfold: rebellion against God in sin, which led to slavery among their enemies, then a crying unto the Lord for relief, which in return moved God to raise up a deliverer. During these three hundred years they did that which was right in their own eyes; there was no king in Israel. They entered into leagues or covenants with other nations; they intermarried with them and abominated themselves through the gods of the surrounding nations. Thus, they fell under the dark consequences of their disobedience to God.

The vast majority within the churches today are “the people.” They live daily in spiritual defeat with no victory in their lives. There is the constant cycle that they fall into: they sin, they remain for days, weeks, and perhaps months under its influence and servitude; a revival comes now and then; they repent and find a little rest for a few days; and then the unending cycle starts again. They live in a state of unbelief and disobedience. They allow pet sins to remain in their life for so

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long a time and eventually become insensible to their source of evil and misery. More and more they are found drifting further and further from the love of the spiritual land, and they despise the godly life inwardly. There is no king in their life; they sing about the King, talk about the King, but He does not exist in their lives, for they do what they want to do. A true prophet can tell “the people” what the Bible says, but in the end they will do what they want to do. They call truth and right a matter of personal interpretation and individualistic, subjective reasoning.

The glory of the Lord is gone (I Samuel 4), and they are relying on the mere symbol of their faith rather than its reality. The symbol could be a church, a denomination, a preacher, themselves, the glories of their past, the memory of how it used to be, or even the kind of songs they sing. Defeat and death have come to their soul; fear has replaced faith; and the children in their influence know nothing of the true heritage in God. They have lost the battle with the second group (the Philistines), because their spiritual indolence caused them to believe that the presence of the ark rather than God would save them. “The people” are making their voyage in life on sinking ships.

## **2. The Philistines**

The Philistines represent the world and the flesh. These are the uncircumcised, the unholy, the carnal and worldly professing Christians that seem to influence others to

the same. They have conquered the people. They have taken control of the symbols such as the pulpits, the choirs, the special music, the seminaries, etc. This became prominent in the 1970s when mergers began taking place, such as in the buyout of Word, Inc. (at that time the largest company in Christian music and books) by the American Broadcasting Company. They were the ones who began integrating the Neo concept into the churches. The Philistines are those of the secular who are buying out or taking over that which is identified as Christian.

The Philistines brought the fall of Samson, and they controlled Israel. This man Samson in his fall can be seen as one who is trying to live in both worlds of the “flesh” and the “Spirit” at the same time. The Delilahs are those who test the strength of Samson with the phrase, “the Philistines be upon thee.” Especially since the early 1950s the world has appointed its seductive Delilahs to approach God’s Samsons. The Samsons eventually desire and yield to what she offers; they have a love for the mysteries of the world’s fornication, money, materialism, etc. Delilah has toyed with Samson, who up to this point may have maintained the Nazarite life outwardly but was waning inwardly. Each time Delilah gets closer: in the early 1900s it was the Neo-Orthodox movement (Neo-Protestant); in 1948 it was the subtle approach of Neo-Evangelicalism; then came the World Council of Churches, the Charismatic movement, and Contemporary Christian music. The

Delilahs propose the right for the “flesh” and the “Spirit” to reside together. By the 1970s there was the total integration of it all. The outward Nazarite form is now gone; the hair has been shorn with many of the churches dropping the word “holiness” or “separation” from their concept of Christianity. Did Samson know that his hair had been shorn? If he did, he went on anyway. He may have reasoned with himself, “they haven’t taken me in the past, nor will they in the future.” Individuals, churches, colleges, universities, and seminaries believe that God will never leave them. The Charismatic movement has given the churches the “shaking” that simply has added to the delusion; they refuse to believe that “the glory of the Lord has departed.”

### **3. Eli**

Eli forms the third group. He is first introduced in I Samuel 1:9 sitting “upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord.” This is an apt description of those who see somewhat the spiritual death taking over the churches, perhaps even their own church. However, there is no spiritual strength in them to rise up and do something about it. A man truly in touch with the Lord will be stirred up about the days in which he lives!

It may be true that there are those who are naturally timid and shy in vocalizing their concern. If this is the case there must be prayer over this matter that God will grant boldness to stand against the wrong and stand for what is right. But Eli’s

problem was not timidity; it was a cold heart. He knew what was happening, but he restrained not. He knew of the iniquity of his own sons, but he was afraid to say anything; God judged him for this. There is confusion in the hearts of this type of professing Christians. They cannot discern true spirituality in such a heart as Hannah’s. Because all the people they know live in hypocrisy, they believe that every individual lives that way. Only after some time do they detect some spirituality in a Hannah. In this group of professing Christians, their sight is going out. We are told that his eyes began to wax dim in I Samuel 3:2. Yet in I Samuel 4:15 they were dim, now fixed and established in the dimness. If a person keeps closing his eyes to truth, he will eventually no longer see the truth. This type of professing Christian will die sitting by the wayside, a different place of perspective (4:13).

