

“Their Message Will Spread Like Cancer”

By Tony Melton

The apostle Paul said, “And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort” (2 Timothy 2:17). In this verse, Paul was speaking about two false teachers who were teaching that the resurrection of the dead had already past.

Here, the Bible is teaching that false doctrines produce “soul-cancer.” The Greek word *gaggraina* is translated “cancer,” but literally means “gangrene.” *Gangrene* is the death or decay of body tissue due to impaired blood circulation. One man I knew had to have his leg amputated because of a severe case of gangrene. Many people have lost their hands, arms, feet or legs due to gangrene and others have even lost their lives.

The apostle is trying to impress upon us the serious consequences of believing a false doctrine. He is saying that it is like “gangrene”; it slowly spreads little-by-little and if not removed or stopped, it kills its victim.

Today, in our society, every doctrine imaginable is being preached and people, like sponges, are soaking them up. People no longer seem to have a love for the truth, and for this reason, they have become easy targets for false teachers. The Bible says that because they do not love for the truth, “God will send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

The only thing that can protect us from soul-cancer or gangrene of the soul is the “**love for the truth.**” This means we must cast aside our man-made church creeds and demand a “thus saith the Lord” for our religious practices. We must throw-off the shackles of human traditions and take the Bible and the Bible only as our guide. To love the truth means that we accept a doctrine, not because our indoctrinated “pastor” says it, but because the Bible teaches it. To love the truth means that we search the Scriptures daily to see if what we are hearing taught is the truth. The Bible says that the Bereans “were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so” (Acts 17:10,11)