### **4. Eli’s Sons**

Eli was a man who honored his sons above his God (2:29). This fourth group, Hophni and Phinehas, is produced by the spiritual apathy, indifference, and dimming sight of Eli. Because the people and Eli remained silent for thirty years, such wicked men were allowed to take office. These are the ones in control of the ark today; these leaders will die allowing the ark to be taken by the world. They are sons of Belial (worthless, lawless, and vile). They know not the Lord (2:12); they selfishly gain from the people

(2:13,14); they lay with the women of the court; they fornicate the truth before all (2:22); and they cause the Lord's people to transgress (2:24).

### **5. The Wife of Phinehas**

First Samuel four presents a fifth group in the wife of Phinehas. There are some individuals associated with apostates whose last cry is one of anguish when it should have been joy. This is a remnant living near apostates, and perhaps working with them, that will finally see through it all. Such a remnant will acknowledge what is happening with a last-minute anguish before death (the death of her husband, father-in-law, and then herself). The book that Francis Shaeffer wrote near the end of his life, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, was such a cry to his Neo-Evangelical companions. Nearing his death he finally saw that the movement had thrown away one of the most needed principles and doctrines, the guardian principle of Biblical Separation. His last book became a desperate call: perhaps it was a call too late. What mercy of God will be shown to such individuals at the end?

### **6. Ichabod**

Ichabod becomes the sixth group. He is the child born in this confusion (I Samuel 4) from a mother who saw that the theft of the ark meant that the glory of the Lord had departed from his people. It is the life and ways of Phinehas' offspring that prove to others that God's glory has departed.

### **7. Peninnah**

Peninnah characterizes a seventh group. She represents those within the institutional church who are having offspring, but there is no spiritual life in this offspring. She becomes one of the chief adversaries to the saints of God. And how was she such an adversary? "And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb" (I Samuel 1:6). The powers of Neo-Evangelicalism have been entering Fundamentalism on the theme of evangelism. The Peninnahs boast of their offspring, the number of souls led to Christ, the number baptized, the big churches and programs. They have a way of intimidating the pastors of small churches: "You're not doing anything for God; you have no offspring like me. God is with me and my ministry because I am winning souls for the Lord." Bigness is spirituality to them; a small ministry is viewed as inferior. Yet there are some ministries on this planet where godly men have given their lives to the truth for fifty years and perhaps have led to the Lord five or ten individuals. Many souls may come initially, but if the truth is preached such modern converts tend to fall back into the world or into lukewarmness. How truly fruitful are the modern-day Peninnahs?

### **8. Elkanah**

Elkanah makes up the eighth group. His name means "God has possessed." He had two wives. Perhaps he had married Hannah

first; because there was no offspring through that union, he may have married Peninnah for the hope of offspring. Nevertheless, he dearly loved Hannah (1:5). Although he had been affected by the age in which he lived in the matter of polygamy, there are clear evidences that he was a godly man: a man who was conscious of God in the many things of life. He represents that group of Christians who are godly except for a weight or sin that burdens them. They have been handicapped by the side effects of this age. It may be a Christian who perhaps has been entangled with the affairs of this life. He loves God but is unable to get out of the web of those affairs. It truly is a hindrance to him.

## 9. Hannah

Hannah represents a ninth group. She was a woman of prayer. She took everything serious when it came to worshipping God and living for Him. She was a woman who believed in the Word of God, lived by it, longed for it to fulfill holy desires in her life. She was a woman of vows and was willing to give back to God what God gave to her. Her whole life, in every way, is a mark of the elect of God in this generation.

## 10. Samuel

This dear young man becomes the tenth group. His name means, “asked of God.” There are two ways in which his name may be interpreted. In I Samuel 1:27, his name is to be viewed from the standpoint of Hannah, “for this child

I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him.” But there is also the perspective of God Himself: “therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there” (1:28). To lend something to someone indicates that someone requested that something from you. This would be true of God’s requesting the child from Hannah. Both truths can be tied up in the deep, mysterious prayer of 1:11.

Samuel is the representative of the longing in the cry of the Hannah and Elkanah saints for God to provide a prophet for them. We must not view Hannah’s prayer selfishly; her prayer was for the elect of that time. We must remember that in the days of the judges the history of the book of Ruth took place; yes, there was that godly remnant living. But with men like Eli and his sons in religious leadership, there was the longing for a prophet who would give the Word of the Lord. This is the cry of the remnant today for there is a famine of the hearing of the Word of God (Amos 8:11,12). This famine of hearing is not to be viewed simply as the people’s refusal to hear the Word of God (which is true), but a famine of the preaching of it; therefore, it is not being heard. Amos 8:12 gives this truth of the matter:

*And they shall wander from sea to sea,  
and from the north even to the east, they  
shall run to and fro to seek the word of  
the LORD, and shall not find it.*


Not many preachers truly are preaching the word of God in an

anointed fashion today. That's why it is hard for the remnant to find a church they can attend without contemporary music and shallow preaching being the hallmarks of the church. One of the judgments of God in the end time is a scarcity of preachers with insight to both the times in which we live and to human nature. But a Samuel is one who is growing on (I Samuel 2:26; 3:19) amidst the backslidings and apostasy of religious leaders. He is a man of God, not a man of the system or the denomination; he is a man walking with God, rising to be the voice of God in a dark generation. Yes, we need to *ask* God for such individuals. Very few young men coming out of seminaries are anointed; most are educated with practical methodology and a few points to give a little flair to a sermon. It is rare to meet a young preacher who

is sober concerning the times in which we live and who has the Spirit of God upon him.

### Conclusion

Dear reader, in what group do you find yourself? What category would be your church? What are you longing to be in Christ? We are in the end of the last church age; confusion reigns within professing Christianity. Amidst the popularity of Christianity today in our country, is it even proper to ask, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth" (Luke 18:8)? May God the Holy Ghost help us to see the mongrelization of professing Christianity today and not become a part of it. We pray not for the apostasy! But we do pray for the true remnant of God around the world.



There used to be in the heart of the men of God to spend their entire lifetime moving in and out among the fundamentals of the great historic Christian Faith reinforcing these great truths with great connecting links between each of the fundamental truths, thus making a total fabric of a one-cloth-truth that would lead the Christians through all the various compartments of life. This fabric of truth wore well in better days. However, in our time, we crave the little truth, the Christian Calendar text-for-the-busy-day. We swallow a devotional book to comfort our religious daily duty, but we begin to starve for God. But not believing we are really starving for God and hungering for a deeper faith, we fall back on trivia and religious entertaining, thinking "Jesus" in any form is Jesus in the singular form—all The Holy Scriptures.

From *The Human Spirit*, Vol. One  
by Dr. O. Talmadge Spence

## MY PRIDE

My Heart Was In Communion Bright  
With Christ The Lover Of My Soul.  
I Daily Longed To Bring Delight  
To Him Alone, His Name Extoll.

The Days Increased His Presence Fair;  
He Blessed Me, Used Me In His Will.  
Each Moment Proved I Was His Heir;  
Temptations Fled, I Fought With Skill.

The Days Increased My Confidence;  
I Stood And Shouted Strong, Mature,  
"See What I've Done: Here's Evidence,  
There Is No Test I Can't Endure."

I Then Began To Look Within:  
Neglect Did Come In Wooing Christ.  
Unnoticed Was The Growing Sin;  
My Fall Would Come, My Pride Enticed.

I Saw With Fear 'Neath Buried Moss  
The Ugly Head Of Pride Arise.  
I Knew Right Then A Double-Cross;  
I Sold Myself My Own Demise.

He Rose With Might, His Sword Did Swing  
With Cutting Edge No Match For Me.  
His Stench Of Hatred For The King  
Did Wreak My Soul With Agony.

His Spittle Foamed With Bitterness;  
His Breath Brought Coldness For The Lord.  
His Eyes Of Envy Did Obsess,  
God's Word And Prayer Were Now Abhorred.

My Strength Was Gone; I Laid Exposed.  
His Sword Was Poised With Serpent Fang.  
It Seemed That Death's Door Was To Close  
Upon My Life With Awesome Pang.

I Cried To God, "O Help Me Now  
To Kill This Giant Of My Pride.



O Christ, Thy Blood My Soul Endow  
Or This Will Be Heart Suicide."

I Saw Just Then My Lord Above  
Did Intercede In My Behalf.  
His Cleansing Pow'r Was Sent With Love,  
As Pride Now Lost Its Ghoulish Laugh.

I Curse Thee Now, O Bitter Pride!  
Thou Foulest Fiend Within My Soul  
Thou Riseth Up, God's Grace Deride,  
To Seize My Life And Take Control.

I Wage A War Against You Now,  
O Fierce Goliath Of My Heart!  
Before The Throne Of God You'll Bow;  
The Voice of Grace Will Cry "Depart!"

I Saw This Enemy of Mine  
Sink Down Beneath The Cross Of Christ.  
For God Will There This Foe Confine,  
Who Did Become An Antichrist.

O Christian, Do You Now Not See,  
That Pride's The Enemy Of Grace?  
You Cannot Afford Affinity,  
Or Dare To Give Your Pride Embrace,

Your Service And Your Love For Christ,  
Will Come To Naught, To Death's Decay.  
Your Pride Is Now Your Antichrist,  
Let Jesus Kill Your Pride Today!

Draw From His Storehouse Full and Free;  
Lay Prostrate At His Feet In Shame.  
Let Christ's Own Work At Calvary  
Bring Restoration Through His Name.

Each Time You See Goliath's Head  
Emerge From Underneath The Sod  
Cry Out To Christ, His Blood Was Shed  
To Kill The Pride You Made Your God!

—Dr. H. T. Spence

# The Fall Foundations Schedule

Registration

The Foundations Schools

August 25 – 8:00 AM

Special Opening Services

August 25-27 – 7:00 PM

Special Evening of Fellowship

August 28

Founder's Day

September 26

Eighth Congress of Fundamentalists

September 29-October 1

Thanksgiving Day

November 25

Winter Break for the Schools

December 18

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"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

Psalm 11:3

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DR. H. T. SPENCE, PASTOR  
(July 2004)

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2. *The Holy Spirit in the Stages of Married Life*
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